

LAUNCH OF

The WHO e-Atlas of disaster risk for the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Volume 1: Exposure to natural hazards

3 February 2008

The World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean presents the *WHO e-Atlas of disaster risk for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, Volume 1: Exposure to natural hazards*. The e-Atlas uses geographic information systems and various disaster models to assist disaster management decision-makers, particularly those in the Member States of this Region regularly experiencing disasters, to reduce health risks to vulnerable populations due to emergencies and health crises. This tool can be used to help predict the magnitude of a disaster on a specific population, to assess where damage might be the greatest and to forecast specific resources which may be required.



Volume 1 of the e-Atlas contains a set of maps and supporting documents explaining methodology and providing metadata that illustrate the distribution of natural hazards (earthquakes, floods, heat, wind, and landslides) occurring in WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Region, as well as estimates of the sizes of populations exposed to such hazards.

This and subsequent volumes, still under development, can be used to improve disaster preparedness in the health sector; aid emergency response measures through improved baseline information; assist in identifying, planning and prioritizing areas for mitigation activities to minimize the effects of natural hazards; and provide a base for transitional and early recovery activities following an emergency.

It is envisioned that this e-Atlas will ultimately contribute to building national and local capacities in the health sector for disaster risk reduction, a key priority of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.