Albania – Civil Emergency Preparedness

Aarhus Convention Task Force on Access to Information
Geneva, 2-4 October 2019
Outline

- Natural & Environmental Vulnerability: Facts & Data;
- Legal & Policy Framework;
- Civil Emergency Planning & Management; Stakeholders;
- Early Warning System: Data Collection & Public Information;
- International Cooperation: Raising Awareness;
- Strengths & Areas for Improvement.
Albania - high natural & economic risk from multiple hazards:

- earthquakes,
- floods,
- landslides,
- droughts,
- rock falls, snowfalls & avalanches,
- forest fires & high temperatures,
- environmental hot spots;

Natural disaster vulnerability + underlying risk factors: increasing urbanization, environment degradation during the transition period;

- 86% of the territory prone to disasters, where 88.5% of GDP is generated;

- Average annual losses about 2.5% of GDP, about USD 68.7 million per year;
- Approximately hit by 1 disaster per year;

- 30 years, 1980 – 2010: 23 major disasters: 9 floods, 4 earthquakes, 3 extreme temperatures related; 163 victims, about 4 million people affected;

- Recent earthquakes (followed by heavy rainfall & floods) - magnitude 5.8 Richter, intensity 7.5, resulting in 1528 damaged buildings: 50 residential buildings destroyed, 34 schools, 13 public university buildings, 1 healthcare centre, 2 bridges, etc.
Legal & Policy Framework

- Constitution of Republic of Albania, articles 170 & 174, - state of emergency, acts, measures to be taken;

- Introduces new concepts: DRR, national & local strategies for DRR, harmonization of urban planning with DRR at local & national level, regional strategies for risk assessment, risk assessment certificates for development projects, civil emergency plans at all levels in line with National Plan for CE, list of critical infrastructure;

- Establishes National Agency for Civil Protection (NACP) – currently General Directorate for CE; clear division of tasks & responsibilities of the numerous players at national & local level;
- Establishes ZOS – Operational Situation Offices regularly reporting at CoM and NACP;

- Article 5, Principle of information: Information on risks and activities of central, local and other responsible institutions for civil protection from natural or other disasters is public;
- Article 48, On gathering and processing emergency information and data – NACP gathers information from all public and private entities (Obligation to respond);

- Article 49, On informing the public – Obligations for all public & private entities to inform NACP, media, TV coordination, etc.;
- Article 60, Rights on private entities and NGOs: public information, conduct DRR & CP studies, present conclusions to local & central institutions, be partners in CE management, etc.

- Free unified emergency number 112; Ministry of Interior and Ministry for Civil Protection (NACP);
- A dozen bylaws to be adopted within 1, 2 and 3 years from adoption of the law;
- Financial impacts from January 2020.
CE & CP Planning & Management Bodies

- **Civil Protection System in Albania**: central, local & operational structures; permanent and temporary;

- **Central**: Parliament, Council of Ministers: approve DRR&CP strategies, policies, plans, programs, measures, budgets;

- **Inter-Ministerial CE Committee** – *(Ad hoc)*, led by PM or deputy, highest CE coordinating body during emergency situations;

- **Civil Emergency Committee & Situation Operational Office** – permanent body, responsible for DRR and CE implementation of policies, under PM; SOO – daily gathering information;

- **NACP or General Directorate of Civil Emergencies, MOD** - key institution for disaster management;

- **National Operations Centre for CE** plays an active role through all stages of CE management;

- **Line ministries & agencies**: responsible for CE planning & managing within their scope of activities;

- **Prefects & mayors**: CE planning and management at prefecture or city level; State Police;

- **AAF mission**: Regional Support Command is dedicated solely for DRR&CP operations; AAF provide a significant part of the civil protection capacities;
Early Warning System: Data Collection & Public Information

- **Article 46** on Early Warning System, Monitoring & Notification - obligation for all relevant institutions to identify, monitor risks & inform NACP & other relevant structures;

- NACP, National Operations Centre - 24/7 monitoring regime over the entire territory; regional CE offices & fire stations report directly to NOC;

- Agencies feeding data to National Operations Centre & providing scientific academic advice to various CP bodies:
  - Institute of Geoscience (part of Tirana Polytechnic University) - manages the seismological and meteorological networks;
  - Military Meteorological Service (MoD);
  - Albanian Geological Service;
  - Meteorological Service of Tirana International Airport.

- Seismological services: 3 networks, ASN: 13 stations, ASMN: 34 stations, GNSS - equipped with various digital instruments & fully integrated digital seismograph system using satellite communication, exchanged in real with international partners;

- National meteorological observation network consists of 7 weather stations, 15 agro-meteorological stations, 2 marine meteorological stations, 110 manned climate stations and 15 rain gauge stations.
Early Warning System: Data Collection & Public Information

- Institute of GeoSciences, Energy, Water and Environment - National Research unit, under Polytechnic University of Tirana; 7 main departments, each containing up to 3 research units;

- National Centre for Natural Risks Forecast & Monitoring - CIMA Research Foundation, International Centre on Environmental Monitoring, Savona, Italy – covering fire forests & rainfall, floods; [www.geo.edu.al](http://www.geo.edu.al)

- Daily Bulletins on Meteorological Warning & Forest Fires, emailed daily before noon and published online: [http://www.geo.edu.al/newweb/?fq=cimady&gj=gj1](http://www.geo.edu.al/newweb/?fq=cimady&gj=gj1);

- National Centre for Monitoring Seismic activity: uninterrupted monitoring 24/24 – almost real time informing to relevant CE bodies; record, analyze and file data;


- Monthly Seismological Bulletin; Monthly Climate Bulletin;
International Cooperation: Raising Awareness

**PRONEWS:** Funded by European Union; implemented by Italian Civil Protection Department

**Overall objective:** Ensure increased resilience to floods by strengthening National Early Warning System & improving disaster prevention in line with EU Good Practices

**Partners:**
- CIMA Research Foundation Savona, Italy & Tirana, Albania
- European Centre for Medium Weather Forecast, Reading, United Kingdom
- Regional (Resource) Environmental Centre, Tirana Office
- Meteorological and Hydrological Service of Croatia, Zagreb, Croatia
- World Meteorological Centre, Geneva, Switzerland
- GIZ Albania – associated Partner

**Beneficiary Partners:**
- Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA)
- General Directorate for Civil Emergencies
- Institute of Geosciences, Energy, Water, Environment
- Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration
- Authority for Geospatial Information
- Technical Secretariat of the National Water Council

**Support Areas:**
- Legal and Institutional Development;
- Development of a Regional Flood Hazard Map;
- National Flood Forecasting and Warning System;
- National Public Awareness Campaign;
- Preparing for Membership to Union Civil Protection Mechanism (EUCPM)

http://www.pronewsprogramme.eu/publications/
Strengths & Areas for Improvement

- New legislation; new concepts and measures; DRR, Risk Assessment, in line with EU standards, etc.;
- Steady progress & improved CP capacities, monitoring and warning capacities;
- Increased institutional & public awareness;
- Effective inter-agency coordination among all public & private stakeholders;
- Better coordination between public bodies and NGO activities or projects;
- Regional & international cooperation;
- Increase civil capacities & capabilities; while reducing military engagement;
- Eventual implementation of new legislation & proper budgeting of structures at central & local level.
Risk: luck or choice?

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