Cross Border

Cooperation

Protocols

2017

Background

Neighboring countries inevitably share medical emergency concerns following natural catastrophes, disease outbreaks, man-made disasters, accidents and political conflicts. Israel, The Palestinian authority and Jordan, share a common border.

The literature in this field shows that most international aid is inefficient (in fact unavailable) in the initial stages of disaster response. Problems such as prolonged preparation and transport times, unfamiliarity with the specific needs and miscommunication lead to ineffective response. If well planned and executed, Cross border cooperation policies can overcome many of the anticipated barriers and hasten response. To facilitate effective cross-border response between Jordan, the Palestinian authority and Israel in times of need, this document, summarizes the collaborative means deduced from the RegDis project.

It is important to note that the responsibility for responding to disasters lies with the emergency services of each respective country and will be affected by regional policies rules and regulations. The model described here is intended to provide immediate response solutions until the official help arrives. Such a framework can facilitate life saving activities in various scenarios resulting from the fact that the partners reside on an active geological fault yet tourists on both sides of the border (which includes extremely high transport by buses on roads that are not of the highest standards) travel this route. For this reason, and the fact that a large earthquake is expected to cause harm in a magnitude that will exaust the local healthcare capacities, the coordination of regional response to emergencies seems to be a rationale health-management strategy for RegDis partners. This strategy follows on the 1994 Peace Treaty between Israel and Jordan that aimed among other things to create collaborations for the benefit of their respective populations (Article 21 of the treaty specifies that the parties will cooperate in the area of health).

The value of integrated emergency response systems in order to offer coordinated responses in case of multi-casualty events has been globally recognized. Elimination and minimization of procedural obstacles to cross border activity in disasters is a pre-requisite to saving lives. While the establishment of such a system is multi-faceted and complex, we focused on its most basic requisite elements: (1) comparably trained personnel who have the ability and willingness to work together (2) a definite set of

jointly developed, enforceable protocols in order to facilitate a real-time coordinated response, based on country/entity rules and regulations as detailed below.

From joint training to Cross border cooperation

L-CERT teams have been trained with the same methodology, having the same concepts of operations, with the idea of Cross border cooperation.

A. **Roles for cross border cooperation**

L-CERT teams were developed in three political entities – the state of Israel, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestinian authority. For each of those entities exists a competent authority responsible of preparing for and responding to disasters; the civil protection / civil defense authority. These authorities have the legal mandate and power to respond to any disaster situation.

To facilitate the ability to work jointly, RegDis studied the flow and mapped the potential barriers and approaches to remove them at time of need.

Any cross border assistance during a disaster requires the approval of the respective authority. The JRC is a member of the royal disaster management committee, MDA part of the national disaster management structure and Green Land worked closely with the Palestinian civil defense during the project.

Thus, the different partners in the project have the necessary links with the respective authorities in order to facilitate the approval of cross border cooperation if needed.

In the case of the Palestinian Authority, there is an added complexity, as any international assistance will require also the approval of the Israeli authorities (the Civil Administration – COGAT). MDA has the working relations with COGAT to facilitate this. Furthermore, Ms. Dalia Bassa COGAT Health officer, was an active member of the RegDis project and made a significant contribution to discussions in all DSF meetings. She is committed to providing support in the case of a real disastrous event.

B. **Modalities of cross border assistance**
   1. Experts – the L-CERT teams are composed of individuals, many of them with unique expertise and experience in specific areas – e.g. shelter, water, and
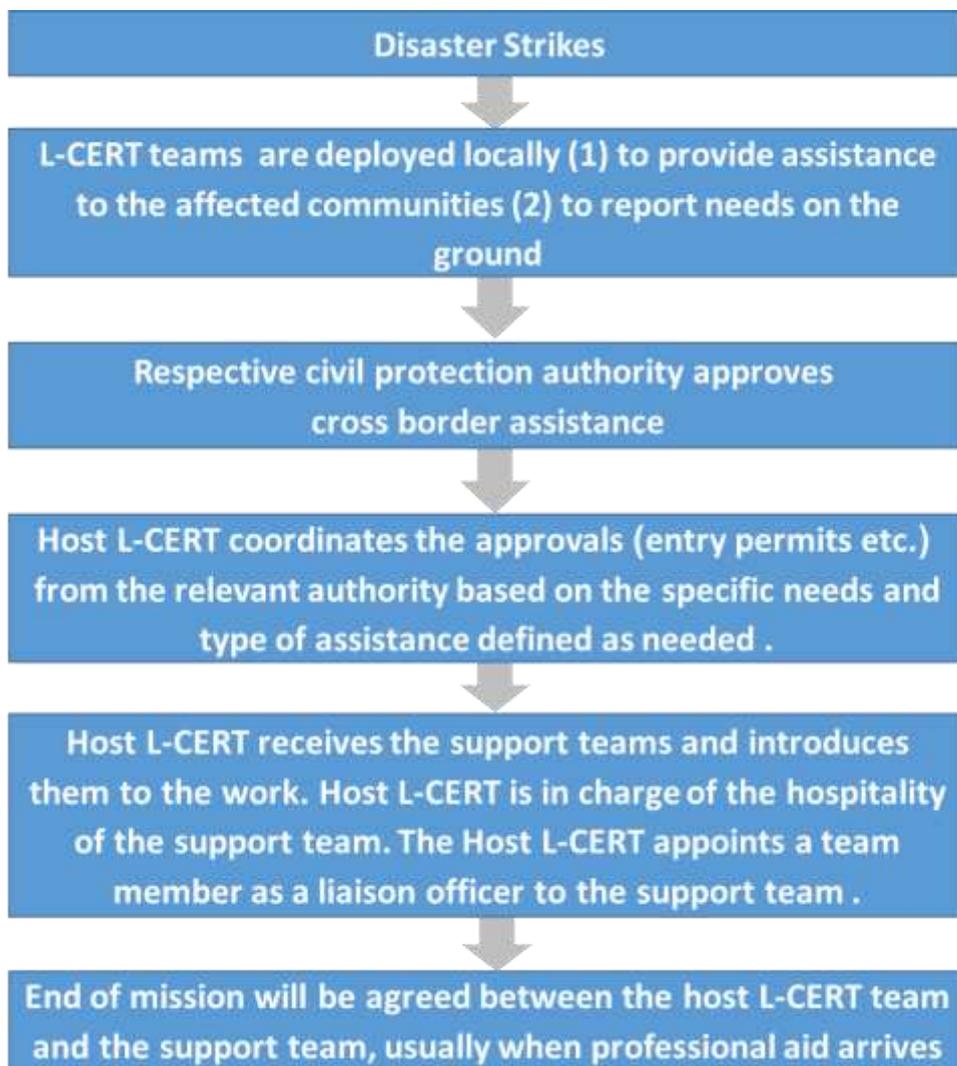
public health.

The experts can be mobilized to support another community with their personal competences, to cover a specific need identified as a gap.

2. Teams – in large scale emergencies, L-CERT teams, from communities that were not affected can be mobilized as a team, with a specific composition (as requested by the host L-CERT team leader, based on the needs identified), to support another community.

C. **Procedures for cross border assistance:**

1. L-CERT teams may have several modes of operation (domestically) –
   1.1 L-CERT teams are operated by the local or regional authority.
      In this case, which is the classical model aimed for in RegDis project, the local or regional authority has to coordinate with the national civil

protection authority the cross border assistance, and after agreement of both civil protection authorities, the coordination of the L-CERT teams (host and supporting) is conducted.

    1.2 L-CERT teams are operated by an NGO (eg. Green Land Society in this project). In this case, it is the NGO has to coordinate with the Civil Protection entity.

    1.3 L-CERT teams are part of the Red Cross / Red Crescent national society structure (JRC and MDA). In this case the Red Cross / Red Crescent movement Roles of international assistance apply.
http://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/disaster-management/responding/
This model was defined as problematic as there may be conflicts of interest for volunteers of MDA/JRC that are also members of the L-CERT. In any case, it is strongly advised that the agreements are discussed beforehand.

2. For assistance to the Palestinian Authority, approval of the Israeli authority (COGAT) is required. Greenland society is familiar with the application methods for this assistance.

3. The domestic Procedure is as follows –

    3.1 L-CERT team identifies uncovered needs.

    3.2 L-CERT team reports to the respective organization the L-CERT team belongs to (JRC/MDA/Green land) and the local authority which operates it (if there is one).

    3.3 The organization/authority verifies with the sister L-CERT organization the availability of resources for cross border assistance.

    3.4 The responsible organization or authority coordinates with the respective national civil protection authority based on the needs defined as necessary. The possibility to use L-CERT teams for cross border assistance is offered (if resources were noted as available).

    3.5 Following approval of the respective civil protection authority (and for the Palestinian Authority – of COGAT), the host organization issues terms of reference for the assisting L-CERT (see annex 1).

    3.6 The supporting organization provides the host organization with the details of the assistance team and equipment they are bringing.
It is the responsibility of the host organizations to arrange all the needed clearances with the authorities (e.g. – migration, customs) and accommodate the joining delegation.

    3.7 In case the deployment is done by members of the Red Cross / Red Crescent movement, the respective National Society activates the international assistance procedures of the Red Cross movement.

D. Areas of responsibility –

    1. Host L-CERT / Host organization

        1.1 Define the needs and the needs uncovered.

1.2 Coordinate with the local civil protection authority (or COGAT) the deployment of cross border assistance from L-CERT teams. In case the deployment is conducted through Red Cross mechanisms – to activate the respective RC mechanisms.

1.3 Issue Terms of Reference for the deployment. (annex 1)

1.4 Facilitate with the authorities all the approvals needed for the deployment (personnel and equipment).

1.5 Appoint a liaison officer from within the host L-CERT to support the arriving team throughout the mission.

1.6 Arrange for the transportation, accommodation and feeding of the support team.

1.7 Conduct periodic coordination and evaluation meetings, with both teams (the support and the local) in order to assess the operation, solve problems and improve the action as needed.

1.8 Liaise with the local host community in order to ensure transparency and accountability to the beneficiaries, including with regards to the deployment of cross border assistance.

1.9 Coordinate with the sister organization any media releases and coverage.

1.10   Coordinate with the support team the end of mission (or need for further rotations), and ensure appropriate reporting (narrative and financial).

2. **Support L-CERT / Support organization**

2.1 Identify the available resources (personnel and material) to support the operation, including the funding for the mission.

2.2 Ensure the persons to be deployed meet the profile described in the Terms of Reference, have the necessary documentation, and are physically fit for the mission.

2.3 Ensure the team has the necessary insurance for the mission.

2.4 Liaise with the respective Civil Protection authority the deployment (if the deployment is conducted through Red Cross Channels – with the respective IFRC / ICRC entities).

2.5 Liaise with the Host L-CERT / Host organization the details of the deployment and the arrival procedures.

2.6 Provide the team with all the material needed for the mission (as detailed in the Terms of Reference), and brief the team / expert prior to their departure.

2.7 Be in constant contact with the host L-CERT and work closely together to achieve the agreed goals of the operation.

2.8 Agree on the terms for end of mission (or need for further rotations). Ensure appropriate reporting (narrative and financial).

2.9 Coordinate with the Host team / organization any media releases and coverage.

Annex 1 – Terms of Reference (ToR) for deployment –

1. The situation – (short brief of the disaster and the current situation)

2. The needs to be covered by the L-CERT team

3. Competencies needed of the L-CERT support teams

4. Composition of the L-CERT support team (competencies, gender balance)

5. Expected mission (including the approval by the authorities)

6. Expected location

7. Time frame for the mission

8. Background on the affected community

9. Logistics aspects and considerations

10. Equipment needed

11. Safety and security considerations

12. Arrival set up

13. Contact details of the liaison officer