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BUREAU FOR CRISIS PREVENTION AND RECOVERY  
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY TEAM  
CAPACITY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION INITIATIVE**

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**Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Assessment Report**  
*For Kosovo<sup>i</sup>*

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## ACRONYMS

AEM	Agency for Emergency Management (in Kosovo)
CADRI	Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative
CDG	Capacity Development Group (of UNDP)
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IEMS	Integrated Emergency Management System
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
KRC	Kosovo Red Cross
KSF	Kosovo Security Force
MED	Ministry of Economic Development
MESP	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SEE	South-East Europe
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

## **INTRODUCTION**

The capacity assessment mission for Kosovo is implemented at the request of the regional project for South-East Europe (SEE) and Turkey on Disaster Risk Management (DRM). Similar capacity assessment missions to be conducted for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro, Macedonia and Turkey out of eight of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) beneficiaries of the project (with the exception of Croatia). The assessment is meant to complement the needs assessments conducted in all eight IPA beneficiaries of the project conducted in 2010 by both a regional and local consultant in each location.

The purpose of the disaster risk reduction (DRR) capacity assessment is to identify capacity gaps related to risk reduction, understand desired capacities and propose recommendations on how these capacities can be achieved. Results of the DRR capacity assessment will contribute to the development of strong national components as part of the regional capacity development proposal – to be submitted to the European Commission and potentially other interested donors for Phase II of the regional DRM project for SEE and Turkey.

## **NOTE TO THE READER**

The Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) recognises that findings of the initial DRR needs assessment conducted between August and October 2010 provide a basis to look into capacity development aspects in order to advance DRR in Kosovo. Where relevant, extracts of that needs assessment report may be used to show some of the challenges affecting capacity development efforts. Regarding recommendations, the report will only propose actions that can realistically be implemented in the next three to five years, based on the existing in-country capacities to absorb them. The reader will also find a list of annexes at the end of the report with, for example, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) report regarding the capacities of the Hydro-Met services.

One particular element regarding the legal system needs to be explained here as this has a very important impact of advancing DRR in Kosovo and in all countries of Former Yugoslavia. In Kosovo, as well as in other countries of Former Yugoslavia, you are authorised to initiate activities of general interest if there is a law, with all steps and activities defined, which authorises you to do so. Therefore, although many laws are drafted to support disaster management that include here and there a few elements of DRR, implementation is a huge challenge due to various reasons, including funding. Note that Kosovo is also in a general revision of most of its laws in order to comply with EU standards and regulations. A major concern is how much the revised laws are aligned with the realities of Kosovo and its real capacities to implement them.

## **CADRI CAPACITY ASSESSMENT APPROACH**

This capacity assessment is conducted by a joint initiative of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), CADRI, United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).

It uses the methodology developed by the UNDP Capacity Development Group (CDG) and is adapted for the DRR sector by the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery of UNDP and CADRI. The methodology was first piloted in Armenia in 2010 and adapted to the regional context of Balkans in 2011 by CADRI and the regional project management for SEE DRM.

CADRI's capacity assessment is conducted with a clear focus on national capacities for DRR. The assessment will look into five technical areas of capacity development: ownership, institutional arrangements, competencies, working tools and resources, and relationships.

Within the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), and specifically regarding HFA Priority 1, the assessment will focus on ownership as a basis for setting the right enabling environment for DRR, in order to guaranty sustainability in developing capacities. It will also look at the overall institutional arrangements for DRR set in the legal base, and the level of financial resources allocated to DRR as a sign of a strong commitment.

Within HFA Priorities 2–5, the assessment will concentrate on capacities related to institutional arrangements, competencies, working tools and resources, and relationships specific to these thematic areas.

The assessment is a qualitative research based on face-to-face interviews with members of various institutions engaged in disaster management, or those likely to have a future role in DRR. In identifying strengths and gaps, the interviews try to find the root causes of some of the challenges that have rendered capacity development difficult – which in turn will help to define technical ways to address these gaps while maintaining existing capacities.

In terms of recommendations, concrete capacity development actions will be proposed at the end of each of the HFA Priorities 1–5 to address any challenges identified. The level of proposed actions will take into consideration the country's real capacity to implement them within three to five years.

## **KOSOVO NATURAL HAZARD PROFILE**

The three main natural hazards that Kosovo is exposed to are earthquakes, floods and forest fires. In addition to these hazards, considerable risk is also posed by landslides, drought, heavy snowfall and water reservoir dam bursts. In addition, there are environmental disasters caused by the former lead factory in Mitrovica, in which strong winds and storms contribute to the pollution of drinking water and food contamination, with consequences such as disease and epidemics. These hazards constitute a permanent threat to the citizens of Kosovo.

Kosovo is located in a seismically active area of the world, with seismic fault lines running along the Adriatic littoral and the Vardar Valley making it susceptible to earthquakes.<sup>1</sup> The most recent significant earthquake occurred in 2010 in the eastern part of the country and measured 5.2 magnitude. In April 2002, an earthquake with a magnitude of 5.7 hit the Gjilan/Gnjilane Commune leaving significant structural damage. One person was killed and many were affected – evacuation was organized. According to the division of Seismology in the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) Department of Mining, up to 10 small-scale earthquakes (measuring below 3.8 on the Richter scale) are registered in Kosovo on a daily basis.

Forests cover a considerable part of Kosovo – according to some sources up to 43 percent of the territory is covered by forest and bushes, and these areas are especially prone to forest fires at the end of spring and during dry summer months. Since 2000 there have been an increasing number of forest fires. Fire brigades and other relevant operational teams have carried out between 2,000 and 3,000 interventions for each subsequent year.

Since the end of the conflict in 1999, Kosovo has experienced an unprecedented construction boom and growth of urban areas. However, authorities do not always adequately control this, even though there is an understanding that illegal constructions pose higher risks to the population, especially with regards to floods. For example, in 1973 the city of Ferizaj/Urosevac was struck by a severe flood that affected the southern part of the city<sup>2</sup>, but houses are still being constructed within flood prone areas. Climate change is also increasing vulnerabilities of populations to natural hazards, but there seems to be a limited understanding of how and why.

## **THE ASSESSMENT FINDINGS**

### **HFA PRIORITY 1**

**Ensure that DRR is both a national and local priority, with a strong institutional basis for implementation.**

The most important requirement for sustainability on any work on capacity development is ownership. For DRR, ownership starts with authorities showing a strong commitment to engage in a long-term approach addressing disaster risk. Ownership is initially shown by making DRR a priority through national legislation, by drafting a DRR strategy, putting in place adequate institutional structures to address priority risks, and allocating financial means to support national institutions to implement national strategies.

In terms of legislation, Kosovo has Law No. 02/L-68 on ‘Protection Against Natural and Other Disasters’ as the main legal base for disaster management. The law was reviewed in 2010 and is about to be submitted to the parliament for approval probably in June 2011. As before, the new version does not mention DRR. In general, there is no evidence of institutionalized DRR mainstreaming into any laws for sectors involved in disaster management. The legislation is strongly oriented towards response, with very limited focus on preparedness, and no policies and strategies that support risk reduction. In addition, most of the major legal initiatives covering

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<sup>1</sup> ISSR/UNDP, Kosovo Internal Security Sector review, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Yokota and Seneque UN-HABITAT Kosovo, Identification of disaster risk in spatial planning for sustainable development: a case study in Kosovo, 2009.

disaster management (and possibly DRR) are either being revised or considered for revision. There seems to be little evidence of a coordinated or integrated approach to preparing legal documents – this is paramount in order to avoid a confusion with roles and responsibilities.

In terms of institutional arrangements, the same law (No. 02/L-68) mentions that the main organization in Kosovo responsible for disaster management (and potentially for DRR) is the Agency for Emergency Management (AEM), imbedded within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The AEM used to be a department, but since the revision of the law it became an Agency in 2010 and is now operational since January 2011.

The main tasks and duties of the AEM are to: implement relevant government plans and policies; coordinate all actors at the central and local level; develop a planning strategy; implement education and training programmes; co-prepare risk assessments; sensitize the public on natural/man-made disasters; conduct relevant research; prepare national/international agreements between partners/main actors; periodically report to the government on the emergency management situation; host the technical secretariat/team for the emergency ad-hoc Inter-ministerial Committee (once it is convened for an emergency situation); deal with emergency needs assessments; establish/manage respective resources/funds; coordinate/conduct damage assessments; and monitor the emergency management database.

Considering that Law No. 02/L-68 is under revision, it is expected that some rearrangements, regarding tasks and duties of the AEM, will take place in order to avoid any incompatibility with: the Law on Kosovo Police; the Law on the Kosovo Security Council; and the Law on the Kosovo Security Forces – all of which have been issued in recent years. However, within the responsibilities of the AEM (the main actor), there is no mention of support to enhance DRR in Kosovo.

Kosovo does not have a National Platform for DRR or a clear coordination mechanism established for disaster management. Infrequent meetings are held to discuss disaster management issues, but nothing is clearly institutionalized.

In terms of competencies, most institutions, including the AEM, seem to have very limited human capacity and technical expertise. For example: the seismology division only has two technicians; the Spatial Planning Department (imbedded within the MESP) has 13 staff, three of which are qualified technical staff in strategic planning; and the water management department of the MESP is understaffed. The Department of Spatial Planning of the MESP, the Hydro Meteorological Service, the Division of Seismology of the MED, and a number of interviewed staff from other organizations clearly stated a need for more qualified personnel at technical level in order to start dealing with DRR. There is an urgent need to train all actors involved in, and likely to be involved in, disaster management and DRR.

DRR is only recognized by some as an important area of work for Kosovo. This is often due to terminology differences – people combine DRR with disaster preparedness and response, which remains an important, and probably the strongest, disaster related sector of Kosovo. A clear understanding of DRR is paramount – potential gains and losses need to be clearly articulated at decision-making levels. National authorities need proper orientation on DRR in order to

understand its concepts and the needs and type of support that technical units require in order to mainstream DRR into their various strategies and plans.

The Kosovo Red Cross (KRC) remains as the main non-governmental stakeholder – it is active in 27 municipalities (out of 37) and is present through its branches in 24 municipalities throughout Kosovo. Members of the KRC understand the concept of DRR due to training provided by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). The KRC organized round table discussions with other disaster management actors on DRR during the International Day for Disaster Reduction in October 2010. In addition, it has conducted ad hoc public awareness and education campaigns on seismic disaster risk. However, the KRC does not have a strategy or regular DRR programmes – the assessment team has not managed to get a clear picture of the DRR involvement of non-governmental organizations in Kosovo.

A shortage of funding is a major obstacle for further advancing DRR, especially for integrating it into sectorial development plans. There is no specific budget allocation for DRR, or even disaster preparedness and response, in the annual budget. The only financial means available for disaster management is the government reserve budget (5 million euros annually or 1.2 percent of the GDP), which can only be allocated for disaster response. The Kosovo Law on the State Budget authorizes local/municipal councils to establish municipal budget reserves in the same manner as for any ‘unpredicted situation’, however, there is no evidence that this is being done in practice due to the overall lack of financial means in Kosovo.

#### **HFA PRIORITY 1: RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Rapidly review the draft Law on Protection against Natural and other Disasters with an expert from BCPR to ensure the integration of DRR concepts into the law.
2. Organize a one-day awareness session on DRR for high-level ministry representatives.
3. As part of the UNISDR ‘Safer Cities’ campaign, organize a series of one-day workshops for all Mayors and municipality technicians on urban risk. This will also be an occasion for their cities to join the campaign (Prishtina is already a member). This is expected to raise interest in DRR and foster intra-municipality experience sharing and collaboration.
4. Establish a National Platform for DRR that will help prepare a DRR policy and strategy. The platform should also ensure that Kosovo contributes to the biannual Global Assessment Report of the UNISDR.
5. Develop a national gender sensitive DRR policy and strategy within the next three years.
6. Translate the UNISDR terminology guide on DRR and propose its adoption into the country by all members of the future National Platform.
7. Advocate a legally backed obligation for DRR funding into the national budget.

#### **HFA PRIORITY 2**

##### **Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning**

The AEM developed a National Risk Assessment Policy as part of the Law on Protection against Natural and other Disasters. This policy states the need to develop a risk assessment methodology for various types of hazards. An inter-agency governmental working group with 12

participants was established to contribute to the development of the document/methodology. A follow-up administrative instructions' paper is also being developed by the AEM, in addition to the risk assessment methodology (which also refers to post disaster response). The policy recommends yearly risk assessments be conducted by municipalities. However, there is very limited capacity at central level, and almost no capacity at municipal level, to conduct risk assessments any more elaborate than hazard mappings.

The AEM understands the evolving nature of risk and the need to monitor it. However, at present neither institutional arrangements nor coordination mechanisms exist to address this. The AEM is trying to mobilize support from other governmental agencies, as well as from the KRC and international partners, to elaborate a risk assessment policy. There is clear recognition of the need for a more formal set up to address risk assessment and risk monitoring.

In terms of competencies for sectorial risk assessments and analyses, institutions such as the AEM, Hydro Meteorological Services, the Division of Seismology, the water department and various municipalities have limited capacity (both technical and financial) to conduct risk assessments – even for analyses of information that they obtain daily from limited existing monitoring systems. In general, the nature of the information from these institutions is for daily monitoring and response to rapid onset disasters. All information on possible threats is forwarded to the Situation Centre of the Kosovo Security Council, which aggregates all data for decision-making. However, there is a clear lack of qualified technical experts on risk assessment at municipality level, where the expertise is very much required to collect raw data.

Although an inter-agency governmental working group is developing a risk assessment methodology, the explanation on the methodology indicates that the assessment may again simply produce a hazard identification/mapping exercise. There is also no evidence that municipalities can make amendments to the risk assessment methodology to fit local realities. In addition, it is not clear if the methodology will provide provisions to support its regular amendments alongside evolving risks. Indeed, it was explained that the methodology should only be amended after a disaster, which would serve as a test for the methodology – as seismic risk is considered the most important for Kosovo, it is important that the methodology takes into consideration all types of hazards. Finally, there seems to be no binding document or policy making risk assessment a mandatory part of future development planning.

The AEM has no pre-defined/arranged methodology for the collection of information, storage and periodic updating of disaster-related historical data. However, data collection and storage has been done in a spontaneous way and therefore different models of data collection and storage have been used for disaster events. At the moment, there is no national observatory system for risk that collects data in a centralized manner and produces a common country risk assessment – for use in planning for prevention, mitigation and even preparedness measures. In addition, there is no real capacity to assess the social, economic and environmental impact of disasters at a national and sub-national level. The division of seismology within the MED only has two members of staff, which is insufficient given the fact that Kosovo is considered to be an earthquake-prone region.

The lack of capacity in terms of risk identification also impacts early warning. There are no early warning mechanisms for informing authorities and the public about developing trends of risks – increasing population and asset exposure to various natural and environmental hazards.

## **HFA PRIORITY 2: RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Propose a presentation of existing tools on risk identification to the risk assessment working group and organize training for the technical personnel of various government agencies likely to be involved in risk identification in the future.
2. Organise a full risk assessment exercise in order to produce the Kosovo risk profile.
3. Support the establishment of a proper disaster risk observatory mechanism for Kosovo – for collecting data and increased information flow among various stakeholders.

## **HFA PRIORITY 3**

### **Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels**

According to all interviewees the awareness level on disaster risk is very low among the general public, technical personnel and decision makers (both at central and municipal levels) in terms of existing hazards. This leads to behaviour that further increases risk, such as ongoing illegal constructions. For example, there is a serious environmental problem in Mitrovica related to lead mining. Although some people are aware of this and other dangerous industrial waste-related pollution/contamination, there is very little or no communication with the public on preventive and protective measures.

The Law on Protection against Natural and other Disasters outlines the need to inform the public in the case of an imminent threat and during disaster response. However, the culture of safety is, at the moment, mainly related to military security rather than safety from natural hazards. Building a culture of safety is not currently part of the school curriculum.

In terms of institutional arrangements, it is not clear which government department has the responsibility to spread public messages in times of emergencies. There is no unified coordination mechanism identifying and disseminating public messages on vital risks. In general, there is no unified Kosovo-wide public awareness strategy to inform populations, technical personnel and decision makers on disaster risks in Kosovo.

Again, as there is no budget allocated for DRR, disaster management or prevention in Kosovo, there is subsequently no budget at central or municipality levels for public awareness campaigns. Funding for public information is normally allocated on an ad hoc basis in the case of an imminent disaster.

On the positive side, the KRC conducted a public risk reduction campaign in 2010 starting with the observance of the International Day for Disaster Reduction on 13 October. Television programmes looking at DRR were broadcasted, brochures were distributed and round table discussions were organized by the Municipality of Prishtina in collaboration with the KRC. The programme also included presentations in schools. On a limited scale, a public awareness campaign was also conducted by UNDP in two villages near the Trepca mining factory in

Mitrovica. In addition, the AEM has technical capacities and knowledge to produce public messages. It has also agreements with the Kosovo public broadcasting agencies (radio and television) for supplying general public information. However, agreements do not cater for regular awareness raising programmes on prevention, mitigation and risk reduction.

### **HFA PRIORITY 3: RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Public awareness campaigns on risk reduction related to specific hazards and risks need to be organized (e.g. television, radio and brochures) at least once a year during the International Day for Disaster Reduction. DRR champions could be identified in Kosovo (celebrities, political figures, artists, etc.) who could advocate and demonstrate practical risk reduction cases.
2. Provide some of the tools developed by the Macedonia school awareness programme and propose a pilot in two schools within the most disaster prone areas.
3. Discuss the possibility of including risk reduction and concepts of culture of safety as part of the school curriculum with the Ministry of Education
4. In terms of seismology, facilitate exchange visits between concerned academic institutions of Kosovo and the seismology institute of Skopje – a globally recognized institution that provides training in seismology based on its past working experiences (since 1960s).

### **HFA PRIORITY 4**

#### **Reduce the underlying risk factors**

Socioeconomic vulnerability is high in Kosovo – around 45 percent of the population lives in poverty, the economy is fragile and there is limited provision from health, social welfare and employment sectors. Other factors include: deterioration of infrastructure (such as drainage and sewage systems); illegal construction along river banks; inadequate municipal planning and land use; and outdated and poorly enforced building codes.

The ‘mission’ met with various sectorial institutions to understand the extent to which underlying risk factors are considered in their work, and if there were any measures taken to reduce them. Interviews were conducted in the following departments: environmental sustainability; spatial planning (development planning); water management; security; hydro-meteorology; seismology; and industrial infrastructure. Most of these institutions are likely to be involved in DRR and have specific laws or bylaws that clearly outline their roles and responsibilities, with a detailed list of regular activities to be undertaken. However, activities usually involve a contribution in disaster response as apposed to risk reduction measures. All interviewees clearly emphasized the limited capacities that exist in Kosovo with regards to integrating risk reduction measures into laws, strategies and plans. This is quite a concern as Kosovo is in the process of revising many of its laws and restructuring various departments in order to implement activities listed in the laws. Many are worried that revised laws may not be implemented due to the fact that they are not adapted to the realities of Kosovo, and they will

require immense financial resources not likely to be available in the near future. While all recognized advantages of mainstreaming DRR into sectorial planning, the legal basis does not yet support this. In addition, most sectorial departments have a limited or a total lack of human, financial and technical capacities to address DRR.

### **Environmental and natural resource management**

What has become apparent from various interviews is that environmental issues do not seem to be high on the agenda in Kosovo. Environmental impacts of disasters are also not taken into consideration in preparedness and response plans. However, all interviewees saw pollution as an immediate threat, and were worried about it escalating due to Mitrovica Industrial Park. The problem is the management of industrial waste, including hazardous materials such as lead that can have far-reaching social and economic consequences – lead is being transported by air and traces of it are present up to 50 km around Mitrovica, including in Pristina. An Environmental Assessment and Remedial Action Plan for the Mitrovica Industrial Park was developed in 2009 by DEKONTA (a Czech consultancy company) with the support of the Czech-UNDP Trust Fund and the UNDP Regional Centre in Bratislava. The project identified possible environmental impacts, the potential social economic consequences, and the necessary remedy measures to be undertaken. However, according to the management of the lead mining plant and representatives of the Mitrovica municipality, there are no funds yet to implement recommendations of the project's initial assessment. The plant manager and the municipality are left to do whatever they can to lower pollution levels. They expressed sincere frustration at regularly meeting assessment missions that neither share their reports nor provide them with feedback on the real extent of the problem.

Climate change was only mentioned by staff at the Hydro-Meteorological Services. This is the only institution that has the capacity to observe and analyze long-term climate trends. However, since its services are not required by other institutions, it does not conduct in-depth analysis of potential climate related risks. It was mentioned that the Hydro-Meteorological Services would charge a fee for in-depth analysis, which may be the reason why many institutions are not willing to collaborate (see also separate assessment report from WMO on Hydro Meteorological Services capacities).

### **Social and economic development practices**

In terms of mainstreaming DRR into national development plans, the law on Spatial Planning of 2006 does not consider DRR. There is a Department of Spatial Planning imbedded within the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP), which is responsible for preparing and monitoring the implementation of the overall development plan for Kosovo. There is a spatial planning strategy, but the related action plans and management plans are not yet ready in order to complete the operational side of the implementation of the law on Spatial Planning. However, the law is currently being revised and this process could offer an opportunity for mainstreaming DRR – especially knowing that the actual planning mechanism used at central and municipality level does not include elements of DRR or disaster management in general. Spatial planning should not only be used as a vehicle for building infrastructure and supporting economic growth – sufficient consideration should also be given to hazards that could potentially destroy all recent investments in infrastructure.

There was no indication during interviews of a good understanding of the need to mainstream DRR and climate change adaptation into various social and economic activities. For example, agriculture is very important for Kosovo but there are no real signs of risk reduction measures being part of the planning process, including in any food security mechanisms. Various socio-economic development plans of Kosovo are currently under review by the government and this could be the right moment to discuss with authorities the importance of mainstreaming DRR and climate change adaptation into these plans. The department of Spatial Planning of the MESP has a good understanding of this but lacks personnel to support various ministries. However, all agreed that national authorities need first to be sensitized on the importance of DRR and how a lack of consideration for its concepts may hinder development. An important element of the resilience in Kosovo not to be underestimated is the potentially large amount of remittances that family members (that migrated to Europe and the USA in the 1990s) are likely to be contributing to relief and recovery efforts in case of disasters. In terms of disaster insurance, the traditional thinking – that that government will contribute to rebuild damages – is still very strong and therefore no favourable development in this field is expected at all unless there is a law that sets obligations and sanctions.

#### **Land use planning and other technical measures**

In terms of land-use planning, including urban planning, there are laws but most agreed that they are not fully implemented once adopted. As a result, there are many illegal constructions not fulfilling building standards to earthquake resistance and this is leading to increased vulnerability in urban areas, which will undermine the sustainable growth of cities in Kosovo that are facing a constant influx of populations. Kosovo has a small territory thus an urgency to seriously consider DRR into urban planning in order to minimize the expansion of vulnerable areas. Authorities are currently considering legalizing the existing illegal buildings/settlements, but are also tightening up inspections and controls for new building projects (although shortage of trained personnel still remains a problem). Building/construction codes are now under review but some of the new provisions may be impossible to implement due to their high costs.

#### **HFA PRIORITY 4: RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. In cooperation with the department of spatial planning, organize workshops on how to mainstream DRR and climate change adaptation into development planning processes for all ministry agencies involved in planning. The training should include general strategic planning and programming skills.
2. Update the microzonation of the territory and integrate building Eurocodes into the national system. The respect for building codes is an issue that needs to be advocated for.
3. Introduce a new law on disaster insurance starting with presentations to national authorities and parliamentarians on its benefits.
4. Promote the UNISDR campaigns on safer schools and safer hospitals and develop programmes to implement recommendations of the campaigns..

#### **HFA PRIORITY 5**

**Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.**

Within the Kosovo legal system there are a number of laws that facilitate the protection of the civil society and enforcement of good practice. The laws are supported by firm punishments but often limited by the number of inspectors to enforce them.

Additionally, a National Response Plan published in December 2010 provides a framework for a national approach to incident management, although this document is yet to be fully implemented. Within this plan, clear roles and responsibilities are assigned to various government institutions at central and regional levels. Roles and responsibilities are also well defined for local governments, as well as for the private sector and non-government organizations. The National Response Plan updating and management is the responsibility of the Ministry of Internal affairs. It is structured to complement the Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS) formalized in May 2010. The IEMS organizes the management of emergency incidents at all levels, closely reflecting the incident command system of the United States of America. Both these documents encompass preparedness for response and were developed in participation with key stakeholders. Yet both documents are recent products and so far they have only been presented at workshops. To develop community level capacities, the IEMS needs, in particular, to form part of a municipality-based training programme for all the relevant actors.

There are a number of plans within ministry departments on preparedness for response. It is encouraging to hear that many of these plans are the result of multi-agency working groups. At the municipality level the most comprehensive plans relate to the Pristina Municipality, which includes an Emergency Reaction Plan, Fire Protection Plan, and Operational Plan for Protection against Zoonotic Infectious Diseases. These superseded the Risk Assessment Study of Natural and other Disasters in the Territory of the Pristina Municipality. However most plans do not appear to be based on a sound evaluation of hazards, risks and capacities of the country and it is unclear whether such plans have also considered vulnerabilities and marginalized groups.

The Municipalities have a legal obligation through the Administrative Instruction on the Methodology of the Composition of Risk Assessment and Plans for Protection and Rescue (nr19/2008) to complete a risk assessment that can then be used to prioritize the threats to society and plan accordingly. Once the risk assessment (in reality it looks like a hazard mapping) is accomplished, it must be approved centrally before planning can begin. However the cultural perception of risk management is still in its early stages. The methodology plan for risk assessment should facilitate an analysis and evaluation of the risks, yet there is evidence that this is not executed. If such instructions were realized, the adoption of national and community risk registers, freely available to the public, would communicate to the local population the level and types of risk they are exposed to.

According to the Law on Protection against Natural and other Disasters, the establishment of a Unique System for Alarms and Emergency Coordination has been ratified. However, the population majority likely to be affected by these warning mechanisms are not covered by

established institutionalized procedures. According to a previous report, there is a draft proposal for a DFID-funded project, but as yet it has not been approved.

In terms of institutional arrangements, overall responsibility lies with the Prime Minister, with the Ministry of Internal affairs, and in particular the Emergency Management Agency, leading the coordination of all central activities. Strategic decisions are made by an Inter-Institutional Group for Incident Management. On scene is a Joint Field Centre, which reports to a Regional Operations Centre. In addition to this are a vast number of functional groups including a mechanism for early recovery.

Specifically, for the main hazards of severe weather – earthquakes, floods and forest fires – there are specialist organizations able to provide technical data and advice. The Institute of Hydrometeorology and Division of Seismology are obliged to update the Ministry of Internal Affairs and there is dialogue between the Department of Public Services and Civil Emergency and those organizations responsible for flood management. There is also cooperation between this department and the forestry agency accountable for forest management. However there is scope to collaborate more effectively between these parties, to minimize the associated risks in these areas and provide a more rapid mechanism for warning the relevant stakeholders.

The KRC has had a disaster management programme since 2003 and has ongoing community preparedness projects in health, first aid and welfare as well as family links and a school programme. It is obliged to work within the parameters of the Law on KRC and has a Memorandum of Understanding with Emergency Management Agency, created in 2009. Currently it has 5,000 volunteers working within 27 municipalities, all of whom are trained to complete risk assessments and compile contingency plans. Some of these volunteers are beginning to receive training for responding to the impact of earthquakes.

The Red Cross has close ties with the IFRC and neighbouring country units but these partnerships are yet to be formalized. There is also cooperation with the Kosovo Police Department, which is implementing a small weapons campaign.

The Public Services and Civil Emergencies department is divided into two sections: Public Services; and the Rescue and Protection division, which manages inspections, planning and the Fire Service. The Public Services and Civil Emergencies department has recently increased its capacities by forming a team of divers, strengthening its inspection service and planning a series of underground shelters. It also runs public awareness campaigns and began a school programme educating children in fire risk and evacuation.

The Fire Service adheres to the Laws of Protection and Administrative Instruction on Criteria for Establishment and Organization of the Firefighting and Rescue Service in Kosovo. The department has approximately 700 professional fire-fighters across the country, 90 of which are based in the capital, Pristina. The department is targeting the ratio of one fire-fighter per 1,000 inhabitants, yet they currently do not meet one in 2,500. They are supported if necessary by

private sector fire brigades and mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring municipalities. The Service's capacity to respond is restricted by limited equipment and poorly maintained vehicles, dating technology and unconstructive training.

The Civil Protection Regiment of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) is likely to be at the forefront of any large-scale emergency within Kosovo. The KSF is able to deploy 2,200 trained troops geographically positioned across the country. This figure will increase to 2,500 by the end of the year and is backed up by a reserve of 800 staff members. The soldiers have responded to emergencies and large-scale multiagency exercises and have a six-month training cycle. They have also benefited from training in forest fire techniques from the Italian authorities. However, they lack some essential equipment to respond to forest fires and water incidents and the tools for search and rescue operations. The Emergency Management Agency or Municipal Directors for Protection and Rescue can and do request the support of KFOR in times of need.

A further existing capacity are Community Safety Action Teams which were created and administrated through a bilateral agreement between the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the United States Department of Justice International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Programme, to increase the quality of life and the levels of safety and security in Kosovo communities. They operate in 20 municipalities and would be well positioned to support future public awareness campaigns in DRR.

In terms of competencies and human capacity, there is a strong and understandable emphasis on the response phase of emergency management, supported by a commitment to preparedness measures through planning, training and education. However there are few examples of education in measures to mitigate or prevent risk and plan for recovery. It also appears that the production of a plan is not part of a process, but more a result. Planning is an opportunity to engage at all levels, build relationships, facilitate coordination and promote the sharing of information towards a common purpose.

The AEM has run a number of workshops to educate municipalities and departments regarding the IEMS. However, this is yet to be exercised and cascaded to all agencies.

Clearly there are examples of testing, training and validation to prepare for a response in Kosovo. The Ministry of Internal Affairs is responsible for a national comprehensive training programme, a national exercise programme and a national system for the exchange of information. With this in mind, there is a clear requirement for training and exercising strategy to be fulfilled, so that the organization of training and outcomes of exercises influence the development of planning and preparedness work for all actors at all levels. Capacity development must begin by building existing capacities so that lessons identified through exercising become lessons learned.

There are no examples of stockpiling resources, however the government can activate the assets and resources within the private sector. Maintaining an asset and resource register and documenting a procedure for compensating the donors could further improve this mechanism.

In terms of working tools and resources, the facilitation of coordination is clearly focused by a 24/7 Situation Centre based in Pristina and operation centres both nationally and regionally. The Situation Centre, which is two years old, gathers operational information and disseminates it according to standard operating procedures. It appears to have both horizontal and vertical coordination mechanisms (as detailed in the IEMS) but in reality, interoperability and coordination is often more problematic.

The existence of an early warning system is entirely dependant on the hazard and in most cases is weak. There is a national emergency number for the public to raise the alarm and parts of Pristina have a communication system. There are also agreements with the media to inform the public in cases of emergency and the government has a well presented website. During an incident, interoperability between responders by radio communications is currently not achievable. Radio transmissions can be broadcast between operations centres, however this provision needs to be regularly tested.

Critical structures, including offices and operation centres, would be susceptible to the threat of earthquakes. Nevertheless, business continuity arrangements do exist and fire regulations and evacuation drills also make these establishments more resilient.

The agencies involved in disaster management have a realistic outlook on their capacities and accept the need to build partnerships, multi-lateral agreements and, if necessary, call upon the international community to assist in rescue and relief activities.

In terms of recovery, there is no legal framework addressing the recovery after disaster events. There is also no evidence of bylaws or administrative regulations that mention clearly any post-disaster recovery process. Legislation, organizational mandates and capacities are mainly limited to disaster response. In some cases the issue of preparedness is covered very lightly, and there are no links between disaster response and recovery, or post-disaster recovery and development processes. Recovery related competencies and capacities are rather limited or non-existent. There are also no working tools or methodologies for a recovery framework. The general thinking is that in case of a disaster, the government would adopt a response programme, while recovery processes are normally prepared and supported by the international community in Kosovo. There is no national framework for providing funding to the recovery programmes.

## **HFA PRIORITY 5: RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Short term**

1. Establish disaster management coordination mechanisms at local, regional and central levels for the sharing of information between all agencies involved in response. This group would be an exact representation of the Inter-Institutional Coordination Entities as detailed in the National Response Plan.
2. Municipalities to establish a resource and asset register for disaster management. Local response agencies and communities will all have their own capacities and this could be formalized through such a document detailing equipment, expertise, staff numbers and contacts readily available to assist in a timely response.
3. Support the drafting of a strategy to enhance local, regional and central inter-agency training and develop a pool of trainers in preparedness for response.
4. Basic training in disaster management, including the initiation of contingency planning and recovery.
5. The training of fire service staff and volunteers (including the KRC) in basic search and rescue techniques.
6. Organize one simulation exercise every year that will test and validate standard operating procedures and plans.

**Long term (only if possible)**

7. Address the outstanding issues highlighted in the OSCE's status analysis of the Kosovo Fire and Rescue Services. This report was completed in 2008 and there is no evidence to suggest that the recommendations made have been met. The priorities are equipment, personnel and training.
8. The collection and sharing of statistics and data on all emergencies to show trends, susceptible areas and reveal vulnerabilities. This may be as simple as recording road traffic collisions and dwelling fires on a local map.
9. A training package to support the IEMS and National Response Plan, delivered to all emergency responders. This should be supplemented by basic equipment to support the Incident Command System and facilitate multi-agency coordination.
10. Education and expertise in flood management including flood mapping software and monitoring technology.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Integrated Emergency Management System
2. Law for Protection Against Natural and Other Hazards
3. Law on Fire Protection
4. National Response Plan
5. Environmental Assessment and Remedial Action Plan for Mitrovica Industrial Park?
6. OSCE Status Analysis of the Kosovo Fire and Rescue Services
7. Kosovo Spatial Development
8. Law on Spatial Planning

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<sup>i</sup>Hereafter referred to in the context of the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).