

Reporting Agency: UNDP  
Country: Armenia

## STANDART PROGRESS REPORT

No. and title: **00076016 / Strengthening of National Disaster Preparedness and Risk Reduction Capacities**

Reporting period: **January– December 2017**

### I. PURPOSE

UNDP Armenia under the programme “Strengthening National Capacities for Disaster Preparedness and Risk Reduction” aims to enhance and contribute to a well-structured and effective Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) system in Armenia. UNDP Armenia has supported implementation of four phases of the project.

The outputs were defined as follows:

- Strengthened enabling environment for the implementation of the National DRR Strategy and Sendai Framework for DRR (SFDRR);
- Improved coordination and cooperation in disaster risk reduction;
- Integration of disaster and climate risk management into community, local and municipal development.

The Government of Armenia has undertaken serious steps towards integration of disaster risk reduction into development policies and programs. Risk informed development is a key priority area for Armenia. The country strongly supports the idea of localization and dissemination of the best practices in DRR identification, assessment and modelling. Information about DRR and climate change should be accessible to all parties involved and should become a cornerstone for development decisions at all levels.

Within DRM capacity development (18 months duration) UNDP with support of DIPECHO in 2016 started implementation of “*Strengthen community based resilience and environmental emergency preparedness capacities in Armenia*” project to strengthen community resilience by applying a multi-hazard approach for preparedness and development thus strengthening coordination between key actors - including local, environment and emergency authorities, private sector and civil society. UNDP successfully implemented all project activities within this ECHO funded project in the targeted communities and established functional and efficient cooperation between state agencies from national to community levels. UNDP worked directly with the urban and rural communities to ensure the proper participation of the interested stakeholders and strengthen their capacities, awareness and ownership of project activities and achievements. The project was implemented within the frame of Disaster Risk Reduction National Platform (DRRNP) and in this regard a Letter of Intent was developed and signed between the Ministries of Emergency Situations (MES), ECHO partners and other stakeholders. For enhanced synergy between all players and for further enhancement of the DRR NP’s sustainability, UNDP delegated all capacity building activities (trainings, workshops, meetings, events etc.) to DRRNP through the Micro-

Capital Grant modality, which also significantly contributed to the development of organizational capacities of the platform and establishment of functional cooperation and partnership with the regional and city administrations, educational and scientific organizations, ministries, international and donor organizations.

**Main implementing partners:**

- Ministry of Emergency Situations of Armenia (MES),
- DRR National Platform (DRR NP),
- Crisis Management Academy of MES (CMSA)
- Communities

## II. RESOURCES

**Total 00076016 project budget for 2017: US\$ 269,975**

(EU - US\$158,310, TRAC-US\$34,000.00, SRDIF-US\$77,665).

## III. RESULTS

### **00076016**

**Strengthening of National Disaster Risk Reduction Capacities- project (00076016)** aimed at contributing towards building a well-structured and effective DRR system in Armenia ensuring its further enhancement and effective performance. Improved DRR capacities will enable the national structures in charge to systematically address existing and emerging disaster risks in the country, maintaining inclusive and coordinated mechanism for risk identification, assessment and early warning, implementing risk reduction measures and increasing preparedness for effective response and recovery.

The implemented activities based on the project AWP are presented below:

### **Outcome 1. Enabling environment for the functional National Platform for DRR, implementation of national DRR Strategy and HFA/Sendai framework for DRR**

-Based on the joint efforts of UNDP and the World Bank towards DRR capacity building in the country, the Capacity Assessment for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) system. Capacity Assessment recommendations were shared with DRR NP partners thus serving as guiding document to support country DRR capacity development. Based on these recommendations UNDP and WB supported the development of new DRM National Strategy. The new strategy and its implementation plan for 2016-2020 were approved by the Government on April 7, 2017.

-UNDP supported the Armenian delegation in participating at the GPDRR hosted by the Mexico government by elaborating & translating official statements, presentations and providing interpretations services during the conference as required. The Global Platform marked the first opportunity for the international community to review global progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which was adopted in Japan in 2015. More than 5,000 participants were participated, including policy makers and disaster risk managers. During the Platform Minister chaired the Special Session on Early Warning and Information Management, provided the National Statement and held several meetings with the representatives

of country delegations, UN organizations and other donors. It was also agreed with UNISDR and UNDP that Armenia will organize International Conference in 2017, and will host Sub Regional DRR CASC Platform in 2018 and Sub regional DRR European Platform in 2020.

-For ensuring risk-informed and community-based resilience building efforts in Armenia, a 3-day International Conference on “Strengthening Resilience for Sustainable development” was organized in partnership with Ministry of Emergency Situations, DRRNP, UNISDR, UNICEF, OXFAM/OXYGEN, Save the Children, Habitat for Humanity, Armenian Red Cross Society, Asian Institute for Technology, etc. The Conference brought together more than 60 officials from 12 countries, facilitating a rigorous dialogue between practitioners on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in the Europe and the CIS region and beyond, strengthening awareness on DRM governance, education, innovative solutions and capacity development, contributing to better preparedness, and more effective early response and recovery for enhancing engagement, oversight and political commitment of key actors for sustainable, risk-informed development. As result of Parliamentary hearings on “Strengthening Resilience for Sustainable Development” co-organized in cooperation with the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia and MES, the Parliamentary Resolution on Disaster Risk Reduction was adopted by the Standing Committee on Defense and Security of the National Assembly in November.

## **Outcome 2. Cooperation and Coordination in Disaster Risk Reduction**

### **Result 1. Multi-risk assessment conducted in target communities of Armenia**

- City Resilience Team (CRT) established by the order of Mayor of Kapan as a new modality for Private -public partnership on DRR. It has become an established platform with both legal and advisory role for mainstreaming DRR in development of urban strategy and monitoring its implementation.
- City Resilience Action plan was developed by implementing the Local Government Self-Assessment toolkit and more that 60% of its recommendations were integrated into the City development 5-year plans.
- Science-based multi-risk assessment for modeling GIS based multi-risk scenarios was conducted and submitted by the community administration of Kapan to ensure the risk-informed urban development. The project risk assessment and modeling achievements were contributing to implementation of the SFDRR, emphasizing on multi-hazard approach (Guiding Principle 7) for resilience and covering technological hazards and environmental risk.
- Based on the monitoring and evaluation of the Simulation Exercise activities a new “Community Disaster Risk Management Plan” module has been developed and presented to MES for adoption.
- Within the frame of DRRNP, the project team supported the development of Disaster Risk Management National Strategy and its action plan 2017-2021 was adopted by the Government.

### **Result 2. Risk informed developments solutions are incorporated into the community development and civil protection plans.**

- Local Level Risk Assessment (LLRM) was conducted, reports and recommendations were provided to Kapan community administration and were integrated into the City development 5-year plans;

- Based on the project results LLRM tool was finalized in partnership with UNICEF and officially approved by the Minister of Emergency Situations as community based risk management tool.

### **Result 3. Early Warning Systems Enhanced Through Improved Coordination Mechanisms and Tools**

- Early warning system (EWS) in Kapan and Syunik and additional 13 communities were established in partnership with MES, Syunik regional administration and Crisis Management Center. The 83,000 USD for the mentioned 13 communities was contributed by the Syunik Region Investment and Development and Investment foundation. UNDP mapped out the locations in target communities bordering Iran and Azerbaijan, following to which the EWS's equipment was procured with the cost of 73,270 USD and installed in 2017. The entire population of 15 target communities are benefiting from enhanced emergency preparedness.

### **Result 4. Public and private Functional Cooperation network established among key stakeholders of DRM players at national and regional**

- The professional knowledge and practical skills of DRR related public and private organizations were significantly enhanced by series of capacity building trainings on "DRM basics; Making cities resilient; LLRM; GIS and Remote Sensing; and Fresh environment assessment tools (FEAT) were developed and organized in partnership with UNISDR, Crisis Management State Academy, UNEP/OCHA and American University in Armenia. 14 Members of City Resilience Team were certified as trainers for the mentioned trainings.
- In partnership with Save the Children and UNICEF the educational package for schools and preschools developed within ECHO previous phases were introduced, tested and updated based on the feedback and recommendations from the beneficiaries.
- Minimum Initial Service in Package (MISP) training was conducted jointly with DRRNP, UNFPA and Ministry of Health for the members of Resilience Team, medical staff of Syunik region 5 city hospitals and rescue service aimed at introducing basics, key priorities and challenges of reproductive health, child and mother safety and other issues during the emergency preparedness and response. The above-mentioned capacities were further tested through Table-top and Field Emergency Simulation Exercise for 50 mid-to-high level participants.
- During the project implementation, **381-man and 282-women** have participated in project activities. Accordingly, the number of the direct beneficiaries was modified from **381 to 670** and the organizations participated and directly benefited from the project activities raised from **12 to 70**.
- All Project activities, the generated knowledge, processes, and lessons learned were thoroughly documented and effectively illustrated by UNDP and partners by the means of reports, banners, photo stories, case studies, interviews and programmes on local and national TV channels, etc. The project results were presented during the Global Platform for DRR held in Mexico in May 2017, DIPECHO Lessons Learned Exercise held in Georgia in June 2017, High Tech Arm Security Expo 2017 in September and International Conference on DRR in Armenia in October 2017. Overall, during the project implementation in total, **226** articles were published on project activities.
- The project results have been shared with MES, who is committed to scale up and replicate the outcomes of this project regionally and nationally through its' wide net of branches, departments and affiliated bodies. The established partnership will support the ongoing efforts of the

Government, UNDP and its' partners' initiatives at national and regional levels to achieve up-scaling, replication and sustainability. All achievements are in line with Sendai framework for DRR and National DRM strategy and will contribute to a stronger linkage between ongoing DRR and community development projects with national-level disaster preparedness and risk reduction strategic activities.

#### **NAIRIT ASSESSMENT:**

- By the joint efforts of the UNDP, DRRNP and MES, the knowledge and experience on FEAT was utilized after the technological accident at Nairit chemical plant in Yerevan. FEAT helps to identify existing or potential acute environmental impacts that pose risks for humans, human life-support functions and ecosystems, following sudden-onset natural disasters. Based on the FEAT assessment and methodology a joint report was formulated and presented by MES to UNEP OCHA requesting official expert mission to Armenia. The UNEP OCHA mission developed an in-depth assessment report and its recommendations were highly considered by the Government of Armenia for further action in mitigation and rehabilitation activities at the Nairit chemical plant. Currently the FEAT has been integrated in recently developed community DRM plan as a unified assessment tool against chemical hazards.

### **OUTCOME 3. Integration of disaster and climate risk management into community, local and municipal development programmes.**

#### **Anti-hail nets**

- On May 5, 2017 a Statement of Intent (SoI) was signed between UNDP, DRR National Platform and ACBA Credit Agricole Bank aimed at cooperate in mitigation of negative social implications associated with losses in agricultural sector from hail storms, in particularly: join efforts for large scale replication of anti-hail nets in the rural communities of Armenia, develop and provide recommendations on calculation on installation and application of anti-hail nets, consolidate the statistical data on cost-benefits of the installed anti-hail nets, organize trainings and provide relevant support to farmers and jointly develop and publish educational materials (leaflets, films, etc.). The results of the mentioned initiative were presented to the Government of Armenia through various channels by the Bank. UNDP and DRR National Platform provided advisory support to the Ministry of Agriculture in development of regulations to subsidize the anti-hail and drip irrigation installation. Considering the importance and possible results in Agriculture, the Government of Armenia approved a legal base on August 31, 2017 for subsidizing anti-hail and drip irrigation loans from 12% to 2% rate for the farmers. DRR Project jointly with UNDP “Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Mountain Landscapes of North-Eastern” Project procured 18 ha nets and based on signed SoI transferred to DRRNP for provision to farmers according to received request from the Bank. Currently 10 ha anti-hail nets installed by the farmers.

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

- Although the Community resilience team (CRT) has been legally established and its capacities were enhanced in sustainable manner, it is very important to mention, that it has yet to achieve success in term of ensuring sustainable and functional private public partnership. At the same time, it was applaudable, that in a brief period the CRT members started to participate, organize

and conduct their own Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) related events and trainings in kindergartens, schools, hospitals, civic actors and wider public.

- Throughout the project implementation it was also identified, that the level of public private partnership (PPP), especially on the local level is very weak. Based on this lesson, currently the Ministry of Emergency Situations, UNDP, World Bank, Crisis management State Academy and other partners, within the DRR National Platform (DRRNP) framework is formulating a strategic concept note for mainstreaming PPP in the sphere of disaster risk reduction.
- The Table-top and field emergency simulation exercise (SimEx) identified many local DRR weaknesses in its preparedness, prevention, response and recovery stages. For instance, if for the Kapan city the primary damage from a possible earthquake was the only identified main hazard, the SimEx identified, that the secondary hazard damage from the break of the Geghi water reservoir has the potential of massive damages both in terms of human and economic losses.
- It was also identified that the private companies, particularly the mining industry, have some level of internal risk reduction and preparedness levels, which do not reflect to the current demands or realities. Furthermore, these public organizations do not integrate their internal hazard related standard procedures with the ones of the local governance. Additionally, the previously agreed Advanced agreements with private companies for ensuring minimal food and infrastructure security, are outdated. These organizations itself may totally collapse upon activation of strong hazards like floods or earthquake, as they are geographically placed in very vulnerable sectors. In this regard, the recently formulated Community DRR and emergency response plan has addressed many of these issues and upon approval will require mandatory and legally binding standard operating procedure to be conducted.
- During the Project implementation, equal gender representation was provided with minor intervention or request from the Project. However, it was indicated, that at this stage, due to the specificities of Armenian DRM, equal representation on certain mid-to-high levels is not there. To ensure gender equality for the future, it is very important to develop and maintain relevant functional sustainability today in the relevant educational institution and lower-to-mid level public-private positions.
- It was assessed, that there will be significant evacuation problems in case of a major disaster. This issue is especially significant for the vulnerable groups such as elderly, disabled citizens and people with special psychological issues in health institutions. During the facilitation of the Minimum Initial Service Package tool, it was identified, that there is insufficient understanding in hospitals for DRR and reproductive health issues during the emergencies. It is believed, that the hospital personnel have little understanding of its standard operating procedures following to a possible huge emergency.
- From the beginning of the Project implementation there was a comprehensive Cooperation developing between DRRNP and the local administration, which was further specifically indicated during the establishment and development of local DRR teams.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The thorough monitoring and evaluation of the project activities and outcomes, both internal and independent were insured by the following.

- Regular meetings with the Community Resilience Team, City mayor and regional administration were organized during the project monitoring visits.
- Monitoring visits were organized by ECHO colleagues Mr. Jacopo Lombardi, ECHO HQ Desk Officer for Caucasus and Western Balkans in June 2017 and Mr. Srdan STOJANOVIC, Rapid Response Coordinator for Eastern Neighborhood, Central Asia, Iraq and Iran in April, European during which series of meetings were organized with high level national and local officials, CRT members, DRR National Platform, UN Resident Coordinator and other partners.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the Simulation Exercise conducted by the project team and many conceptual recommendations were formulated and presented to the Kapan city administration, Syunik Regional Administration and the Ministry of Emergency Situations for further consideration.
- External evaluation of the project progress towards its objectives and goal has been conducted by an independent expert. The evaluation included the collection and analysis of exhaustive information on interventions and activities and evaluated impact and replication prospects, beneficiaries' satisfaction level, their expectations towards planned outputs and results were qualitatively measured, and revealed shortcomings were highlighted. The evaluation concluded that the needs identified and objectives were accurately tackled by the project.

## V. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

**As of 15 December, 2017**

Activities	Planned Budget in USD	Revised Budget	Expenditure as of 15.12.2017
<b>Activity 2:</b> Earthquake Scenario	\$2,658.00	\$2,822.00	\$2,822.00
<b>Activity 3:</b> Enabling environment for the functional National Platform for DRR, implementation of national DRR strategy and HFA	\$23,793.00	\$34,671.00	\$32,792.00
<b>Activity 4:</b> Cooperation and Coordination in DRR	\$92,769.00	\$147,788.00	\$146,653.00
<b>Activity 6:</b> Project Management/ Implementation	\$52,757.00	\$84,694.00	\$84,420.00
<b>Total for Project 00076016</b>	<b>\$195,176.00</b>	<b>\$269,975.00</b>	<b>\$266,687.00</b>

The delivery of the DRR Project during the reporting period (January-December 2017) is **98.78%**.

## **Project implementation for 2018**

New project “*Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction National Platform capacities in Armenia*” was approved by DG ECHO in June 2017 with the total amount of 214.957 EUR which implementation started in September 2017. The project focuses on institutional, human and science capacity building for the DRRNP which also contributes to the involvement of subsequent financial capacities, by attracting relevant stakeholders. Strengthening and sustaining capacities at DRRNP can bring lasting effect to overall DRM potential in the country and ensure trickle-down effect to other DRM stakeholders. It is in line with the promotion of the implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) as DRRNP serves as a basic structure to support the Government in implementation of SFDRR at national and community level synchronized with the Sustainable development goals.

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