



Programme for Improving National Early Warning System and Flood Prevention in Albania

Editorial

Albania has been significantly affected by flood events in the recent months. The events that took place last December as well as at the beginning of this year are clear indicators of a risk that is easily possible and very common now even for our country.

Thousand hectares of land underwater, hundreds dead animals, dozens displaced families are a strong alerting bell that we must pay a lot of attention to information, preparedness and tackling appropriate measures at the right time.

In this regard, PRO NEWS programme has foreseen a series of activities under each specific component, aiming to ensure increased resilience to floods and improving disaster prevention in line with EU Good Practices.

In this newsletter, you can read on the contribution made to increased emergency management planning capacity through Assessment of Emergency Planning at Prefectural level; on the support to Albanian institutions in accessing the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, and on the assessment of automatic weather stations and on the ongoing historical data rescue activities.

Enjoy your reading!

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Assessment of Emergency Planning at Prefectural level



Sustain Albanian institutions in accessing the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

Automatic weather, hydrological and marine station assessment

Climate and hydrological data rescue activities



Increased emergency management planning capacity Assessment of Emergency Planning at Prefectural level

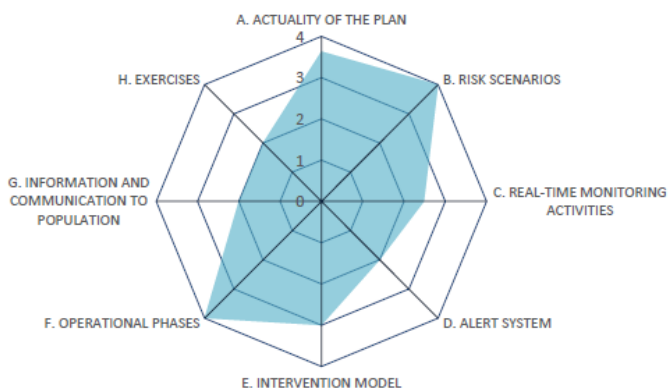
One of the components of the PRO NEWS Programme (*Component B: Increased emergency management planning capacity*) is focused in assisting The General Directorate for Civil Emergencies in Albania in order to analyze the existing prefectural emergency plans. Such analysis goes in the direction of homogenization and coordination of the overall emergency management and planning system in Albania.

The work on the first year was thus focused on the analysis and development of an assessment methodology to analyse the plans and identifying good practices and gaps in order to support the drafting of new guidelines for the emergency planning.



From the workshop "LEVELING UP" with the 12 prefectures and GDCE

COMPONENT		SCORE
A. ACTUALITY OF THE PLAN	✓	3.6
B. RISK SCENARIOS	✓✓	4.0
C. REAL-TIME MONITORING ACTIVITIES	! ?	2.5
D. ALERT SYSTEM	! ?	2.0
E. INTERVENTION MODEL	✓	3.0
F. OPERATIONAL PHASES	✓✓	4.0
G. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TO POPULATION	! ?	2.0
H. EXERCISES	! ?	2.0



One of the assessment of the prefectural plans, represented with score card

The assessment has been conducted amongst PRO NEWS consortium partners (DPC, CIMA, REC) and beneficiaries (GDCE and Prefectures).

References for this work have been the UNDP guidelines for emergency planning of 2003, the Albanian legal framework, the EU guidelines and EU Member State (MS) good practices. Where Albanian laws were missing (i.e. alerting system), the EU MS legal framework or EU guidelines have been used. This analysis has provided a dual result (i) a simple system with which to verify the conformity of the plans to the existing guidelines emphasizing the areas that require urgent intervention; and (ii) an overview, at prefectural level, of emergency planning in Albania.

The assessment was finalized during a national workshop on 5th-6th October 2017, when representatives of the 12 prefectures, the General Directorate for Civil Emergencies and other national stakeholders met together to exchange views and share good practices and methodologies while finalizing the assessment.



Automatic weather, hydrological and marine station assessment

Institute of Geosciences, Energy, Water and Environment (IGEWE) carries out observations of weather, climate and hydrological phenomena to support weather forecasting and issuing warnings of hazardous events including floods. Accurate observation data from automatic weather, hydrological and marine stations are essential for this work, and therefore the station network operations were inspected by experts from the Meteorological and Hydrological Service of Croatia, Turkish State Meteorological Service and IGEWE.

Based on the inspection of the stations, it is evident that large part of the automatic stations require rehabilitation. Some hydrological and marine stations are completely destroyed due to vandalism, theft or floods. Other stations require new instruments, maintenance and calibration of existing instruments or works on the station infrastructure. Based on the field inspection of the stations, the station network rehabilitation plan will be developed with the support of PRO NEWS Programme, in frame of *Component D: Improving Early Flood Warning and Inclusion in the European System of Awareness Raising*. A number of automatic stations will be rehabilitated to ensure continued availability of reliable observational data.

Climate and hydrological data rescue activities

Availability of historical climate data is essential for understanding the climate and how it changes over time. Furthermore, information of climate extremes is important in understanding and preparing for risks related to hazardous weather and hydrological events.

Data rescue activities are important especially when the historical data is at risk of being lost due to deterioration of paper archives, and therefore digitizing the data into computer compatible form for easy access is necessary. In this regard, as part of the assistance under *Component D* of PRO NEWS Programme, a data rescue team is being engaged and 6 new laptops have been donated to IGEWE. The team will work in preserving climate and hydrological data that are currently available in IGEWE, in paper format. Digitalized data can be used in modeling hydrological and flood forecasting activities in the future.



Sustain Albanian institutions in accessing the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)

UCPM assistance includes governmental aid delivered in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. A well-coordinated European response is necessary to avoid duplication of relief efforts and ensure that any assistance provided meets the real needs of the affected country.

The UCPM is open to the participation of “acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates”. In this respect, PRO NEWS Programme, through *Component F: Sustain Albanian institutions in accessing the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, is supporting Albania in the membership process in the UCPM.

To this purpose, the PRO NEWS Consortium and GDCE recently discussed an Action Plan aimed to provide guidance towards the Albanian actual participation in the UCPM. The plan has been prepared with a focus on addressing the whole range of non-legal basic requirements and capabilities that are defined at EU level for the participating states in the UCPM. The non-legal requirements for UCPM membership include, among others, the respect for the basic principles of cooperation, openness, transparency and sharing between peers, the functioning of a 24/7 contact point able to communicate in English, connecting to the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS), the provision of national early warning services and the sharing of information on operations conducted in countries that activated the UCPM, as well as the participation in UCPM lessons learnt processes, the development of risk assessments and the financial contribution to the UCPM itself.



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The development of the Action Plan, moves from the assumption that there is a political will of the Albanian competent authorities to enter the UCPM. That said, a number of internal actions would have to be taken in Albania to target the UCPM requirements, including through the support and the technical assistance that are provided under the different PRO NEWS components.

For Albania, membership in the UCPM would contribute to create new opportunities to reinforce the national civil protection system at both policy level and in the domain of disaster preparedness and prevention. Among these it is worth mentioning: participation of Directors-Generals in the Civil Protection Committee meetings and experts working groups, involvement in UCPM trainings, exchange of experts programmes and modules exercises, participation in disaster management peer reviews and access to calls for proposals within the preparedness and prevention domain.

Follow the programme on: