

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities Disaster Risk Reduction



Disasters and security

Disasters affect the security of people and nations. Their impact can cross borders and transboundary co-operation is often required to address related challenges. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and scale of disasters. The OSCE with its comprehensive approach to security plays an important role in strengthening resilience of communities, states and regions.

The methods and tools of disaster risk reduction provide powerful means for co-operation and joint action among OSCE participating

States and between different stakeholders, and therefore contribute to conflict prevention and confidence building.



OSCE vehicles were sent to affected communities to help authorities with assessing the damage caused by the May 2014 floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mandate

The importance of co-operation on disaster risk reduction was recognized in the **1975 Helsinki Final Act**. This was followed by several policy documents that referred to disaster preparedness and management in the OSCE context, including the **2003 OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension**, and the **2007 Madrid Declaration on Environment and Security**.

The **2014 Basel Ministerial Council Decision on Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction** is the cornerstone of OSCE policy in this field. It acknowledges that disasters could be a potential additional contributor to conflict and that conflicts can affect the vulnerability of society to disasters. It also emphasizes the importance of co-operation among participating States in disaster risk management.

The OSCE's activities in disaster risk reduction are part of the international effort to secure a more sustainable future for all.

They contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015.



What we do

The OSCE strengthens the disaster risk reduction capacities of its participating States through field-based activities that are implemented by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) and OSCE field operations in co-operation with specialized partners.



Disaster Risk Reduction cycle: OSCE projects and activities focus on preparedness and co-operation.

Wildfire management

The OSCE enhances the capacities of national authorities and professionals in managing wildfire risks and in building regionally harmonized wildfire management frameworks.

In the South Caucasus, the OSCE has assisted participating States in preparing national wildfire management policies and supported the development of a Fire Danger Rating System as an early warning tool.

Similarly, the OSCE supported the establishment of a Regional Fire Management Resource Centre in Mongolia to assist disaster management efforts in the country and the Central Asia region.

The OSCE also works with Belarus and Ukraine in reducing risks that wildfires pose to communities, firefighters and the environment in and around areas contaminated by the 1987 Chernobyl nuclear tragedy.

Flood risk reduction

The OSCE facilitates transboundary water co-operation and trains national authorities and practitioners on flood risk reduction. Workshops and practical exercises cover topics such as flood risk modelling and mapping in vulnerable areas, vulnerability assessments and flood risk communication between riparian countries and to the concerned population.

In the Dniester River Basin, OSCE-supported flood mitigation measures have included installation of monitoring stations by Ukraine and Moldova and ecosystem restoration activities.



The OSCE organizes regional training courses to enhance the capacities of relevant national authorities and professional in managing wildfire risks.



Because floods are often transboundary in nature, the OSCE facilitates regional events to help states establish strong co-ordination mechanisms. In 2016, the OSCE brought together participants from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan for a training course on disaster risk reduction.

What we do (continued)

Community-based disaster risk reduction

The OSCE strengthens cross-border co-operation among high-risk municipalities and communities by organizing joint training events and by providing technical assistance in the preparation of local disaster risk reduction plans. In this, the OSCE partners with Aarhus Centres, which provide platforms for local

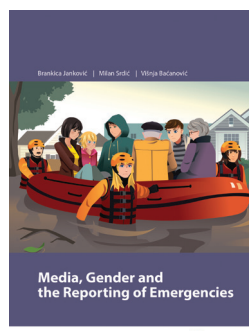
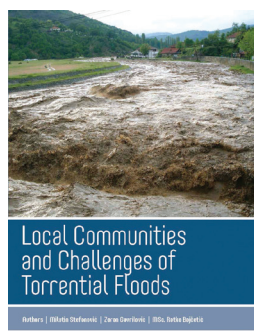
institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector to jointly address environment and security challenges at the local level. Aarhus Centres have been trained and supported in promoting community-based disaster risk reduction and ensuring greater awareness of disaster preparedness measures.



The OSCE builds the capacities of Aarhus Centres in disaster risk reduction as they play an important role in raising awareness at the community level and facilitate public participation in local planning processes.

Providing tools and guidance

The OSCE develops publications on disaster risk reduction to assist practitioners with reference materials in support of capacity building and awareness-raising activities for communities at risk.



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