

Ten Years Experience in Earthquake Reconstruction in the Republic of Yemen

An Evaluation of the Dhamar Earthquake Reconstruction Programme

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In close co-operation with the other members of the evaluation team, Mr. J.P. Buwalda, Netherlands, Mr. W. Dubach, Switzerland, Prof. Dr. M. Erdik, Turkey, and Dr. J. Studer, Switzerland.

A five-man mission to evaluate the Dhamar Earthquake Re-construction Project took place from 17-31 May 1992 in Dhamar, Republic of Yemen, in close co-operation with a team of Yemeni and international experts. The team included representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Planning and Development and the Staff of the Executive Office for Reconstruction (EOREDA). The National Team was headed by the General Manager of EOREDA, Mr. Ahmed Obeid. The team is greatly appreciative of the good co-operation and frankness displayed throughout all stages of the mission.

It should be mentioned here that the reconstruction programme was the first one of its kind in Yemen; seen in this light, the results are remarkably positive. Some of the somewhat negative results have therefore *not* been deleted, but are seen as future tools for even better results in the Al Udein Reconstruction Programme, and other similar programmes.

Background to the Dhamar Earthquake Reconstruction Programme

The Programme was initiated following one of the worst disasters in recent times when, in December 1982, an earthquake, with a magnitude of 6.0 Mb on the Richter Scale, occurred in Dhamar Province, in the centre of the Yemen. The earthquake caused major loss of life and property: 1,600 people were killed, thousands injured, and property loss was estimated at US \$2 billion. Less than a month after the earthquake, the Government of Yemen established a Supreme Council for Reconstruction, with a mandate to prepare a general policy for reconstruction of the affected areas. At the same time, an Executive Office for Reconstruction of Earthquake Affected Areas (EOREDA) was created.

Background to the Evaluation Mission

Early in 1992 the Swiss Disaster Relief Unit (SDR) expressed its willingness to make a contribution to the victims of the Al Udein Earthquake, 140 km South of Dhamar, which occurred on 28 November 1991. After discussions with DHA-UNDRO, the SDR agreed to focus on reconstruction efforts in Al Udein, instead of making a relief contribution; the SDR believed that a thorough review of the experiences in reconstruction in Dhamar would be one prerequisite for such a possible contribution. The Government of Yemen agreed with the Swiss proposal and approved the formation of an international evaluation team, via UNDP Sana'a, to be headed by DHA-UNDRO, in close co-operation with a Yemeni counterpart team. In addition to the two experts provided

by the Swiss Government, the Governments of the Netherlands and Turkey kindly agreed to provide experts for the evaluation team.

Objectives of the Evaluation Mission

The objectives of the evaluation mission were: to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the various results of the Dhamar Earthquake Reconstruction Programme; to advise the Government which policy decisions have proved to be successful or have not led to the expected results; and the steps which may be needed to improve these policies. The objective of the evaluation mission was based on a DHA-UNDRO proposal, approved by the Yemen Government.

The conclusions of the evaluation mission are directly applicable to the