

# DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

## *Disaster Risk Reduction and Security in the OSCE Area\**

### Project Highlights South-Eastern Europe

- Two bilateral trainings held for 12 municipalities and 15 Aarhus Centres
- Four local DRR plans developed through public participation
- 600 local representatives, civil society activists, media professionals and students trained
- 7870 copies of public education material distributed
- Tailored online resource content developed and uploaded



# ALBANIA – Vlora

Municipality of Vlora is a coastal city in the South of Albania which is composed of five administrative units. Two of its administrative units are situated on the banks of Vjosa River estuary. In case of floods, the river estuary is blocked by sea level rise which impedes the water level from receding more quickly. In addition, Vlora is threatened by forest and wildfires, erosion, snow blockage and technological threats. The February 2015 floods caused

over EUR 122 million in damages in the entire affected area. The situation led to the declaration of national emergency and to a formal request to the European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection for activation of the European Civil Protection Mechanism.

## PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 300 family guides on disaster preparedness were distributed in local schools;
- 1 simulation fire drill exercise organized in a public school;
- Short awareness raising TV documentary prepared and launched in social media;
- Briefing pack on DRR composed and posted online for citizens and local authorities;
- Technical working group established at local level to prepare and lead the work on DRR local plans and guidelines; and
- 4 DRR community based awareness workshops were organized in Orikum, Novosele, Qender and Vlora administrative units.



# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA – Goražde

Municipality of Goražde is situated in the east of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the banks of the river Drina, in the Sava River Basin. As such, it is at high risk of floods. The last devastating floods occurred in December 2010 when heavy rains combined with release of water from the upstream hydropower station in Montenegro amplified the incoming flow, causing EUR 7 million in damages. This was the most devastating flood recorded in the municipality's history.

## PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS:

Owing to the expertise provided by the Ministry of Security of BiH/ Protection and Rescue Sector, a new plan was prepared with the involvement of all stakeholders dealing with DRR issues, including representatives of the civil society. An information pack focusing on disaster risk reduction was prepared and published on the municipal website. Research conducted during the project found that only 38 per cent of municipalities in the Federation of BiH and 31 per cent of municipalities in Republika Srpska have placed emergency alert

posters in public spaces. The emergency alert posters were also not harmonized so the project initiated their harmonization in both Entities.

The project beneficiaries identified local community councils, fire fighters, school children and the media as target groups for capacity building workshops. During the project:

- New Municipal Protection and Rescue Plan was prepared and adopted;
- 12 DRR awareness-raising workshops were organized with participation of 243 students and 58 professionals from various departments;
- 200 copies of informative material were distributed to students;
- 350 DRR manuals were distributed to workshop participants and the public;
- 470 emergency alert posters were printed and handed to the municipality for further distribution to local community councils;
- 26 web articles were published about project activities
- 3 hours of video material for awareness-raising was produced.



# MONTENEGRO – Ulcinj

Ulcinj is a historical coastal city on the Adriatic Sea coast of Montenegro. It is frequently exposed to flood and fire risk, with floods jeopardizing settlements, farmland and roads. Of particular importance is the protection of the town's valuable cultural heritage.

## PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS:

A multi-stakeholder working group was established with expertise provided by the National Directorate of Emergency Situations. The group identified several activities that would strengthen the municipal institutional framework for disaster risk reduction and increase the public's awareness and preparedness.

With expertise provided by the National Directorate of Emergency Situations and support from Aarhus Centre Nikšić:

- Municipal Flood Protection Plan was revised and submitted for adoption to the local parliament;
- Recommendations were prepared for municipal plans dealing with fire and earthquake hazard, with specific focus on community participation and public visibility;
- 1500 copies of awareness-raising brochures prepared, published in 3 languages and distributed to the public.
- Teachers from one elementary and one high school in Ulcinj attended DRR education workshops following a tailored curriculum accredited by the National Council of Education.



photo: F. Selović



photo: Lj. Tmušić

# SERBIA – Bajina Bašta

Bajina Bašta is located in West Serbia, in the Drina River Basin. In recent years, the municipality was exposed to a variety of natural hazards that caused considerable material damage and threatened human life. During the floods of 2014, this municipality was one of the most affected in Serbia.

responsible for the environment, Republic hydro-meteorological institute, authorities responsible for emergency management and the Aarhus Center for South and East Serbia. This multi-stakeholder group reviewed the municipal plans and contributed to reducing risks each from their professional perspective, clearly defining the role of every team member engaged in emergency management at local level;

## PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS:

- A DRR Action Alliance in Bajina Bašta was formed, gathering stakeholders engaged in flood risk management, including local administration, water authorities, Ministry

- Local government policies and strategies in Bajina Bašta were revised using DRR methodology;
- The existing disaster risk management system was reviewed through multi-stakeholder engagement and a draft proposal containing recommendations for its improvement were developed;
- Public consultations were held informing the public about the proposed amendments to the DRR plans;
- Proposal for reorganization of the civil protection system was adopted;
- 5050 copies of information leaflets were distributed during advocacy campaign;
- A good practice example showing inclusive municipal DRR management system was promoted.



photo: A. Marković



photo: N. Jovičić

## Supporting Cross-Border Learning and Co-operation

In the first half of December 2015, the Office of the Co-ordinator for OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities worked with the OSCE field operations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia to organize two bilateral trainings for 12 municipalities (Orašje, Bijeljina, Goražde (BiH), Bajina Bašta, Priboj, Šamac (Serbia), Vlora, Lezhe and Shkodra (Albania), Ulcinj, Podgorica and Cetinje (Montenegro) and 15 Aarhus Centres in South-Eastern Europe. The trainings took place in Budva and Sarajevo, gathering close to 80 professionals from national ministries, civil defence and urban planning units as well as staff of Aarhus Centres. In both trainings, the participants visited field locations to witness first-hand the impact of disasters as well as practice the understanding and evaluation of risk concepts.

The regional meeting hosted by the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina on 22-23 September in Sarajevo gathered the representatives of partner municipalities, Aarhus Centres, national ministries responsible for disaster risk management and OSCE field operations. The meeting allowed for presentation of activities and results within the project, both from the municipal and Aarhus Centres' perspective. Participants signed joint recommendations and conclusions from the meeting agreeing on future co-operation priorities in the region.

More information about OSCE activities can be found at:

[www.osce.org/eea](http://www.osce.org/eea)

[www.osce.org/secretariat/disaster-risk-reduction](http://www.osce.org/secretariat/disaster-risk-reduction)

## From our partners:



*In the frame of this pilot project supported by the OSCE Presence in Albania, aimed at public awareness on natural and man-made disasters in Vlora municipality, we managed to prepare guidelines for local authorities and local communities on how they should be better prepared in forest fire situations. Additionally, we managed to prepare a guide for safe use of gas tanks which is an emerging threat in Vlora municipality.*

**Dritan Leli,**  
Mayor of Vlora, Albania

*Disaster risk reduction is essential in local development planning therefore it was important to us to prepare our municipal Protection and Rescue Plan in line with European and international standards. The regional training we attended in December 2015 conveyed international standards and practices to us, but also showed us that in the region are all dealing with the same challenges. The project enabled us to establish co-operation with the Municipality of Bajina Bašta.*



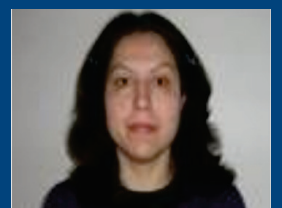
**Samira Drakovac,**  
Assistant Mayor for Civil Defense and  
Local Community Councils, Goražde, Bosnia and Herzegovina



*The territory of our municipality is exposed to risks with varying intensity during the year. In the rainy season, we have an increased flood risks, but during the summer we have a high risk of open fires. That is why the co-operation we established with the National Directorate for Emergency Situations as well as the Aarhus Center, through this project, is very important for us, because it enables us to update the existing and prepare for new municipal risk reduction plans. Also, the public will be better informed and benefit more from these plans.*

**Fljamur Selović,**  
Head of the Firefighting Department, Ulcinj, Montenegro

*Within this project we prepared two municipal plans that will enhance our institutional framework for disaster risk reduction. All documents were prepared in line with national methodology and with community participation. The most vulnerable communities were also targeted with public information leaflets containing specific guidelines on preparedness and response in emergency situations.*



**Dragana Ivanović,**  
Environmental Inspector, Bajina Bašta, Serbia