IT 4 Sec Reports

ALBANIA: Capabilities, Organisations, Policies, and Legislation in crisis management and disaster response

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АЛБАНИЯ: Способности, организация, политики и законодателство за управление на кризи и реагиране при бедствия

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IT4Sec Reports 120

http://dx.doi.org/10.11610/it4sec.0120

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CSDM | Centre for Security and Defence Management
www.IT4Sec.org

Sofia, March 2015

Georgi Tzvetkov, Philip Spassov, Vesselin Petkov, and Todor Tagarev, ALBANIA: Capabilities, Organisations, Policies, and Legislation in crisis management and disaster response, *IT4Sec Reports* 120 (March 2015)
http://dx.doi.org/10.11610/it4sec.0120

IT4SecReports 120 „ALBANIA: Capabilities, Organisations, Policies, and Legislation in crisis management and disaster response“ This report offers assessment of the main hazards affecting Albania, such as forest fires, floods, earthquakes and snowstorms. It provides details on the three-level structure of the country's crisis management system and the main role of the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies in the Ministry of Interior. Further, it goes from qark-level specifics to community organisation of crisis management. Finally, it provides information on the main operational forces and resources committed.

Keywords: disaster preparedness, disaster response, civil security, Albania, National Civil Emergency Plan, SEEDRMAP

IT4Sec Reports 120 „АЛБАНИЯ: Способности, организация, политики и законодателство за управление на кризи и реагиране при бедствия“ Докладът предлага оценка на основните рискове за Албания, например горски пожари, наводнения, заметресения и снежни бури. Описана е структурата на националната система за управление при кризи, функционираща на три нива, като се изследва водещата роля на Главна дирекция „Извънредни ситуации“ в Министерството на вътрешните работи. Докладът разглежда начина на структуриране и работата на системата от ниво qark (регион) до ниво община. В заключение се предлага описание на основните оперативни звена и на ресурсите, които се отделят за управление при кризи.

Ключови думи: подготовка, отговор при бедствия, гражданска сигурност, Албания, Национален план за действие при извънредни ситуации, SEEDRMAP

Acknowledgement. The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Community's 7th Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under Grant Agreement n°607798. We thank the DRIVER project partners contributing to the described work. Only the authors' views are reflected, the Commission and the Project are not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

ISSN 1314-5614

Overview

Albania has a total area of 28,748 km2. It shares a border with Montenegro to the northwest, with Kosovo to the northeast, with Macedonia to the north and east, and with Greece to the south and southeast. It has a coastline around 476 km long. Albania is divided into 12 regions (qarks), 36 districts, 375 municipalities and communes, which are the basic units of local self-government.

The four main hazards affecting Albania are forest fires, floods, earthquakes and snowstorms. Among other hazards available assessments make reference to landslides, drought, epidemics, avalanches, tsunami, technological hazards, dam burst and storms.

The national crisis management framework consists of three levels – national, regional and local. At national level, the Council of Ministers leads and governs the national system of civil emergency management in Albania, with the main role played by the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies in the Ministry of Interior.

Figure 1. Symbol of the Albanian Civil Protection

Prefects in the qarks (regions) are responsible for planning and coping with civil emergencies at qark (regional) level. A Commission of Planning and Responding to Civil Emergencies is established in each qark with the task to coordinate activities of the qark authorities and volunteer organisations for planning and coping with emergency. Accordingly, the mayor or the head of commune is responsible for planning and responding to civil emergencies in the respective municipality or commune (local) level. Under the chairmanship of the mayor or the head of commune, a Commission of Planning and Responding with Civil Emergencies is established, and its main task is to coordinate all activities of the local government unit and volunteer organisations, responsible for planning and responding to emergencies.

The principal operational forces or active structures in Albania are comprised of the Armed Forces; Directorate of Fire Protection and Rescue (PMNZZH); the Ambulance Service; the State Police and other Police units; Directorate of State Reserves; Units specialised in mines and technical response; Monitoring and operational supportive structures.

Earlier data show that in normal times the human resources dedicated to crisis management include the following: app. 450 personnel, including the employed in civil protection at qark level (app. 50) and personnel employed in civil protection at commune or district level. Involvement of private companies and volunteers is limited to app. 500 of active personnel.

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List of Abbreviations

AAF	Albanian Army Forces
ALL	Albanian Lek (the Albanian currency)
ALUIZNI	Agency for Legalization, Urbanization and Integration of Informal Constructions in the Republic of Albania
ARC	Albanian Red Cross
DCA	Danish Church Aid
DPPI	Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative
DRR	Disaster Risk Response
EADRCC	Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EU-MIC	European Commission - Monitoring and Information Center
HAZMAT	Hazardous Material
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IEWE	Institute of Energy, Water and Environment
IGEWE	Institute of Geoscience, Energy, Water and Environment
IMC	Inter-Ministerial Committee
IOM	International Organization of Migration
IPA	[EU's] Instrument for Pre-Accession
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
ISDR	[UN] International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
MSNATA	Meteorological Service under National Air Traffic Agency
NCESS	National Civil Emergency Service System
NCEP	National Civil Emergency Plan
NICP	National Inspectorate of Civil Protection
NMHS	National Meteorological and Hydro meteorological Service
NOCCE	National Operation Centre for Civil Emergencies
SAR	Search and rescue
SEE	South Eastern Europe
SEEDRMAP	South Eastern Europe Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Programme
SEEDRMI	South East Europe Disaster Risk Management Initiative
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment Coordination

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP	United National Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHCR	United Nations Humanitarians Committee of Refugees
UNISDR	UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNMAS	United System Mine Action Service
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

1 Policy

1.1 Risk Assessment

The draft version of National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection 2014-2018 [1] contains a risk assessment based mainly on the Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Assessment Report for Albania, UNDP, 2011.

The four main hazards affecting Albania are forest fires, floods, earthquakes and snowstorms. Among other hazards available assessments make reference to landslides, drought, epidemics, avalanches, tsunami, technological hazards, dam burst and storms.

While information on risk of natural hazards in Albania remains patchy, available data shows that the risk level is increasing and is comparatively higher in Albania than in neighboring countries.[2] Albania ranks 41st in the world in terms of vulnerability to landslides, 43rd in terms of earthquakes and 58th in terms of drought risks.[3]

Risk of natural hazards is primarily driven by economic, social and environmental factors, as well as institutional and political context. Factors affecting earthquake risk are anchored in the application of building code and standards, the awareness and knowledge of engineers and builders, as well as in the incentives to ensure that non-engineered constructions are built to appropriate norms. A level of earthquake risk, difficult to quantify, has accumulated over many years in Albania. This risk needs to be quantified and factored into emergency plans and future development policies and plans such as efforts to retrofit key buildings.

Other factors are driving the risk levels related to floods and forest fires, such as rapid deforestation, poor watershed management, low levels of preparedness of local population, insufficient monitoring and warning capacity and the need for better coordination between dam control and emergency flood managers.

A certain amount of risk will not be reducible in Albania and alternative mechanisms are required to offset the economic and social impact, such as catastrophic risk insurance schemes.

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1 The draft is from 19 June 2014 and is available on http://www.mbrojtjacivile.al

2 Two reports outline the level of risk to natural hazards and capacities in disaster risk management in Albania (1) Disaster risk assessment in Albania, UNDP, 2003 and (2) Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Assessment Report for Albania, UNDP 2011.

3 Global Assessment Report, UNISDR, 2013.

Climate change is a further compounding factor, as Albania's rain and snow fall occurrence has one of the highest levels of variability in Europe. Climate change is projected to further increase the variability and will result, for example, in a higher incidence of heat waves according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).[4] These factors may already be influencing the occurrence and intensity of floods and forest fires in Albania; and, both floods and forest fires are projected to occur more frequently in the future. Albania's National Communication under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) identifies Albania's coastal zones, as well as water resources, ecosystems, agriculture, energy and tourism sectors as the most vulnerable to climate change.

From a statistical point of view, the most frequent natural disasters in Albania are floods and earthquakes, with the former also causing significant financial damage.

Table 1. Summarised Table of Natural Disasters in Albaniafrom 1900 to 2014

		# of Events	Killed	Total Affected	Damage (000 US$)
Drought	Drought	1	-	3200000	-
	ave. per event		-	3200000	-
Earthquake	Ground movement	6	47	8429	-
	ave. per event		7.8	1404.8	-
Epidemic	Unspecified	1	-	226	-
	ave. per event		-	226	-
	Viral disease	1	7	66	-
	ave. per event		7	66	-
Extreme temperature	Heat wave	2	3	150	-
	ave. per event		1.5	75	-
	Severe winter co	2	73	237085	-
	ave. per event		36.5	118542.5	-
Flood	Unspecified	1	4	1500	-
	ave. per event		4	1500	-
	Coastal flood	1	-	8000	-
	ave. per event		-	8000	-
	Flash flood	1	11	35000	7000
	ave. per event		11	35000	7000
	Riverine flood	6	4	92484	17673
	ave. per event		0.7	15414	2945.5
Landslide	Landslide	1	57	26	-
	ave. per event		57	26	-
Storm	Convective storm	2	8	525000	-
	ave. per event		4	262500	-
Wildfire	Forest fire	1	-	75	-
	ave. per event		-	75	-

[4] IPCC Special Report on Extreme Events (IPCC/SREX, 2011).

Examples of recent impacts include the forest fires of the summer of 2007. The fires affected 30,856 hectares of forests and 7,139 hectares of pastures. The floods of December 2010 in the Lower Drini-Buna River Basin cost the Albanian economy ALL 2.5 billion (EUR 18 mln), rising to ALL 4.4 billion (EUR 37 mln) when indirect losses were accounted. A report, produced in 2012, estimates the cost of reducing the risk in the lower Drini-Buna River Basin to an acceptable risk of 50 year return period at ALL 7 973 mln, equivalent to EUR 57 mln.

Very conservative estimates of economic losses due to floods, landslides and forest fires that occurred since 2002, put the direct cost to the national economy at ALL 13 bln (EUR 94 mln).[5] If indirect costs were factored in and the projected losses due to earthquakes were accounted for, the projected costs of disaster to the national economy will considerably higher.

Extreme temperature events have had severe impacts in the country, which is indicated by a large number of deaths per events. Landslides and earthquakes are the next most severe hazardous events in the country in terms of people killed.

The most severe technological accident recorded to date in Albania is the explosion which occurred at a munitions decommissioning facility on 15 March 2008, affecting more than 10 000 people. The accident caused 26 deaths, injuries to over 300 people, the destruction of 2,300 buildings and displacement of 4,000 people.

Table 2. Summarised Table of Technological Disasters in Albaniafrom 1900 to 2014

		# of Events	Killed	Total Affected	Damage (000 US$)
Industrial accident	Fire	1	60	-	-
	ave. per event		60	-	-
Miscellaneous accident	Explosion	1	22	10300	-
	ave. per event		22	10300	-
Transport accident	Road	3	42	57	-
	ave. per event		14	19	-
	Water	1	16	-	-
	ave. per event		16	-	-

Some conclusions mentioned in *IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment* (UNDP, 2011), are not included in risk assessment section of the *Strategy*, i.e. the conclusions emphasising the tendency that the less developed regions and social groups are the most vulnerable.

[5] For comparison, according to World Bank data the GDP of Albania grew from 3.687 billion US dollars in 2000 to 12.9 billion in 2013. See http://data.worldbank.org/country/albania.

The South East European Climate Change Framework Action Plan for Adaptation acknowledges that the entire region of South East Europe will have to face increased annual mean temperatures, decreased annual number of precipitation days and increased magnitudes and frequencies of climatic extremes. The majority of SEE countries also share similar vulnerable groups: low-income groups in drought-prone areas with poor infrastructure and market distribution systems, low to medium-income groups in flood-prone areas due to the possible loss of stored food or assets and farmers who may have their land damaged or submerged by increased floods. The first impacts of climate change will likely be felt in the agricultural production, the availability of water resources, forestry and energy (since SEE countries are heavily dependent on hydropower).[6]

The vulnerability of Albania's citizens and the impact of disasters in the country are significantly compounded by a relatively high degree of poverty, lack of infrastructure maintenance, unsafe building and land use practices linked to rapid urbanisation, exploitation of natural resources (overgrazing of pasture, overexploitation of forests and riverbeds, etc.) as well as by the various consequences of the transition from a state-controlled to a free-market economy.[7] Nearly 47 percent of Albanians live below the poverty line. Socio-economically fragile groups being often disproportionately exposed to hazards, the effects of a disaster would negatively affect the prospects for long-term development.

Part of Albania's structural vulnerability stems from the obsolescence of some installations such as dyke systems, drainage channels, high water collection or flood-control facilities and pumping stations. Many of these have not been improved in recent times and their deterioration may easily aggravate the consequences of river flooding. During the winter 2009-2010, severe flooding created a critical situation at the River Drini hydro-power plants and water-reservoirs as well as downstream, in the area between Vau, Dejes and the Adriatic Sea. Albania's flooding potential is further increased by the proliferation of high earth dams constructed on rugged terrain that is subject to landslides and earthquakes. The 2003 Risk Assessment Study of Natural Disasters established that the greatest demand placed on the national civil emergency system would result from earthquakes occurring in Durres, Elbasan, Berat or Vlora. In these regions, only a few hospitals and school structures are designed appropriately and the safety of residential buildings is generally poor.

1.1.1 List of major hazards and risk in Albania [8]

Seismic risk

Albania is characterised by a high rate of seismicity. Albania, together with Greece, Montenegro, Macedonia, southern Bulgaria and western Turkey (all located in the same region), experience almost annual occurrences of at least one earthquake of magnitude ≥ 6.5. Albania is characterised by intense micro (1.0<M≤3.0), small (3.0<M≤5.0) and medium-sized (5.0<M≤7.0) earthquake activity, and rarely by large (M>7.0) earthquake events. Tirana accounts for more than one quarter of the urban seismic risk, perhaps considerably more if the official population figure is underestimated. The

[6] SEE CC Framework, Action Plan for Adaptation.

[7] See www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/86599/Albania.pdf.

[8] This section provides excerpts from the document Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Assessment Report for Albania (UNDP, 2011).

seven largest cities at risk in Albania account for more than 75 percent of the urban risk.[9] Earthquake risk reduction is crucial as most strong earthquakes have been accompanied by extensive land instability (such as liquefaction, ground subsidence, surface cracks, landslides and rock slides) and can, at times, be held accountable for small tsunamis.

Flood risk

The Albanian river system poses the highest risk of flooding to the country, generally of pluvial origin. The hydrographic basin encompasses an area of 43,305 km^2, of which 14,557 km^2 belong to the watersheds of the Drini and Vjosa rivers, which encompass parts of Greece, Macedonia and Kosovo. The eight main rivers in Albania are grouped into six watersheds that transverse the country from east to west. Their mean annual discharge is 1,308 m^3/sec, which corresponds to the discharge of 30 m^3/sec/km^2. Floods are more frequent during the November–March period, when the country receives about 80–85 percent of its annual precipitation. Due to topographic patterns, these floods occur rapidly after water has run through the main river hydrographic network for around 8–10 hours.

DRR primarily has to deal with preventive, preparative and reparative measures aimed at flooding of the Buna, Drini and Semani river basins. In these areas the expected number of flooded buildings (100 year returned period) ranges from 15,500 to 24,000 (± 10 percent), which would cause demands for shelter and/or other forms of assistance for an estimated 84,000 to 172,000 (± 10 percent) people. The implications of disaster related to other river basins are considerably lower, ranging from about 4,000–8,000 (± 10 percent) affected buildings corresponding shelter and/or other forms of assistance for 25,000 to 50,000 (± 10 percent) people.[10] The 100 year return period of West Plain Flooding would adversely affect 20 Districts (out of 36), 341 villages (out of 2,962), 110 Communes (out of 308), about 85,500 buildings covering 7,900,000 m^2 and 565,000 people.

Landslide risk

Albania is characterized by land instability caused by natural factors (e.g. mechanical action of surface and underground water, precipitation, seismic action, physical and chemical conveyance) and anthropogenic factors (e.g. engineering interventions on slopes, the construction of dams, large water retention reservoirs, roads, tunnels and other related infrastructure facilities). The Albanian territory is divided into three zones of natural slope stability – stable, relatively stable and unstable, corresponding respectively to 56.6 percent, 33.6 percent and 9.8 percent of the total territory of the country. Land instability in Albania occurs primarily after massive torrential rain or snowfall. Various types of landslide (rock falls, topples or torrent deposits) are often recorded along disturbed slopes on national and regional transportation routes, in the irrigation water usage or other engineering works.

In addition, hydro-technical works either interrupt the weak equilibrium of geological formations or accelerate existing landslides. Consequently, the largest landslides have developed in the basins of the main hydropower plants of Fierza (the Porava landslide), Vau i Dejes (the Ragami landslide) and Banja (the Banja landslide).

[9] Probabilistic seismic hazard maps for Albania, 13th World Conference on Earthquake Engineering, 2004.

[10] Risk Assessment Study of Natural Disaster in Albania, 2003

Dam-burst risks

Dams and reservoirs in Albania are primarily constructed for: agricultural and irrigation needs, flood control, hydropower and recreation. Presently there are 630 dam reservoir systems in the country, 307of which are recognized as either high dams (height ≥ 15 m) or large dam reservoir systems.[11] Among the 82 ICOLD members, Albania ranks first in number of dams per 10,000 inhabitants. The height of the majority of dams ranges from 10–30 m (524 dams) to 30–60 m (77 dams). Six dams are higher than 60 m, of which two are higher than 100 m (the Koman Dam, 115 m and the Fierza Dam, 167 m). At a height of 167 m the Fierza Dam is the highest dam of this type in Europe. All high dams in Albania are earth-filled.

Migration and urban expansion have led to increased concentrations of populations and material property in such downstream areas. In the event of dam bursts: 246 (57 percent) could affect a population larger than 100; 56 (36 percent) could impact areas with more than 500 inhabitants; and any of the other 57 would affect areas with a population in excess of 2,500. Burst of eight out of those 57 dams could affect the entire towns of Elbasan (population over 100 thousand), Lushnje (population over 37,829) and Divjake (more than 10,000 inhabitants). Albania is planning to build new small hydropower plants; currently only 40 percent of country hydroelectric potential is exploited. Therefore this risk is expected to increase in the near future.

Snowfall risk

Snowfall risk occurs mainly during the period from November to March, and in the mountainous northern, north-eastern, central and southern parts of the country. Typical high snow hazards are road blockage (due to the lack of maintenance and poor conditions of roads) and avalanches. The population residing in these areas (at least 30 cm snow-depth) ranges from 11.6 percent (355,000 ± 10 percent) to 31.3 percent (1 million ± 10 percent). Disaster preparedness planning is needed for such situations that last longer than 30 days (taking into consideration conditions like household food reserve levels or seriously ill patients).

Wild/Forest Fire risk

Forests occupy roughly 29 percent of Albania. Most of the forestland (77 percent) consists of low productivity degraded forests like oak forests (31.8 percent) and scrubland [12] (25.6 percent). Forest areas can be divided into two basic functional categories: productive forests (some 900,000 ha or 86 percent of the total area); and protected and recreational forests (some 140,000 ha or 14 percent). The forests of Albania are prone to fire, especially at the end of spring and during dry summers.

Among Mediterranean countries, Albania is one of the most affected by forest fires. The total area burnt during 2007 reached 127,000 ha, whereas the figure in 2008 was significantly lower at 19,254 ha (11,389 ha burnt in forest or wooded land and 2,080 ha of agricultural land). Fire causes are of both anthropogenic origin (human negligence, pasture burning and, to a lesser extent, arson) and natural origin (lightning). Human misuse of fire, accompanied with deforestation and grazing practices, are among the key reasons for the forest destruction. For DRR management, more training of fire-fighting personnel is considered necessary.

[11] ICOLD World Register of Dams, 1998. See also www.icold-cigb.org/GB/World_register/world_register.asp.

[12] Or “shrubland.”

Technological risks

The main technological hazards for Albania are industrial pollution, toxic wastes, transport accidents, factory explosions and chemical spills. Although the country is well endowed with natural resources, such as oil, natural gas, coal, chromium, copper, nickel and timber, technological risks do not pose a significant threat to the population (except in the case of accidents) due to a low level of industrial activity. However, as hazardous materials, substances and products remain in stock in different parts of the country, DRR preparedness and response are still deemed necessary to properly manage the risk of technological disasters.

1.2 Policy and Governance

According to the Albanian disaster risk response legislation [13] the national crisis management framework consist of three levels – national, regional and local.

At national level, the Council of Ministers leads and governs the national system of civil emergency management in Albania. This includes endorsing strategies, policies, programmes that aim to prevent, mitigate, prepare and respond to civil emergency situations.

Each line ministry is responsible for planning and handling civil emergencies according to their area of expertise. To be effective, this requires coordinated inputs from a number of line ministries. The Inter-Ministerial Committee of Civil Emergencies coordinates the appropriate actions of all concerned institutions through all the phases of response to civil emergency situations. A General Directorate of Civil Emergencies [14] was established in the Ministry of Interior.

Prefects in the qarks (regions) are responsible for planning and coping with civil emergencies at qark (regional) level. Under the chairmanship of the prefect, a Commission of Planning and Responding to Civil Emergencies is established whose task is coordination of activities of the qark authorities and volunteer organisations for planning and coping with emergencies. The 12 qarks of Albania have one full-time civil emergency officer.

[13] To be reviewed at section 2 “Legislation.”

[14] The original name of the structure was Department of Civil Emergency Planning and Response, and many documents and pieces of legislation consulted for the report’s drafting use that name. It could also be found as General Directorate of Civil Protection.

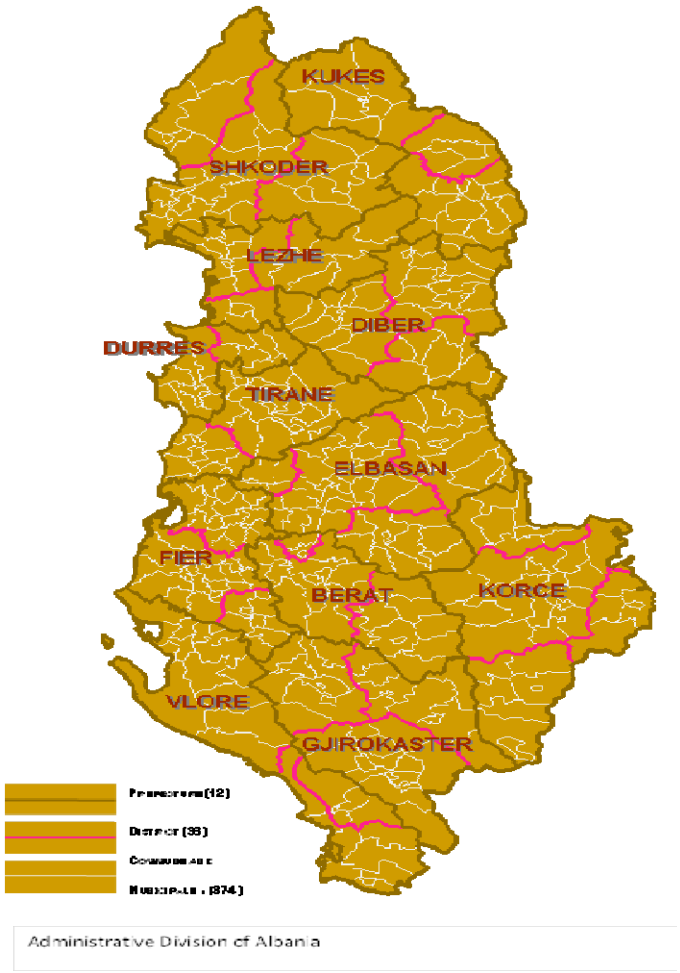

Figure 2. Administrative Division of Albania. Source: IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment Albania.

The mayor or the head of commune is responsible for planning and responding to civil emergencies in the respective municipality or commune (local) level. Under the chairmanship of the mayor or the head of commune, a Commission of Planning and Responding with Civil Emergencies is established, and its main task is to coordinate all activities of the local government unit and volunteer organisations, responsible for planning and responding to emergencies.

The main non-governmental organisation that provides volunteer services for local risk and capacity assessments, public education and community-level disaster planning is the Albanian Red Cross (ARC).

When describing the Albanian DRR Institutional Framework, the authors of Albania's Needs Assessment report [15] concluded that:

> *Although there are powers and responsibilities assigned to the regional and local governments in DRR, the system in Albania remains highly centralised. Regional and local governments do not receive sufficient funding and in practice are excluded from decision-making. Moreover, legislation does not yet specifically encourage community participation in disaster risk reduction.*

[15] IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment, UNDP, 2011, p.10

1.2.1 Strategy scope and focus

The draft version of *National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection 2014-2018* introduces a comprehensive approach toward DRR and DRM including prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. The document contains a conclusion that "The main challenge is increasing the level of understanding of disaster risk reduction concepts – in order to shift perception of disaster risk reduction from "disaster response" towards "risk reduction" this needs to be addressed within long-term development plans."[16] However, it seems that the scope of 'Prevention' is the monitoring of hazards and the early warning. It is hard to find a true "risk reduction" through, for example, requirements and/or actions addressing respective infrastructure, urban and rural development.

1.2.2 Monitoring and analytical support to policy making; R&D

According to the Strategy,[17] the Institute of Geoscience, Energy, Water and Environment (IGEWE) is the institution in Albania for national monitoring and warning structure for natural hazards of meteorological origin, including floods, wildfires and earthquakes. IGEWE is endorsed by the World Meteorological Organization as the National Meteorological and Hydrometeorological Service for Albania.

According to IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment,[18] Albania monitors and assesses its risks from natural hazards through several relevant institutions:

Table 3. Albanian institutions monitoring and assessing risks.

For seismic risk	Department of Seismology within the Institute of Geo-sciences (Tirana Polytechnic University)
Floods, avalanches, heavy snow	Primarily by the Institute of Water, Environment and Energy (Tirana Polytechnic University)
Landslides	Institute of Geo-sciences (Tirana Polytechnic University)
Forest fire	Department of Forests and Pastures (Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection)
Epidemics	Institute of Public Health (Ministry of Health)

However, the DRR Capacity Assessment Report [19] states that:

> *At University level there is no faculty that supports the education of seismic or hydrology experts. Seismologists and hydrologists are usually drawn from the faculties of mathematics,*

[16] Draft version of National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection 2014-2018, June 2014, quote on p. 12.

[17] Draft version of National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection 2014-2018, June 2014, quote on p. 11.

[18] UNDP, 2011, p.13.

[19] Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Assessment Report, UNDP, 2011, p.15

civil engineer, physics and geophysics and are then trained in seismology or hydrology. A project of the Institute of Geoscience to collaborate with IIZIS (based in Macedonia) and other university institutes in the region, for providing postgraduate education in seismology, has not yet been implemented due to a lack of funds.

1.2.3 Policy for Prevention

As noted in the *National Civil Emergency Plan* of Albania [20] the Prevention and mitigation for existing structures, facilities and environmental areas in Albania is a shared responsibility, requiring:

a) *Information*. Essential information includes:

- Seismological, hydrological, meteorological data;
- Technical information on the conditions of maintenance, repair and safety of: housing and transport infrastructure, and essential installations including dams, mines, public and private sector land and marine industrial installations, complexes and stores;
- Technical information regarding the state of environmental areas, such as drainage basins and watersheds, including forests, rivers, primary, secondary and tertiary channels, unstable slopes, wetlands and reclaimed areas;
- The level of pollution, hygiene and epidemiological data as well as level of civic order.

b) *Observing and Applying Standards*. Developing, resourcing and implementing appropriate schedules and standards include:

- Regular agreed maintenance schedules;
- Agreed forecast repair schedules;
- Attaining and maintaining minimum agreed national standards of safety installations and internal and external inspection procedures.

c) *Improvements*. Planning and resourcing improvements include:

- Repair, upgrading, improving and retro-fitting up to or above original minimum standards of use;
- Taking into account new hazards and risks posed to or by the structure or facility;
- Aiming towards European Community approved standards.

d) *Emergency Prevention Plans*. Developing specific emergency prevention plans from relevant sectors for existing structures, facilities and environmental areas, comprising:

- Identified personnel roles and responsibilities;
- Establishing a monitoring and information system;
- Making clear and known early warning steps and procedures;
- Agreeing on clear public information procedures;
- Developing and testing emergency checklists, key emergency contacts and simulation exercises.

[20] Prepared by the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization and adopted by the Council of Ministers with Decree no. 835 (2004).

e) *Training*. Investing in appropriate training of identified emergency situation personnel and joint training with related partners in civil emergency matters.

f) *Investment*. Actively soliciting investment in prevention and mitigation through new and existing partnerships, coherent planning and attainment of industry and EU norms.

The Plan also envisages additional general measures for prevention and mitigation, related to:

- New structures, facilities and developing environmental areas;
- Review and enforcement of legislation;
- Inspectorates, Secretariats and Diverse Polices; and
- Responsibilities and planning at various levels.

More specifically, the Plan (p. 25) states that it is necessary to establish of an efficient structure for civil emergency prevention – National Inspectorate of Civil Protection (NICP). As part of prevention and mitigation structures, NICP will be present in planning, projects implementation and providing licenses. With a structure at both central and qark level, this inspectorate will take the role for monitoring and reporting on the progress in monitoring all the territory. The National Inspectorate of Civil Protection will have monitoring, controlling and reporting roles through supervising the work in progress of all structures relevant to civil emergencies. The NCIP will control the work for planning and implementation of prevention measures for civil emergencies of all state and private subjects. NICP will also control the status, i.e. the level of manning, equipment and the level of preparedness of the operational forces to respond to civil emergencies.

In its work, the NCIP will pursue competences and responsibilities foreseen in legal and sublegal documents/acts such as for undertaking measures against the institutions, structures and subjects which have not correctly implemented rules, regulations, standards and legal bases for prevention, preparedness and response to civil emergencies, as well as the activities for recovery and development of the affected area.

By now such an Inspectorate has not been established. In fact, there is no single authority coordinating the disaster prevention policy. The draft of the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection 2014-2018 (p.10) states that the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies needs to be promoted to an Agency, functioning under the Prime Minister's Office.

According to Annex 2 of the Draft Strategy, there are 15 Key Institutions with responsibility in civil emergencies. These are 13 Ministries, the Albanian Academy of Science and the Albanian Red Cross. Five ministries have responsibilities for the policy for prevention.

The leading *Ministry is that of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection*. It has a wide range of prevention responsibilities, including for flood, landslide, dam-burst, epidemic, and wild/forest fire risk reduction. The *Ministry of Public Works and Transportation* is the principal structure that shoulders core problems as maintenance, repairing and construction of highway and railroad infrastructures, ensures support and organises assessments of damages and resistance of structures in residential and public facilities, water-supply facilities, and channels. The *Ministry of Economy,*

Trade and Energy is responsible for collecting information in relation to emergency needs to determine intervention in public investments of critical infrastructure. The *Ministry of Health*, the *Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities* and the *Ministry of Finance* also have some limited responsibilities.

1.2.4 Policy for Preparedness

The National Civil Emergency Plan defines preparedness as "undertaking of any measures to prepare people and property to withstand as effectively as possible, the effects of an identified potential threat or hazard."

The policy for preparedness is based on several pillars:

- Institutions and Civil Emergency Plans
- Sectorial and Contingency Plans
- Identifying Hazard and Risk
- Awareness of Risk
- Monitoring and Trigger Mechanisms
- Early Warning
- Emergency Public Works and Other Measures
- Seasonal Preparedness and Protection Measures
- Clear roles and responsibilities at National, Qark, Commune and Municipality levels
- Developing Preparedness and Protection Priorities for Albania

Plans

Departments and organisations with responsibilities for civil emergency issues are obliged to draw up their own civil emergency plans to meet their responsibilities and obligations under NCEP.

In addition to that, specific problems, which may be of national, regional or local importance are treated by Sectoral Plans. The disaster management structure at the central, regional and local level is responsible for developing Contingency Plans for specific disasters. There are also specific plans developed to cover important Installations and facilities pertaining to private or public juridical or physical subject.

Early warning

Along the lines of the cooperation between Italian Department for Civil Protection and the General Directorate for Civil Emergency under the Program for Prediction, Prevention and Mitigation of Forest Fire and Flood risk in Albania, the Web-GIS application system DEWETRA was donated by the Italian Civil Protection to the Albanian Civil Protection.[21]

Under this platform is enabled the Early warning System for Floods and Early Warning System for Wildfire and daily bulletins on the related risks for all territory are produced by IGEWE and disseminated to all stakeholders.

[21] Albanian HFA Monitoring Report 2011-2013

In addition to that, under the AL-DRMAP project, more specifically the second component of the project "Strengthening of Hydro-meteorological Services", there are activities conducted with this regard. The upgrade of entire hydro-met network is in the implementation phase through installation of an Automated Hydro meteorological network and Central data management system. The new system will bring significant improvements to the hydro-met services in Albania, but also contribute to the overall hydro-met data availability in Western Balkan countries.[22]

Albania was also part of the IPA Adriatic Cross-Border Cooperation Programme and in Adriaradnet project (information processing system network to support hydro-meteorological monitoring and civil protection decision).

1.2.5 Policy for Response

The NCEP defines response as "actions of forces and means for rescuing people's lives, livestock and property in a territory stricken by a disaster, as well as providing the basic living conditions for the population affected by disaster."[23]

The plan distinguishes between four stages of the response phase, namely:

- Stage 1: Alert. All measures on first notification or information on an emergency situation and serves as a signal to increase readiness.
- Stage 2: Standby. Readiness of all post notification measures or information that an emergency situation or disaster is imminent or has started.
- Stage 3: Activate. Activation arises when an emergency situation has occurred.
- Stage 4: Stand Down. Stand Down represents the closure of the Response Phase, irrespective of how many previous stages have actually occurred.[24]

Albania has a National Operations Centre for Civil Emergencies (NOCCE), under the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies to which all new information relating to a real or potential civil emergency situation must be addressed, where it will be collected and analysed.

NOCCE inform the Director of the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies who informs the Minister of Interior each emergency situation or possibility for occurrence, and depending on the situation issue the activation of the National Civil Emergency Service System (NCESS).

NCESS comprises structures, human and material resources, governmental and nongovernmental, which are involved in the response to civil emergencies. NCESS is composed of both permanent and temporary structures, depending on the activation of the capacities to respond to emergencies. The activation of the NCESS ensures an appropriate and immediate response to all the types of potential emergency situations, whether or not the Alert stage has occurred.[25]

[22] Albanian HFA Monitoring Report 2011-2013

[23] National Civil Emergency Plan

[24] National Civil Emergency Plan

[25] National Civil Emergency Plan

Roles and responsibilities in the response phase are listed by the NCEP. At Regional or local level, the Civil Emergency Officer, Prefect or designated official will commence similar stages of activation to support and complement the NCESS. Public information will be provided by the NOCCE. Any requests for international assistance are made when it is decided that the level of needs cannot be met from national resources and capacities. International Appeal is prepared by Inter-Ministerial Committee of Civil Emergencies.

The NCEP details financial considerations in the response phase (immediate, secondary and tertiary financial implications), as well as four series of standard assessment tools for the purposes of analysis and reporting. These include: First Notification Form (Prepared at Prefect Level); First Disaster Information Report (Prepared by Joint Assessment Team); Disaster Situation Report to OCHA; Request for Line Ministries in Case of Emergencies.

1.2.6 Policy for Relief and Recovery

All the line Ministries and agencies have duties and responsibilities during the recovery phase. It starts with a declaration that the civil emergency situation is over and that the affected public and organisations can start to return to their normal situation.

The NCEP envisages the following steps to be taken in the recovery phase:

- Removal or Reduced Force of Primary Hazard
- Stabilization of Risk of Secondary Hazards
- Procedures for Safe Return or Resumption of Normal Access
- Restoring Essential Public Utilities
- Activities related to Destroyed and Damaged Structures.

1.3 Financing

1.3.1 Investing in preparedness

National financing

The Law on Civil Emergency Services defines that the state budget is the primary financial resource for civil emergency planning and crisis management, as well as that ministries are to be allocated an annual budget for civil emergency planning and response within their respective field of activity.

Specifically, four types of budgetary provisions are available: the civil emergency budget of the Ministry of Interior, the emergency budgets of local government, reallocated budgets of line ministries and the Council of Ministers Reserve Fund. [26]

The Civil Emergency item (within the Ministry of Interior's budget) in the State Budget for 2014 amounts to ALL 788.8 mln, app. EUR 5.62 mln.[27]

[26] IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment Albania, p.10-11

Most of the funds are allocated for disaster preparedness and post-disaster recovery. These budgets are primarily intended for emergency situations, although there are training and development budgets within line ministries. However, the funding for disaster preparedness and response in Albania is limited, particularly at the local level.[28]

With respect to personal obligations, the NCEP makes note that the lack of buildings insurance in Albania means that the home, security and livelihood of a previously self reliant household can be instantly destroyed by a civil emergency event, leaving them destitute and dependant on state and humanitarian assistance.[29]

International assistance

The South Eastern Europe Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Programme (SEEDRMAP) provides financing to investment priorities in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation at the regional level and at the national one. Within this framework, the Albania Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Project (AL-DRMAP) was developed, in collaboration with the government of Albania, covering the following components, implemented through World Bank loans: Disaster Risk Management and Preparedness (EUR 2.9 mln), Hydromet (EUR 1.2 mln), Building Codes (EUR 0.22 mln), and Catastrophe Insurance (EUR 1.6 mln).

The components of the project aim, as follows:

- Disaster risk management and preparedness – capacity building for the emergency response mechanism through provision of necessary equipment, and strengthening disaster risk mitigation planning
- Strengthening hydrometeorological services – promoting disaster risk reduction through provision of accurate hydro-meteorological forecasts and services tailored to the needs of disaster risk managers in weather-sensitive sectors
- Developing building resilience – supporting reduction of risks from seismic activities through the development of improved building codes and mechanisms for the introduction of improved standards
- Catastrophe insurance – providing access to private catastrophe risk insurance for households and SMEs.

1.3.2 Investing in consequence management

The Law on the State Budget allocates a yearly reserve fund. The Council of Ministers is entitled to use this fund in the event of a civil emergency situation, as well as for disaster reduction measures. In Albania, the fund amounted to app. USD 17 mln in 2006, which, according to ISDR estimates, could cover only 0.3% of damages from an earthquake with a return period of 250 years.[30]

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[27] Data available in Albanian at http://www.financa.gov.al/al/legjislacioni/buxheti-thesari-borxhi/buxheti/buxheti-ne-vite/buxheti-2014

[28] IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment Albania, p.10-11

[29] National Civil Emergency Plan

[30] Mitigating the Adverse Financial Effects of Natural Hazards on the Economies of South Eastern Europe

Within the AL-DRMAP project, Albania's Albania's membership in SEE Catastrophic Risk Insurance Facility was secured. Operationalisation of Europe Re was completed as of the end of March 2014. As a result, comprehensive earthquake and flood insurance packages were developed with view to provide homeowners and SMEs with high credit quality coverage.

1.4 Policy review, Evaluation &Organisational Learning

1.4.1 Post-Disaster Assessment

In Albania, the institutions responsible for ensuring thorough review following a major emergency situation are the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies, the Qark Commission for Civil Emergency Planning and Response, the Local Commission for Civil Emergencies and the Civil Emergencies Commissions in the line Ministries. Following operational debriefings to be performed as soon as possible after the end of the crisis situation, a review process is launched, which normally involves inputs from all stakeholders including the affected population and organisations. The review should be documented and shared with stakeholder agencies in a round table meeting. Such review is an essential aspect as it can accurately highlight issues that could be incorporated in future planning.

The review's aim is to provide clear action points to be taken by stakeholders in order to prevent and to mitigate future crisis events, as well as to improve preparedness and protection. The format of the review has to be as comprehensive as possible and to take into account the following:

- The status of prevention and mitigation plans before the event, and impact of any prevention and mitigation measures used;
- The effectiveness of preparedness, protection and response plans during the event;
- Effectiveness of communications procedures;
- Implementation of the National Civil Emergency Service System;
- Effectiveness of early warning and public information procedures;
- Effectiveness of national and local level civil emergency coordination arrangements, including acquisition and analysis of information, decision making and provision and dissemination of information to concerned agencies and to the public;
- Effective undertaking of roles and responsibilities by identified stakeholders;
- Effective drawing on national capacities and their use in response;
- Information flow and effectiveness of coordination at National and local levels;
- Speed and effectiveness of combined responses for: Search and rescue (SAR), Mass Casualty Management, evacuation, providing safe access, clearing roads and transport access, making safe and restoring essential services.
- Effectiveness of arrangements for emergency health, safe shelter, food and non-food assistance;
- • Use and effectiveness of international assistance arrangements and relationships with international organisations
- Impact and value of training programmes in strengthening response;
- Effective provision of information and resources for recovery;
- Special additional factors presented by this civil emergency situation;

- Conclusions and action points to be followed by identified responsible stakeholders;
- Presentation of the review to the Technical Consultative Commission.[31]

The IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment study on Albania reveals that:

> *The current legislative system does not have any law that defines a possible disaster recovery process or how to conduct a post disaster needs assessment. After each event, institutions in charge realize systematic reports for their field of operation but no detailed analysis of socio-economic and environmental impacts and losses is conducted. The first efforts to prepare standard post event reports are underway, but capacity is presently lacking to conduct more detailed analyses of this nature.*
>
> *In order to unify the various reports on disaster situations prepared by various institutions, the Ministry of Interior has developed a series of standard assessment tools to be applied: a First Notification Form (prepared at the Prefect level), the First Disaster Information Report (prepared by a Joint Assessment Team), a Disaster Situation Report to OCHA, and Request for Line Ministries in Case of Emergencies.*
>
> *The Rapid Needs Assessment Reports are practical tools presented in the Civil Emergency Manual that have to be completed by the respective authorities to help them get immediate information on the level of damage and the needs.*
>
> *In the case of a large-scale civil emergency situation, a Joint Assessment Team undertakes a Rapid Needs Assessment. However, prior to this, any contribution should be made by the NOCCE, the Qark Civil Emergency officer or Prefect and communal and municipal authorities using the same format. In extreme situations, initial interventions (mass medical care and other priority activities such as evacuation, search and rescue) can be conducted before or during the Rapid Needs Assessment. Successive follow-up assessments will be made using the same approach, but with greater detail as information becomes available and the situation stabilizes.*[32]

1.4.2 Centralised (national) Lessons Learned system

The action-points or recommendations that have been agreed in the evaluation review are used to create follow up steps. It is the responsibility of the Department for Civil Emergency Planning and Response to pursue the implementation of these action points and recommendations, which should be reported back to the Technical Consultative Committee.

The follow up steps may include:

- Amendments, revision or updating of the National Civil Emergency Plan;
- Amendments to existing measures and new measure to be introduced in:
    - Prevention and Mitigation

[31] National Civil Emergency Plan, p.49-50

[32] IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment – Albania, p.12

- Preparedness and Protection
- Response
- Recovery

- Changes to the operational structure of the Civil Emergency System;
- Revision of specific issues within civil emergency management, such as; early warning, public awareness, primary roles and responsibilities, coordination mechanisms, links with international response mechanisms and training initiatives;
- Specific factors to feed into local and national development plans, including those with international support.[33]

1.4.3 International exchange for Lessons Learned

A number of international projects provide (policy) recommendations concerning the whole Albanian crisis management system or elements of it.

Back in 2008, the United Nations Disaster Assessment & Coordination (UNDAC) issued an Assessment and recommendations following the Gerdec Explosions. The recommendations concerned immediate actions to be undertaken to mitigate the consequences of the blast (such as Immediate clearing of UXOs in the three identified zones), as well as such with a long term effect, e.g. update of the National Civil Emergency Plan.[34]

Importantly, a series of reports within SEEDRMAP provide important recommendations with respect to the crisis management system in Albania. For example, a report on "The Structure, Role and Mandate of Civil Protection in Disaster Risk Reduction for South Eastern Europe" concludes that the capacity of Albania to respond to major events is burdened with procedural operations which could be detrimental to effective emergency responses."[35] Further on, the report expressed doubts as to the effectiveness of the chain of command, and notes that significant capacity gaps exist in terms of quantity and quality of resources.

In 2010, a capacity assessment mission for Albania was implemented at the request of the regional project for South-East Europe and Turkey on disaster risk management. Similar missions were also conducted for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Turkey, Macedonia, Kosovo and Montenegro out of eight of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) beneficiaries of the project. The assessment was 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.[36] The purpose of the capacity assessment was to identify capacity gaps related to risk reduction, understand desired capacities and propose recommendations on how these capacities can be achieved.

[33] National Civil Emergency Plan, p.50

[34] Assessment and recommendations following the Gerdec Explosions

[35] The Structure, Role and Mandate of Civil Protection in Disaster Risk Reduction for South Eastern Europe, available at http://www.unisdr.org/files/9346_Europe.pdf

[36] Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Assessment Report For Albania

In 2012, the World Meteorological Organization published a report on "Strengthening Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems and Risk Assessment in the Western Balkans and Turkey: Assessment of Capacities, Gaps and Needs."[37]

The report assesses that the "Albanian hydro-meteorological sector is more or less disordered and does not have the technical, human and financial resources to meet the needs for hydro-meteorological services in order to provide expected information and products to the Government, the socio-economic communities, to protection of human life, and to improve human and environmental safety. It neither has the capability to properly fill the international commitments of producing hydro-meteorological data to promote regional and global cooperation in production of better hydro-meteorological modelling and services to promote the human safety and well-being."

It further notes a need to create and finance a "fully operational 24/7 hydrometeorological services to support risk assessment and early warning systems and promote operational monitoring, warning, forecasting and mapping of meteorological, hydrological and climate-related hazards."

1.5 Resilience

The term resilience is not used in relevant legislation in Albania.

However, the country has been part of international projects aimed, among other goals, to strengthen particular elements.

[37] Available at http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/drr/projects/SEE/documents/SEEPhase%20I%20-%20FinalReport.pdf

2 Legislation

The constitution of Republic of Albania provides as the main judicial starting point in civil emergencies and the main principles for organising civil emergencies are stated. Part sixteen – "extraordinary measures", Articles 170 and 174 of the Constitution of Albania addresses issues related to emergency and disasters, the acts issued and the measures taken under these circumstances.[38]

In general, the civil emergency planning is established under Albanian Law 8756 of 26 March 2001 and governed by the Albanian National Civil Emergency Plan of December 2004.

The Law 8756 focuses primarily on response rather than on prevention and risk reduction, while the National Civil Emergency Plan (NCEP) covers in detail all stages of the disaster cycle, including prevention, mitigation and preparedness. The NCEP does not feature individual sectoral plans, but is nonetheless linked to sectoral strategies and contingency plans such as the National Environmental Action Plan, the Strategy related to Forest Fires, the Contingency Plan related to Radioactivity or the Initiative on Land Use and Watershed Management.

Other laws include the Law on Fire Protection and the Law on Local Government, which are completed by legal provisions dealing with environmental protection, environmental impact assessments, protection and development of forests and pasture, agriculture and rural area development, safety of dams and dykes, public health protection, urban planning and construction, etc. With regard to forest fires, the Government has issued extensive legislation that defines compulsory prevention measures for the protection of forests, such as the construction of fire prevention barriers, biological measures, construction of forest monitoring towers, the strengthening of the seasonal forest patrol system, prohibition of igniting fires in forests, etc.[39]

2.1 Crisis (emergency, disaster) management concept

The National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection 2014-2018 of the Republic of Albania aims at fulfilling five Strategic Components and priority activities:

- Strengthen national, prefect and local institutions and their regulatory frames;
- Compile and organize risk information and strengthen early warning systems;
- Increase national awareness, knowledge and facilitate the exchange of information on disaster risk reduction and civil protection;
- Increase preparedness, emergency services and recovery capacities;
- Increase financial protection.

[38] Albanian HFA Monitoring Report 2011-2013, General Directorate of Civil Emergencies of Albania

[39] IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment – Albania, p. 8-9

The Strategy includes recommendation regarding the required financing and highlights the importance of regional and international cooperation. The Strategy contains a Results Table with the priority investments, responsible agencies for each activity and timeframes for their implementation.[40]

The Strategy provides the basis for enhanced coordination between national institutions, sustained resourcing and even behavioral change, in particular, regarding the need to address disaster risk in national development and integration plans, the work of line Ministries, regions (Qarks), communes and cities. The Strategy builds on and strengthens already existing plans, institutions and regulatory frames in Albania and further recognizes the role of the private sector and civil society.[41]

> *The Strategy allows Albania to align its disaster risk reduction work with, and to position itself at the forefront of, regional and international agreements such as the Hyogo Framework for Action 2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. The norms and standards to be elaborated under the Strategy for Albania, such as building codes and standard centralized emergency numbers, will also contribute to Albania's accession discussions with the European Union.*[42]

2.2 General crisis (emergency, disaster) management law

The Civil Protection system and the structure of civil emergency planning are established under Albanian Law 8756 dated 26 March 2001 and governed by NCEP of 3 December 2004.

Law 8756 on Civil Emergency Services aims to prevent, mitigate and remedy any damage inflicted on people, animals, property, cultural heritage and environment by emergencies; to provide conditions for public institutions, economic entities and the population for the transfer from ordinary living and working conditions to an emergency situation with the smallest possible losses, for the keeping of order and preservation of human lives against the effects of an emergency; to guarantee the use of available state resources in order to ensure public security, maintain the continuation of the national economy, localise the emergency areas and alleviate the effects thereof.[43]

The NCEP is the most important document regarding civil emergencies. It aims at improving the civil emergency structure of Albania, clarifying the division of responsibilities, and planning the best use of limited state resources to identify gaps and avoid duplication, in accordance with the established legal base.[44]

[40] National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection 2014-2018, Republic of Albania, Draft for consultation – version 19 June 2014

[41] Ibid., p.5

[42] Ibid., p.5

[43] Law Nr. 8756 on Civil Emergency Services, dated 26/03/2001, art.1

[44] National Civil Emergency Plan, p.5

The aim and objective of the Plan is to be an instrument which supports the Law on Civil Emergency Services. The National Civil Emergency Plan draws together and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders. This aims to channel the flow of relevant information, to strengthen decision making, and through coordination, to reinforce the capacity to respond through all phases of the disaster cycle. The National Plan is essentially a coordination tool.[45]

The National Civil Emergency Plan is an overarching initiative bringing together all Albanian and international stakeholders. Many ministries, directorates, and institutions have developed and maintain their own specific disaster preparedness plans.[46]

2.3 Emergency rule

Decision No 664 regarding Criteria and Procedures of Proclamation of the Civil Emergency Situation, dated 18 February 2002 states that civil emergency situation can be announced in a part of the territory of the country, or in the whole territory of the country.

The civil emergency situation is proclaimed when the possibilities and resources possessed in normal conditions cannot respond to the consequences deriving from the disaster. For proclamation of the emergency situation, the following data is necessary:

- The territorial extension of the damaged zone;
- Impact of the damages on distortion of the community normal life balance;
- Scientific data from the respective institutions on the concrete case of the disaster.

There are specific procedures that are set out in the document, for proclaiming civil emergency situation in case of an earthquake and floods. The procedures followed for proclamation of the civil emergency situation in cases of earthquakes are:

- The seismologic institute, within two hours, submits to the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies the preliminary registered data, and updates the data on a periodical basis, until termination of the seismic strikes;
- Civil Emergency Planning and Response Department presents the respective report to the Minister of Local Government and Decentralization after receiving the data the preliminary assessment of the damages caused from the seismologic institute, commune/municipality and the region;
- After collecting the necessary data, the Council of Ministers, decides on proclamation on the emergency situation in the respective zones.

In cases of floods, the civil emergency situation can be proclaimed in the following situations: the water level reaches critical points in some measured zones; one or more rivers that run through the area have run out of the river beds, causing dangerous situations; reservoir dikes and lake dams are

[45] National Civil Emergency Plan, p.6

[46] Vademecum Civil Protection - Country Profile - Albania

heavily damaged; the life of the civil population, of the livestock and of the property is seriously damaged.

The main criteria for proclamation of civil emergency on disasters caused by people, epidemics, industrial accidents and radio-active radiations, etc. are defined case by case according to the effects that will be produced in the stricken zone, and on basis of the existing possibilities for disaster responses in the local government units' level.

The proposal for proclamation of the civil emergency in these cases is undertaken by line ministries, according to the specifics of the occurring event and depending on the competencies and functions covered, in cooperation with the respective institutions and local government bodies affected by the disaster.[47]

2.4 Specific, department/agency-level legal arrangements and regulations on emergency and disaster management

Decision No 532 on Liabilities and Tasks of the Civil Emergency Planning and Response Department, dated 1 August 2003 defines the specific responsibilities of the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies. They include:

- Cooperating with the other institutions for drafting and updating of the national plan on the civil emergency response;
- Drafting plans for completion and updating of reserves of civil emergencies in compliance with the national plan of civil emergencies;
- Management of the civil protection system and coordination of state and non-state structures connected with it;
- Preparation, pursuance and implementation of sub-statutory acts on planning and response against the civil emergencies;
- Organization of international bilateral and multilateral co-operation relations on civil emergency issues, fire protection and humanitarian aid.

The specific tasks of the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies incorporate:

- Implements, together with other institutions, policies of the Council of Ministers in the field of civil emergencies planning for response, fire protection and rescue and helps in creation, use, and distribution of reserve emergency goods, including food, material and monetary goods;
- Cooperates with domestic institutions and public enterprises to assess the emergency situations on basis of which the national plan of civil emergencies is built, and organizes the work for its updating on a periodical basis;

[47] Decision No 664 regarding Criteria and Procedures of Proclamation of the Civil Emergency Situation, dated 18. 02 2002

- Follows in continuity the situation of protection from fire and the civil emergency situation all over the territory of the country, in the region and wider, and plans action measures against them;
- Plan funds for studies from the public enterprises for the civil emergency prevention and response;
- Every six months prepares a report for the overall situation of civil emergency planning and response;
- Provides all the necessary data on threatening risks and emergency situations to the Inter-ministerial Committee of Civil Emergencies, and provide possibilities for a material support of operations for civil emergency response;
- Plans and defines the rules according to which the financial and material sources are used in the cases of civil emergencies;
- Coordinates the work of central institutions with units of the local government on the civil emergency responses;
- Coordinates the organization and equipment of the active and supportive structures of the civil emergency service;
- Requests data regarding the civil emergency response, communicating directly with the standing and temporary structures of civil emergency service in the central government level, in a regional and municipality/commune level;
- Organizes, implements and monitors the data system in a national level on the civil emergency situations;
- Enters into contracts with associations and bodies that offer assistance for realization of the tasks given in the plan on civil emergency response and on creation of reserves;
- Organizes and leads conferences, seminars and workshops for the national, regional and local civil emergency staffs;
- Processes the public education programs and of training of state and non-state structures in the civil defence field;
- Guides the responsible structures on the way of realization of the public opinion awareness and sensitization on civil emergencies and fire fighting;
- Coordinates the work for assessment of the caused damages and rehabilitation from natural disasters or other disasters in compliance with the respective legal and by-law acts;
- Controls application of the protective and preventive measures from state and non-state subjects all over the territory of the country for civil emergency responses and fire fighting;
- Controls the way how the material and financial sources allocated by the state budget, or by other state bodies in the case of civil emergencies for the central and local bodies are used;
- Controls distribution and way the reserve emergency goods are used, making sure that distribution and usage is made in compliance with the National Plan on Civil Emergencies and with the legal and sub-statutory acts in power;
- Organizes inter-ministerial monitoring groups on management of the civil emergency system.[48]

[48] National Civil Emergency Plan, p.10-11

2.5 Specific to the regional and local authorities legal arrangements and regulations on emergency and disaster management

Law 8756 on Civil Emergency Services sets out the specific responsibilities of the Inter-Ministerial Committee of Civil Emergencies, the Ministry of Interior,[49] the Department for Civil Emergency Planning and Response, the technical consultative Commission, other public instituions and ministries, and defines the organisation of civil emergency planning and response on qark (regional), municipality and at commune level.[50]

Further, the National Civil Emergency Plan specifies the organization of the National System of Management of Civil Emergencies in Albania at national, qark and at municipal and commune levels.

It is the responsibility of authorities at qark, commune and municipal levels to develop contingency plans of their own, which all feed into the National Civil Emergency Plan, and the procedures, roles and responsibilities which it describes.

Municipalities and communes have responsibility for preparedness, planning and undertaking civil emergency response for situations developing in their territories. Every municipality and commune, establish and maintain a system of:

- Early warning and notification of key structures,
- Alarm and evacuation of population,
- Squads and other active structures prepared to prevent, mitigate and respond to civil emergency situations,
- Undertaking and administering rehabilitation activities for affected area.[51]

According to the Law, the Council of Minister calls for the creation of the Inter-Ministerial Committee of Civil Emergencies and appoints the appropriate staff for it. The Committee is responsible for coordinating the work of all other civil emergency services, decides on the usage of state resources to overcome the situation and in case of a national civil emergency appoints the leadership to manage the coordination.

The Ministry of Interior is responsible for a range of managerial and planning duties in cases of an emergency including the development and implementation of the national plan on civil emergencies. The Ministry also monitors, on a national level, the information system on civil emergencies and reports to the Council of Ministers every 6 months regarding the level of civil emergency preparedness of structures throughout the country. Many of the aforementioned duties of the Ministry are shared, if not regulated, by the Department for Civil Emergency Planning and Response , which is an organ established within the Ministry. The Department plays an important coordination

[49] Previously Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization

[50] Law 8756 on Civil Emergency Services, Chapter II, Chapter III

[51] Vademecum Civil Protection - Country Profile - Albania

role in the crisis management system and ensures the coordination between national, prefecture, commune and municipal level civil emergency structures.

The Department's role is supported by the Council of Minister's Decision No. 532 on the "Responsibilities and Duties of the Department of Planning for and Overcoming Civil Emergencies" adopted in August 2003.

The Director of the Department has the authority to call the Technical Advisory Commission of Civil Emergencies which includes specialists from ministries, various institutions and operational forces throughout the country. The Technical Advisory Commission has another source of legal basis, namely the Council of Minister's Decision No. 663, the "Constitution, Functioning and Responsibilities of the Technical-Advisory Commission of Emergency Specialists", adopted in December 2002.[52]

2.6 Legal regulations on the involvement of volunteers and specialised NGOs

Decision 533, dated 1 August 2003, on Citizen Involvement on Civil Emergency Prevention and Response defines the involvement of citizens in crisis situations. It specifies that in case of civil emergencies, the head of the operation at central/regional level, requests the region's prefecture the engagement of the capable citizens, according to the needs scale. The Prefect, in cooperation with the mayor/commune head, orders activization of citizens and plans their involvement in the operational structures, functioning for civil emergency prevention and response in the region's territory.

The Regional Prefect, through the civil registration offices in municipalities and communes, ensures data and keeps records on the citizens living in the territory of the region, aged 18 to 55 for the women and 18 to 60 for men.[53]

According to article 24 of the Law 8756 on Civil Emergency Services, the service of volunteers is organised for responding to emergencies. Volunteers may be any Albanian citizens over 18 years old who have received basic training in responding to emergency situations and accept to participate. During emergency situations foreign citizens can also be admitted to participate as volunteers.

Persons who volunteer to participate in rescue operations have the rights for the period they are active in the rescue operation to keep their job, to receive full payment from their employers and to insurance in case of an accident.[54]

[52] Comparative Research of Emergency Response Legislation: Albania, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, p.5

[53] Decision no 533, dated 1.8. 2003, on Citizen Involvement on Civil Emergency Prevention and Response

[54] Law 8756 on Civil Emergency Services, Chapter IV, art.24

Economic entities and institutions, which in the pursuance of their activities use, produce, transport or store hazardous substances are obliged to plan, organise and implement, on their own expenses, services for responding to emergencies within their area of activity.

In addition they have to develop plans for emergency situations and implement preventive measures within their area of activity; to notify their personnel as well as the respective municipal or commune authority about an imminent risk; to organise, when necessary, evacuation of their employees, set up their own organisation for responding to an emergency situation within their area of activity; and to provide training to their employees. The Council of Ministers determines in subordinate legal act what constitutes hazardous substances, which create threat of emergency situations.[55]

2.7 Legal regulations for international engagements of first responders and crisis managers

The Council of Ministers has the overall responsibility for civil emergency planning and response in the Republic of Albania. Furthermore, it is responsible for arranging and specifying the procedures for international assistance in the event of emergencies.[56]

The Directorate for Civil Emergency Planning and Response can request the assistance of national and international organisations, nongovernmental organisations and private volunteer organisations to deal with civil emergencies.[57]

[55] Law 8756 on Civil Emergency Services, Chapter V, art.30

[56] Ibid., Chapter I, art.5

[57] Ibid., Chapter IV, art.25

3 Organisation

3.1 Organisational chart

The crisis management system in Albania consists of permanent and temporary structures at central level, qark (county) and local level. Through these structures, each ministry, department or institution, has specific and responsibilities, for all the stages of the emergency management cycle.

At national level the Council of Ministers chairs the national management system of civil emergencies in Albania. It approves the strategies, policies and programs which aim at prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response to civil emergency situations. The Council of Ministers pronounces the state of civil emergency in a given area or all over the country. After the pronouncing of the state of civil emergency, the Council of Ministers establishes the Inter-Ministerial Committee of Civil Emergencies. The Inter-Ministerial Committee of Civil Emergencies coordinates the activities of all the institutions involved in all the stages of the response to the state of civil emergency. The Inter-Ministerial Committee involves key ministers (i.e., the Minister of Interior, Minister of Defence, Minister of Environment and Minister of Health) and usually acts for a period of 10 days.

The Ministry of Interior implements the policies of the Council of Ministers in the fields of planning and dealing with civil emergencies. The Department of Civil Emergency, Planning and Response is the key institution for disaster management. Through this permanent structure the Ministry monitors the state of the emergency in the entire territory of Albania, whereas in calm situations and in case of low scale emergencies cooperates with central institutions and structures, involved in the issues of civil emergencies. This Department has three subordinated units: Directorate for Civil Emergency Planning and Response, Directorate of Fire-fighting and Rescue and the National Operations Centre for Civil Emergency.[58]

At qark or regional level, the regional prefect is responsible for planning and dealing with civil emergencies at regional level. Under the chairmanship of the prefect, the Commission of Planning and Responding to Civil Emergencies is established with the task of coordination of the activities of the regional authorities and volunteer organisations for planning and dealing with the emergency situation. At each of the 12 qarks in Albania, a civil emergency officer is appointed.

At local, municipality and commune level, the mayor or the head of commune is responsible for planning and responding to civil emergencies in the respective municipality or commune. Under the chairmanship of the mayor or the head of commune, the Commission of Planning and Responding with Civil Emergencies is established, and its main task is to coordinate all activities of the local government unit and volunteer organisations, responsible for planning and responding to emergencies.[59] Every municipality and commune in Albania has a designated official with responsibility for civil emergency matters, who benefits from instruction in the standardised training

[58] National Civil Emergency Plan,p.9

[59] Albanian HFA Monitoring Report 2011-2013, General Directorate of Civil Emergencies of Albania, p. 2-3

curriculum, and through the frequent necessity for early warning, standby and response in many areas.[60]

Each Ministry is responsible for the planning and management of civil emergencies according to their scope of activity. Their activities are incorporated in all the stages of the emergency management cycle and as appropriate they play a leading or supporting part, depending on the nature of the emergency.

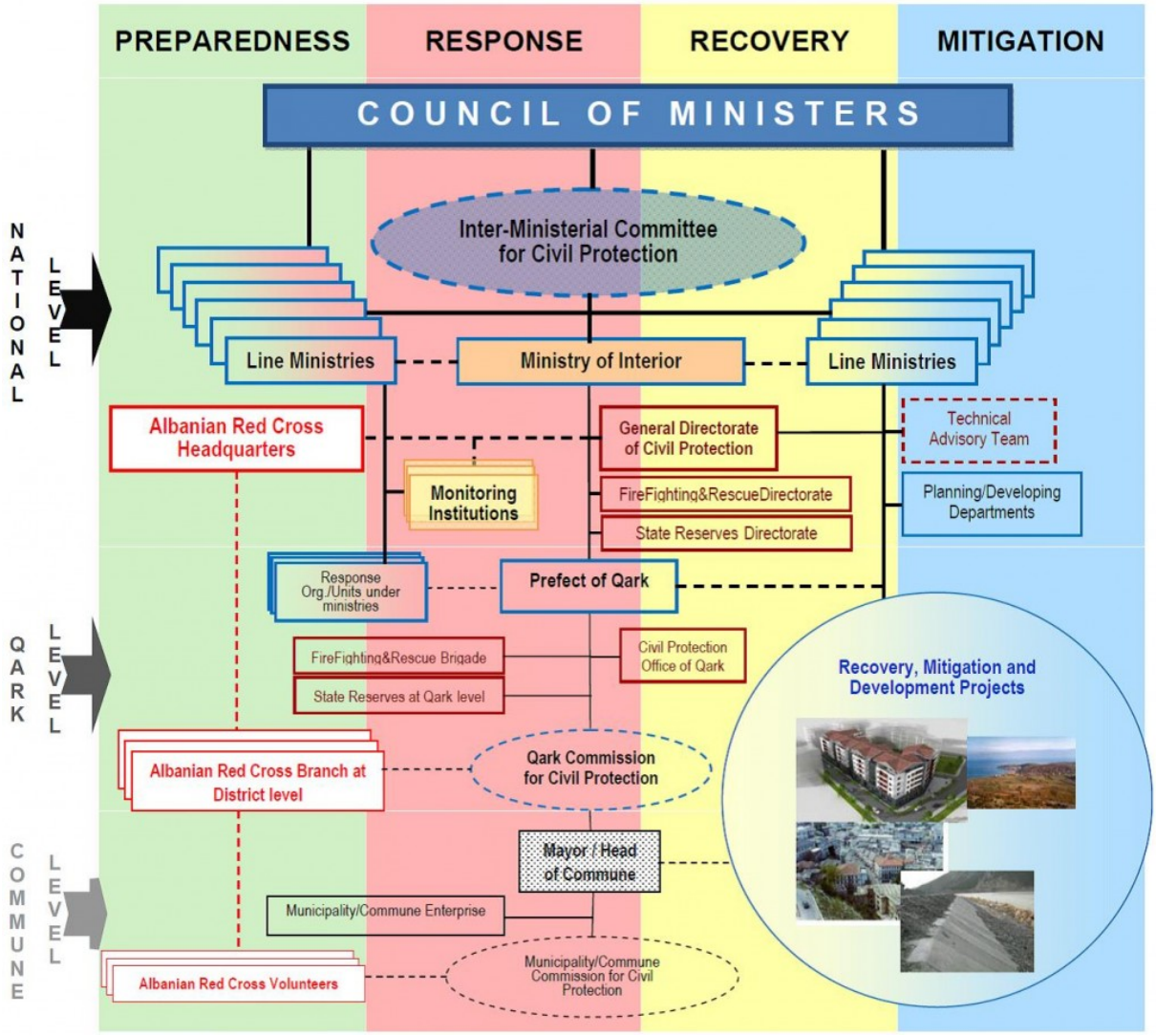

Figure 3. Organisation Chart of Civil Protection System in Albania.[61]

The principal operational forces or active structures in Albania are comprised of the Armed Forces; Directorate of Fire Protection and Rescue (PMNZZH); The Ambulance Service; The State Police and

[60] International CEP Handbook 2009, p.12-13

[61] Source: http://www.mbrojtjacivile.al/?page_id=774

other Police units; Directorate of State Reserves; Units specialised in mines and technical response; Monitoring and operational supportive structures.

These structures have specific roles, tasks and responsibilities for all the phases of the civil emergency management cycle, and it is essential that they cooperate closely with each other to provide the most effective response possible.[62]

The National Operations Centre for Civil Emergencies is at the very centre of civil emergency management in Albania. It plays an active role through all four stages of civil emergency management.

The Albanian Red Cross is the main non-government organisation dealing with emergencies and crises. It is a voluntary organisation, which operates in all the Albanian territory with its Head Quarters based in Tirana, has 12 branches and 40 sub-branches at Qark, Commune and Municipality and District levels.

3.2 Organisational cooperation

Inter-ministerial cooperation

The NCEP outlines the roles and responsibilities of line ministries and inter-ministerial bodies in the crisis management cycle.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee of Civil Emergencies coordinates the actions of all involved institutions through all the phases of response to civil emergency situations. The Inter-Ministerial Committee undertakes, among others, the following tasks:

- Prepares an appeal for international relief
- Coordinates the actions and activities of national and local government institutions, the Albanian Red Cross, various volunteers and donors
- Plans, and requests their engagement
- Requests from the Council of Ministers to draw upon the State Reserves
- Supervises the process of calculating and estimating the damage incurred by the disaster situation and identifies the potential means for the rehabilitation of the disasteraffected area, and propose possible solutions to the Council of Ministers
- Appoints the Head of Operations, who shall be responsible for the administration and implementation of the civil emergency operation

The Head of Operations is the leader of the response activities, and coordinates the management of the civil emergency operation in the affected area. The Head of Operations has the responsibility to:

- Supervises all the active operational and supporting structures necessary for responding to the civil emergency situation

[62] National Civil Emergency Plan, p.11

- Is assisted by the Civil Emergency Management Team -task force that functions near the National Operations Centre for Civil Emergencies in managing the civil emergency operation
- Consults with heads of active operational structures, heads of monitoring structures and supporting operational structures, as well as other managers and specialists employed in the institutions involved in the National Civil Emergency Plan
- Follows the involvement of international relief teams and implement all necessary measures and requests to facilitate their intervention and achieve maximum results in civil emergency response
- Issue appropriate orders and directions for the management of operations of response to the civil emergency situation
- Briefs the Inter-Ministerial Committee and performs the tasks assigned by it.
- Arranges the involvement of operational forces and other groups and individuals that are willing to contribute with their efforts to overcome the situation
- Cooperates with and coordinates the actions of other operations leaders at different levels and those of local government.[63]

Requests for international assistance to Albania are made only when it is decided that the level of needs cannot be met from national resources and capacities. International appeal is prepared by Inter-Ministerial Committee and procedures are implemented by Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence. International assistance can be solicited, or offered, as financial contributions, in kind donations (food, tents, blankets, medical supplies etc.), or specialist services (Search and Rescue Teams, logistics handling teams etc.). The Head of Operations, Inter Ministerial Committee, closely supported by the General Director of Civil Emergency will determine the requirements for international assistance.

Some unsolicited assistance may arrive in country spontaneously and without being requested. This needs to be managed correctly in the same method as the requested relief assistance. Non-acceptance of unsuitable or unnecessary national and international assistance is the responsibility of Inter-Ministerial Committee/ Ministry of Interior advised by the Head of Operations and the Department of Civil Emergency.

The effective coordination of international assistance places a huge burden on the national response system. Assistance in this coordination can be requested from the United Nations Agencies, EU structures, NATO and from the countries.

The Head of Operations is responsible for providing information on expected donor assistance to the Customs, Immigration and Quarantine Services to facilitate this process at entry points. In case of an emergency in neighbouring countries, involving displaced people crossing the border, the customs, immigration, and quarantine must be prepared to facilitate the appropriate measures of the State. [64]

[63] National Civil Emergency Plan, p.12

[64] Vademecum Civil Protection - Country Profile - Albania

International cooperation

Albania has signed numerous cross-border and international agreements for bilateral cooperation for civil emergency support with Austria, Croatia, Greece, Italy and Turkey and also agreements are under discussion with Montenegro and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Additionally, agreement for Cooperation in the Forecasting, Prevention, and Mitigation of Natural and Technological Disasters between the Governments of Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Slovenia, was signed on 18 June 1992, to which Albania acceded later. Albania is also a member of the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI), launched by the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

Other multinational agreements in the area of civil protection, to which Albania is a party, include:

- Declaration on cooperation in disaster preparedness and prevention in south Eastern Europe singed 5 June 2002;
- Memorandum of Understanding on the Institutional Framework of the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South Eastern Europe, signed 24 September 2007;
- Council of Europe: Resolution 87(2): Open Partial Agreement on the Prevention of, Protection against, and Organisation of Relief in Major Natural and Technological Disasters, Albania signed the accession on the 15 May 1993;
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – Regional Seas Programme: Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution. (The Barcelona Convention) Barcelona, 16 February 1976;
- Protocol concerning cooperation in combating pollution in the Mediterranean Sea by oil and other harmful substances in cases of emergency;
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE): Convention on the Trans boundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, signed on 18 March 1992, ratified 05 January 1994.[65]

On the civil-military cooperation side, EU and Albania signed a framework agreement for the participation of Albania in EU crisis management operations. On 5 June 2012 the European External Action Service and the Government of Albania inked an agreement, making Albania a partner in the area of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy. The agreement set out a legal framework for possible future Albanian participation in the full range of EU-led military operations and civilian missions, and was a step towards more structured cooperation between the EU and Albania in the security field.

The World Bank is actively contributing to DRR goals in Albania, not only through the Albanian Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Project (under the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN ISDR) supported by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery), but also through the Land Administration and Management Project and the Energy Community of South East Europe APL Programme (Albanian Dam Safety).

[65] Vademecum Civil Protection - Country Profile - Albania

4 Procedures

4.1 Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Guidelines

The National Civil Emergency Plan (NCEP) details seven procedures concerning the flow of information and notification in case of natural or man-made disasters. These concern the following cases:

1 Earthquakes
2 Industrial Incident
3 HAZMAT Transportation incident
4 Sea incident
5 Air incident
6 Terrorist Attack
7 Dam or Dyke collapse

The ammunition blast of 15 March2008 shows how the Albanian crisis management systems works in practice.

The factory where the blast occurred was located in the village of Gerdec, app. 15 km west of Tirana. On site, there was an ongoing program to dispose old military ordnances. The explosion sent artillery and mortar shells over nearby residential neighbourhoods destroying houses and shattering windows across the villages of Gerdec, Marqinet, Marikaj and the city of Vore. Many secondary explosions continued through the night until the early hours of the next day.

The Government declared the zone a “Disaster Area” and advised that inhabitants would not be allowed to return until the area was deemed safe. The Durres-Tirana highway was also closed to traffic whilst authorities assessed the situation. It was later reopened on the next day. Three risk zones (High, Medium and Low) were defined.

In accordance with the NCEP, an Inter-Ministerial Committee activated soon after the incident, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. The Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) and civil authorities cordoned off the area and started the search for victims as soon as it was relatively safe to access zone. Surface clearing in zone two and three is being carried out in cooperation by the AAF and Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) teams/specialists from DanChurchAid, Italy and Sweden.

Approximately 600 evacuees from the affected areas are housed in three facilities in Durres – two owned by MoI and MoD and a privately owned hotel. The remaining affected population is staying with friends or relatives in the area of Vore according to the authorities and the Albanian Red Cross.

Through the Albanian Red Cross and local authorities, food and non-food items were made available. Furthermore, trauma counselling, teaching for primary school students and social activities for children were provided. Secondary school students as well as evacuees who had jobs were transported from the government facilities in Durres to and from Vore and Tirana on a daily basis.

The Albanian Red Cross engaged in a campaign for solidarity with the persons affected in Gerdec. 25 groups of volunteers were sent to help the persons injured, and their families, in the Military Hospital and the Hospital of Durres.

In addition to that, United Nations Disaster Assessment & Coordination (UNDAC) was deployed to Albania on 20 March to support the IMC.

The UNDAC team received the following mission objectives:

- to assess the overall situation with a focus on the needs;
- to evaluate the environmental impact of the explosion and provide analysis of samples of soil and ground water;
- to provide coordination support to the government of Albania;
- to provide the international community, UN and the government with short-mid- and long term recommendations.[66]

The government carried out an initial damage assessment for all affected structures, refurbishing and livestocks. The findings were forwarded the National Authority of Housing for economic evaluation. The evaluation was based on market prices. Discussions between the authorities and the affected population concluded that the affected population preferred to receive a cash grant for reconstruction rather than state-organized rebuilding. Between USD 600 and USD 2500 were made available per family. Further financial assistance was to be provided for domestic supplies. A special financial contribution was made to families who lost one or more of their members. A total of 156 mln Albanian lek had been provided by the government to the affected families as of 28 March 2008.

4.2 Operations planning

NCEP stipulate that all departments and organisations, public, private sector and NGOs should have an emergency or contingency plan for protecting their property and assets in case of an emergency situation, as well as to provide the best possible service during the emergency situation, and the most rapid recovery afterwards. The outline and content of civil emergency, contingency and sectorial plans are provided in the Civil Emergency Manuals, which are part of the National Civil Emergency Curricula. [67]

These plans could be:

[66] UNDAC MISSION REPORT Gerdec Explosions, Albania, 15 March 2008

[67] National Civil Emergency Plan, p.27

- Sectorial Plans, covering specific problems, which may be of national, regional or local importance.
- Contingency Plans, designed by the disaster management structure of central, regional and local level for specific disasters, which may happen in the near future. Usually, contingency plans are used for transitory periods until the Emergency Plans are prepared. Contingency plans may be developed for seasonal or new risks/hazards or emergency that not covered by the main plan.
- Emergency Plans are specific plans developed to cover important Installations and facilities pertaining to private or public juridical or physical subject. These provide protection measures for human life and property and foresee activities to overcome civil emergencies through available capacities and provision of assistance from outside, if necessary.[68]

4.3 Crisis communication to general public; Alert system; Public Information and Warnings

In Albania three separate organisations provide national weather forecasting: the Institute of Environment, Water and Energy (IEWE), the Military Meteorological Service (MMS) under Albanian Ministry of Defense and the Meteorological Service under National Air Traffic Agency (MSNATA). Besides them, there is also one private company performing weather forecast.[69]

Institute of Energy, Water and Environment (IEWE) produces general forecast for 24 hours, 3 and 5 days and 10 days outlooks. IEWE`s operational forecasting is based on use of printed analysis and forecast products from international forecasting centers and from the Montenegrin NMHS. The IEWE forecasters do not have access to any real-time data. IEWE has 2 duty forecasters and it does not have capacity to operate 24/7 weather forecasting services.

In addition, the IEWE does not produce special marine forecasts. Further, there is no capacity to download numerical weather prediction model products to be used for national weather forecasts, or to run any numerical weather prediction models. MMS maintains cooperation with the Italian meteorological service for the use for weather forecasting. On the other hand, the IEWE produces special forecasts for the agriculture and aviation sectors.

However, the IEWE does not produce any public warnings. It has a governmental role to produce updated maps and forecasts to the authorities. Hydrological studies for flood warnings have been developed for different basins, while flood forecasting is prepared for different river basins using meteorological forecasts and by monitoring water levels. MMS gives occasionally warnings in connection to its daily TV weather forecasts. Warnings to the aviation sector only are produced by the MSNATA.

[68] National Civil Emergency Plan, p.26-27

[69] Strengthening Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems and Risk Assessment in the Western Balkans and Turkey: Assessment of Capacities, Gaps and Needs, Chapter 2, p.14

Moreover, IEWE disseminates hazard monitoring data, forecasts and early warning to the Head of the National Committee for Disaster Reduction and other partners. The limited weather warnings produced are disseminated to the public via media. The MMS provides warnings through TV presentations and by disseminating advice to the media, in order to edit their own weather forecasts and warnings. Currently there are no specific procedures for interrupting TV or radio programs, or to the have a continuous warning stripe on the TV screen in the case of emergency. Method to send warnings directly via SMSs to mobile phones located at site of danger is not in use in Albania. Sectors like Ministry of Health or NGOs like the Albanian Red Cross are not on the direct contact list of warnings of hydrological or meteorological hazards. Further, Albania is not member of the EUMETNET METEOALARM systems.[70]

International cooperation is key part for the successful operation of event forecast and warning. Weather forecasts and forecasting of natural hazards are based on products from global and regional scale state-of-the art numerical weather prediction models, use of satellite data and sharing of data from conventional and modern remote sensing systems.[71]

[70] Strengthening Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems and Risk Assessment in the Western Balkans and Turkey: Assessment of Capacities, Gaps and Needs, Chapter 2, p.21-22

[71] Ibid., p.24

5 Capabilities

5.1 Human resources

Earlier data show that in normal times the human resources dedicated to crisis management include the following: app. 450 personnel, including the employed in civil protection at qark level (app. 50) and personnel employed in civil protection at commune or district level (app. 400).[72]

There are thirteen people, comprising the General Director and the managers of the directorates, compose Albanian Civil Protection at central level in the General Directorate of Civil Emergency. Each qark dispose of some permanent staff, incl. a set of technicians and a Civil Emergency Officer. Each municipality and commune has a designated officer with responsibility for civil emergency matters.

In times of crisis, the human resources engaged also comprises the fire brigade (app. 480), private companies contracted by the authorities (app. 400) plus forest service personnel (app. 100).

Albanian Red Cross is the main non-governmental stakeholder with 80 000 members, 2 000 volunteers and 39 branches. Founded in the 1920s, its current activities are based on Law No. 7864 on the Albanian Red Cross. According to the National Plan for Civil Emergencies the Albanian Red Cross has an important role in disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. The Albanian Red Cross has developed its own disaster plans and its structure for responding to disasters is organised in two levels: central, which manages the main human and material resources; and local/district, where 39 disaster-trained volunteer teams comprising between 25 and 30 people have been established throughout Albania. In 2002 a partnership agreement was signed between the Ministry of Interior, the Albanian Red Cross and UNDP Albania.[73]

5.2 Materiel (non-financial) resources

According to the National Civil Emergency Plan (NCEP), the key civil emergency response capacities in Albania include:

Albanian Special Forces Teams:

- Civil Protection Base, MoD, Tirana - Earthquake Search and rescue (SAR) 2 teams; Flood SAR 2 teams; Firefighting/SAR 2 teams; Chemical Pollution/SAR 2 teams; Mountain SAR 2 teams; Road clearance from snow and landslide 3 teams;
- Air Force Search and Rescue Service, MoD - National airborne SAR Service: 56 persons and 6 Helicopters;

[72] The Structure, Role and Mandate of Civil Protection in Disaster Risk Reduction for South Eastern Europe

[73] IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment Albania, p.11

- Special Commando Battalion, MoD, Tirana - Air and Marine accident SAR team 1 team;
- NBC Battalion, MoD - Chemical, bacteriological, ecological hazard rescue team 1 team 25 specialists;
- National Military Hospital, Tirana - Emergency Surgical Teams (each of Surgeon, traumatologyist, anaesthetist, 3 support staff) 2 teams;

Specialist Technical Services

- Ministry of Industry and Energy - Mines Inspectorate, mines SAR team 52 Specialists; Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation 55 Specialists; Electrical Sector Emergency Response 60 Specialists (KESH);

Transport Capacities and Specialist Equipment

- Ministry of Tourism and Territory Regulation - Tankers 5 water tankers, 5 sewage tankers, Welding/cutting equipment 5 units, Bulldozer 1 unit, Transport Capacity (people) 16 vehicles (total 469 people);
- Transport Capacity (Freight) 29 Trucks (total 166 mt), Tipper Trucks 8 units (total of 100 mt),
- Earthmoving Equipment/Bulldozers 11 units (total of 450 m3), Snow Clearing Equipment 3 Units, Motor Boats 8 units (total of 80 persons), 14 units for freight, Fire Trucks 2 Units at 5 mt each, Civil.
- Protection Base, MoD - Generators 8 units (total 396 kw);
- Military Engineers Brigade, MoD - Specialists: 50 Specialists, Tipper trucks 5 units, Earthmoving Equipment/Bulldozers 10 units excavators, 5 units, tracked bullodozers; Crane 1 unit at 15 mt; Medium capacity vehicles 8 units.
- NBC Battalion, MoD - Decontamination 6 vehicle units and 25 specialists;
- State Reserves - Transport 20 light vehicles of 9 mt
- Albanian Red Cross - Transport 4 heavy trucks, light vehicles in 12 branches in 12 qarks.

Assistance Services

- Civil Protection Base, MoD - Operational Forces 170 persons, Field Hospital I unit 50 beds, 4 treatment rooms, Potable Water 7 Tankers (total 67 mt) and 11, pumps (total 12 m3/hour), Water Purification 2 units (total 6,000 l/hour), Bakery units 2 units (total 2,400 kg/day), Mobile kitchens 12 units (total 3,000 rations/day), and 1 kitchen truck 300, rations/day, Shelter Tents for 17,000 people, Shower Trucks 2 units (total 200 persons/day),
- State Reserves - Temporary shelter 28,000 m2 for 6,000 people in warehouses, Tents for 30,000 people, Warehouse storage Total of 43,000 m2 for goods, Fuel storage for 14 mt
- Albanian Red Cross - Food Rations 8,000 people for 1 month, Shelter and Non-Food Items 8,000 people, Family links Tracing service linked to ICRC international tracing system.[74]

However, in the case of a wildfire, service personnel attend the scene but are active during the operational phase only, as observers or technical advisors. At present, the Service has no vehicles suitably equipped to cope with wildfire. The present fire-fighting capacity of local and national forces in Albania is not sufficient to tackle large wildfires, especially in the presence of multiple simultaneous events. The only way of tackling such emergencies is to address a request for

[74] National Information on Disaster Risk Reduction: Albania, Annex: Reference Guide for Preparation of National Information, p.11-12

assistance to the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC, now Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) or to the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) of NATO.[75]

5.3 Training

According to the Law on Civil Emergencies the Ministry of Interior is tasked to elaborate educational and training programmes in the area of protection against natural and other disasters. In fulfilling these requirements the Ministry of Interior has designed and implemented the National Civil Emergency Training Curriculum, comprised of eight training manuals containing national and international civil emergency standards and guidelines, undertaken training activities and organised conferences at the national and regional level. Institutions responsible for designing and conducting training and simulation activities on specific issues relevant to civil emergency management, are obliged to inform and coordinate their activities with the Civil Emergency System Service.

The Directorate for Civil Emergencies has established a national training centre, the Albanian Red Cross actively cooperates through its four training centres for volunteers and the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies regularly conducts training courses for fire brigades at the Fire Brigade Training Centre in Tirana. Through the Training of Trainers initiative, Albania has established a core group of civil emergency trainers. They have increased the capacities related to the design and organisation of training activities for different target groups at both national and local level.[76]

Tabletop Exercises, Functional Exercises, and Full-scale Exercises are carried out.

Albania's Department of Seismology of the Geo-sciences Institute is participating in the project *Harmonization of seismic hazard maps for the Western Balkan Countries* launched in 2007 in the framework of the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe with the support of the NATO Science for Peace and Security Programme. The main aim of the project is to prepare the ground for joint preparedness and prevention activities in disaster management among the countries of the region. The process of harmonization of the earthquake terminology and of the seismic risk maps targets improvement of scientific collaboration between the project partners and enhancing the cooperation and coordination in the field of seismic hazard management.

Moreover, bilateral activities have been organised between relevant Albanian institutions and counterparts in neighbouring countries. Albania has established bilateral cooperation with the Italian Government, particularly in respect to disaster risk reduction training activities. Additional memorandum of understanding was agreed with Greece, FYROM, Turkey, Croatia and Austria, especially regarding support in case of large scale disaster response operations.[77]

[75] The Structure, Role and Mandate of Civil Protection in Disaster Risk Reduction for South Eastern Europe, *South Eastern Europe Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Programme*, p.54

[76] IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment Albania, p.16

[77] IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment Albania, p.19-20

Albania has participated in several regional and local exercises with structures of line ministries, local power structures, foreign agencies and volunteers. These include table top exercises, such as main planning conference, (CMEP), Tirana, 2006; Table top exercise, (CMEP), Durrës, 2006; and Intergovernmental table top exercise, (with support US Army), Tirana, 2009.[78]

5.4 Procurement

5.4.1 Procurement regulation

Public procurement in Albania is governed by Law No. 9643 dated 20 November 2006 as amended (PPL). The PPL defines the Public Procurement Agency (PPA) as the central body responsible for public procurement. The PPA operates as a regulatory authority and manages the national procurement system.

The PPL applies to all contracts for supplies, services or works awarded by contracting authorities, unless explicitly exempted.

Art. 5 of the PPL deals specifically with defence procurement, stating that the PPL "shall apply to all public contracts awarded in the field of defense, subject to para 2 of this Article." The PPL shall not apply in the cases of "(a) when CA (Contracting Authority) shall be obliged to supply information whose disclosure is contrary to the essential interests of national security; (b) for the purchase of arms, munitions and war material, or related services. This exception shall not adversely affect the conditions of competition regarding products not specifically intended for military purposes; (c) in specific circumstances caused by natural disasters, armed conflicts, war operations, military training and participation in military missions outside the country."[79]

5.4.2 Procurement procedures

The PPL provides for two levels of thresholds: low and high. Furthermore, the PPL provides that the level of each threshold will be adjusted on a two-year basis. The high thresholds are approximately EUR 8 mln for works and EUR 1.3 mln for goods and services. The low-value thresholds are app. EUR 80,000 for works and EUR 50,000 for goods and services.

For contracts above the low value thresholds, contracting authorities shall use open procedures, restricted procedures, design contests. Negotiated procedures may be used only in the specific circumstances set forth in Art. 32 and 33 of the PPL.

For contracts of a value lower than the low value thresholds, contracting authorities may use negotiated procedures with or without prior publication and requests for proposals in accordance with the conditions provided in the law.

The contracts are advertised on the website of the PPA and are fully accessible to any bidder, wherever it is located, and the time limits are a minimum of30 days from publication on the website (for open procedures).

[78] Vademecum Civil Protection - Country Profile - Albania

[79] Public Procurement Law, available at https://www.app.gov.al/ep/Legislation.aspx

Resources

Legislative acts

Law No. 7623, dated October 13, 1992 on “Forests and Forestry Police Services”

Law No. 7664, dated January 21, 1993 on the “Protection of Environment”

Law No. 7761, dated October 19, 1993 on “Prevention and Fighting of Contagious Diseases”

Law No. 7978, dated July 26, 1995 on Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania, changed

Law No. 8093, dated March 21, 1996, on “Water Reserves”

Law No. 8408, dated September 25, 1998 on the “Construction Police”

Law No. 8553, dated November 25, 1999 on the “State Police”

Law No. 8681, dated November 2, 2000 on “Designing, Construction, Exploitation and Maintenance of Dams and Dikes”

Law No. 8736, dated February 12, 2001 on “Security of Pressure Equipment in Operation”

Law No. 8756, dated March 26, 2001 on the Civil Emergencies”

Law No. 8766, dated April 5, 2001, on “Fire Protection and Rescue”

Law No. 8897 dated May 16, 2002 on “Protection of air from pollution”

Law No. 8934, dated September 5, 2002 on the “Protection of Environment”

Law No. 9106, dated July 17, 2003 on “On Hospital Service in the Republic of Albania”

Law No. 9126, dated July 29, 2003 on the “Civil Use of Explosive Substances”

Law No. 9251, dated July 8, 2004 “Code of Seas of Republic of Albania”

Law No.8671, dated October 26, 2000, on “Powers and Authorities of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania”

Other normative acts

Council of Ministers Decree No. 103 dated March 31, 2002 on “Monitoring of environment in Republic of Albania”

Decision No 664, dated December 18, 2002 on the “Criteria and procedures dealing with proclamation of a state of civil emergency“

Decision No. 531, dated August 1, 2003, on the “Organization, Functioning, Duties and Responsibilities of Civil Emergency Service”

Decision No. 532, dated August 1, 2003 on the “Responsibilities and Duties of the Department of Planning for and Overcoming Civil Emergencies“

Decision No.533, dated August 1, 2003 on the “Involvement of Citizens in Prevention and Overcoming Civil Emergencies”

Decision No. 654, dated December 18, 2002, on “Temporary application of taxes for private business vehicles by the government bodies in a situation of civil emergency”

Decision No. 655, dated December 18, 2002, on "Establishment and functioning of the national system structure on civil emergency planning and response"

Decision No.663, dated December 18, 2002 on the "Constitution, Functioning and Responsibilities of the Technical-Advisory Commission of Emergency Specialists"

Decision No.664, dated December 18, 2002 on "Criteria and procedures of proclamation of the civil emergency situation"

Regulation of Operative Management of Emergencies for the State Police, No. 1604, dated December 22.12.2001

Official documents (white papers, strategies, etc.)

National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection 2014-2018, draft as of June 2014

National Civil Emergency Plan

Online resources (e.g. websites of key CM organizations)

Albanian Civil Protection, www.mbrojtjacivile.al

Ministry of Finance, http://www.financa.gov.al/

Ministry of Interior, http://www.punetebrendshme.gov.al/

Prime Minister's Office, http://www.kryeministria.al/en/

DPPI SEE Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South Eastern Europe, http://www.dppi.info/

Publications

Study Reports

Albanian HFA Monitoring Report 2011-2013

UNDAC, Assessment and recommendations following the Gerdec Explosions, 2008, available at http://www.unep.org/french/greenstar//publications/Report%20Ammunition%20Blast,%20Albania,%202008%5B2%5D.pdf

UNDP, Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Assessment Report for Albania, 2011, available at http://www.gripweb.org/gripweb/sites/default/files/Albania%20DRR%20Cap%20Ass%20Report%20Hachim%20Final.pdf

UNISDR, Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction, 2013, available at http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/33013

ISDR, WB, WMO, Strengthening Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems and Risk Assessment in the Western Balkans and Turkey: Assessment of Capacities, Gaps and Needs, 2012, available at http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/drr/projects/SEE/documents/SEEPhase%20I%20-%20Final Report.pdf

ISDR, WB, South Eastern Europe Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Initiative: Risk Assessment for South Eastern Europe, Desk Study Review, 2008, available at http://www.unisdr.org/files/1741_SouthEasternEuropeDRMitigation.pdf

ISDR, WMO, WB, Strengthening the Hydrometeorological Services in South Eastern Europe: South Eastern Europe Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Programme, 2008, available at http://www.unisdr.org/files/18136_seedrmapevaluation.pdf

ISDR, WB, Mitigating the Adverse Financial Effects of Natural Hazards on the Economies of South Eastern Europe: a Study of Disaster Risk Financing Options, 2008, available at http://www.preventionweb.net/files/1742_SEEDRFinancing.pdf

ISDR, WB, The Structure, Role and Mandate of Civil Protection in Disaster Risk Reduction for South Eastern Europe, 2008, available at http://www.unisdr.org/files/9346_Europe.pdf

ISDR, WB, South Eastern Europe Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Programme, 2008, http://www.unisdr.org/files/18136_seedrmapevaluation.pdf

IPA Beneficiary Needs Assessment: Albania (UNDP and WMO, August 2011), available at www.gripweb.org/gripweb/sites/default/files/Albania%20Needs%20Assessment%20-%202011-08-30.pdf (accessed 12 September 2014).

Expert interviews

Expert from a non-governmental organisation.