



ЦЕНТАР ЗА УПРАВУВАЊЕ СО КРИЗИ

CRISIS MANAGEMENT CENTER



# NATIONAL PLATFORM

FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA



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## Foreword

In a world that is witnessing numerous hazards and disasters, intensified by a rapidly changing climate and environment, the need for a systematical reduction of the risks is becoming a priority of nations. The Republic of Macedonia, being dedicated to the principles of the Hyogo Framework for Action, supports the efforts of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction by developing and presenting its experience in the disaster risk reduction.

An effective and efficient disaster risk reduction process calls for a multi-stakeholder network approach that integrates the reliable and relevant capacities and resources, thus ensuring that all important economic, social and environmental sectors are addressed accordingly. Each network, incorporating various governmental and non-governmental entities from local and national levels is part of the specialized platforms covering specific risks and disasters. Together, they are the components, building blocks of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Instead of seeking costly new capacities, we introduced an innovative system that interconnects and modernizes the existing resources. By adopting a holistic approach to disaster risk reduction and crisis management in general, we are creating a new quality that surpasses the simple sum of the constituent elements, thus enhancing the disaster risk reduction process.

As a result, the Republic of Macedonia became the 11<sup>th</sup> country in Europe to have a National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, a clear recognition of result-oriented activities and commitment.

Dr. Pande Lazarevski  
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## I. History

With the adoption of the Law on Crisis Management from April 2005, the Crisis Management System of the Republic of Macedonia (hereafter: CMS) was created. Following the Law, in October 2005, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia established the Crisis Management Center as an independent Governmental body, responsible for coordination of the stakeholders in the System. In 2008 the basis of the National Platform for **Disaster Risk Reduction** were developed through a network of cooperation agreements with state institutions, scientific and academic institutions, NGOs, the Organization of the Red Cross of the Republic of Macedonia and the business sector.

Being one of the 168 countries represented at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan in 2005, accepting the "**Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters**" (hereafter: HFA), the Republic of Macedonia developed a National Platform, based on the strategic goals and the priorities for action outlined in the HFA.

**Disaster risk reduction:** The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyze and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events.

**Hyogo Framework for Action:** Key instrument for implementing disaster risk reduction, adopted by the Member States of the United Nations. Its overarching goal is to build resilience of nations and communities to disasters, by achieving substantive reduction of disaster losses by 2015 – in lives, and in the social, economic, and environmental assets of communities and countries. The HFA offers five areas of priorities for action, guiding principles and practical means for achieving disaster resilience for vulnerable communities in the context of sustainable development.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia, on its session held on 21 April 2009, officially declared the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. Therefore, a political impetus has been given, guarantying the Platform's national ownership and leadership of the disaster risk reduction process.

**National Platforms for DRR (UNISDR definition):** A National Platform for DRR can be defined as a nationally owned and led forum or committee of multi-stakeholders. A National Platform for DRR should be the coordination mechanism for mainstreaming DRR into development policies, planning and programmes in line with the implementation of the HFA. It should aim to contribute to the establishment and the development of a comprehensive national DRR system, as appropriate to each country.

## II. Goals

The principal goal of the National Platform is crisis management through effective and efficient utilization of available resources and capacities, as an instrument for reduction of risk factors, identifying, assessing and monitoring risks, building a culture of safety, and strengthening disaster preparedness at all levels. Being a multi-stakeholder national mechanism, the *National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction* serves as advocate of DRR on national and local level.

The aim is to ensure an integrated, efficient and effective approach to DRR through prevention, early warning, management and mitigation of disaster threats and post-disaster consequences, while securing functional unity of the state authority, the local self-government, the NGO sector and the academic and business communities.

## III. Composition

### **Crisis Management System:**

The National Crisis Management System coordinates the forces and resources in order to assist the communities in case of crisis. Its scope of

responsibilities includes timely, coordinated and proportional action in the phases of prevention, early warning and crisis management.

► **Crisis Management Center:** a Governmental agency that holds the strategic position within the Crisis Management System. CMC provides continuity of inter-departmental and international cooperation, consultations and coordination of crisis management. This includes preparation and updating of a unified assessment of the risks and threats to the national security, **early warning** and the proposing of measures and activities to resolve the crisis situation. Within CMC, the General Headquarter is in charge of the crisis management activities. CMC created the National Platform for DRR in accord with the HFA and UN/ISDR guidelines.

**Early warning system:** The set of capacities needed to generate and disseminate timely and meaningful warning information to enable individuals, communities and organizations threatened by a hazard to prepare and to act appropriately and in sufficient time to reduce the possibility of harm or loss.

► **Steering Committee:** composed of the Ministers for Interior, Health, Transport and Communications, Defence, Foreign Affairs and the Head of the Assessment Group (CMC Director). If necessary, depending on the crisis situation, other heads of relevant State administrative bodies can also be included in the work of the Steering Committee. The main role of this Governmental body within the Crisis Management System is to prepare and propose Governmental decisions regarding adequate actions and resource usage. Finally, the Steering Committee evaluates the indicators of efficiency of the disaster risk reduction and crisis management activities in general.

► **Assessment Group:** governmental body that performs constant assessment of the risks and dangers to the national security and proposes measures and activities for their prevention, early warning and management. Assessment Group delivers its analyses, recommendations and conclusions to the Steering Committee, the Prime Minister, and the Presidents of the Republic and the Assembly.

## The Platforms

The National Platform for DRR is developed through 21 specialized platforms covering specific risks and threats (from wildfires and epidemics, through droughts and floods, to earthquakes and CBRN contamination.) The particular platforms will enable synergy and integration of available resources, knowledge and know-how of the national and local authorities, the NGO sector, the business and academic community and the civil society.

Within the scope of competences of the platforms, as a support of the overall performance of the National Platform, will be the development of data base of risks and threats in the country and the region; as well as human and technical resources data base. In addition, each platform is expected to develop particular crisis management strategy; relevant risk assessment methodology and, accordingly, the very risk assessment in the particular field; hazard mapping; monitoring procedures; risk development scenarios; SOPs as internal and operability tools.

For optimal support of the DRR and crisis management activities in general, CMC developed coordination with the state authorities in the domains of normative regulation; finances and procurements; human resources

### ***The main principles for National Platforms for DRR are:***

- National Platforms for DRR should view DRR as a national responsibility and a cross-cutting issue within sustainable development processes;
- National Platforms for DRR should utilize a participatory process to facilitate various sectors engagement, with their diverse perspectives and actions, and build on existing systems and mechanisms;
- National Platforms for DRR should influence positive changes through concerted and coordinated efforts particularly in policies, planning, administration and decision-making processes;
- National Platforms for DRR should encourage national and local implementation, adaptation and ownership of the HFA.

***Disaster risk reduction plan:*** A document prepared by an authority, sector, organization or enterprise that sets out goals and specific objectives for reducing disaster risks together with related actions to accomplish these objectives.



management; inspectoral supervision; IT networking (with a unified GIS platform and compatible document management system); public relations and public opinion; international cooperation; as well as ISO/PAS 22399 standardization.

## **Ministries and Other Disaster Management Authorities**

The need for a multi-risk approach in the process of disaster risk reduction calls for various ministries and governmental agencies engagement on national and local level. These include the Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management; Environment and Physical Planning; Health; Transport and Communications; Economy; IT Society; Culture; Education and Science; Labour and Social Policy; Justice; as well as the Protection and Rescue Directorate. Also incorporates independent regulatory bodies, such as the National Broadcasting Council, the Agency for Electronic Communications and the National Business Chamber, each with its scope of competences related to risk reduction.

## **Inspectorates**

Supervision is important element in both preventive and post-disaster stages For that purpose, inspectorate network has been developed involving inspectoral departments relevant to crisis management within the Ministries of: Economy; Transport and Communications; Environment and Physical Planning; Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management; Education and Science; Labour and Social Policy; Health. Also, CMC signed agreements with the Protection and Rescue Directorate, Agency for Electronic Communications Agency of Civil Aviation; Agency for Commodity Reserves and the Radiation Security Directorate.

## **The Local Level Authorities**

CMC and the National Platform in general provide full coverage of DRR activities on the local level. In this respect, a municipal network is started, aimed at developing and strengthening cooperation on the local level

towards effective prevention, early warning, crisis management, protection and rescue of people and goods, and mitigation. For this purpose, cooperation agreements with all 84 municipalities and the City of Skopje (country capital) were signed.

## **The Networks:**

### **National Laboratory Network**

The scientific institutions are a crucial part of the National Platform. For this purpose, CMC coordinated the establishment of the National Laboratory Network (hereafter: NLN) that includes over 70 laboratories at state institutions, universities, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, public and private companies. The aim of the functional integration of the laboratory resources countrywide is to provide **capacity development**, reliable data and expertise, supportive to prevention, mitigation as well as to provide a variety of forensics (medical, technical-technological, building and construction forensics, environmental forensics as well as telecommunication and IT system safety.)

**Capacity Development** The process by which people, organizations and society systematically stimulate and develop their capacities over time to achieve social and economic goals, including through improvement of knowledge, skills, systems, and institutions.

### **Academic Community Networks**

The academic community provides crucial support in the process of developing risk assessment methodology and programs and their advocacy and integration within the sustainable development strategies. Thus far, CMC established cooperation with all state and private universities in the country: State University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” - Skopje; State University “St. Kliment Ohridski” - Bitola; State University “Goce Delcev” - Stip; State University in Tetovo; University of SEE – Tetovo; European University – Republic of Macedonia; University FON.

## Disaster Management Center of Excellence

Considering the diverse and complex nature of the risks and threats, there is a need for multi-disciplinary approach in the disaster risk reduction process. To further this end, CMC and the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje signed an agreement for the establishment of the Disaster Management Center of Excellence (hereafter: DMCE), and its development has been started. DMCE will integrate the scientific and academic activities in the field of crisis management, protection of people, animals and goods. DMCE, covering a variety of academic disciplines, will be in charge of scientific and research projects and activities in the fields of medicine (epidemiology); veterinary medicine (epyzootic); agriculture and forestry (epyphitotics); bio-hazard; eco-hazard, forest fires and protection of environment; climate change and extreme weather conditions; earthquakes, floods and geo-hazards; industrial and technical-technological hazards; nuclear hazards; telecommunication and IT systems safety; energy and power plant security; water management; treatment of trauma and stress related to natural and man-made disasters.

### Education and Training

Building the capacity to effectively confront disaster risks depends on adequate human resources. For that purpose, CMC is setting up a national crisis management educational and training network including universities, vocational schools and other educational

#### **Focus on the following political, technical, participatory and resource mobilization components is needed:**

- The political component ensures strong political commitment from the top leadership.
- The technical component involves various activities such as developing knowledge bases on DRR, a methodological framework for the National Platform for DRR, and a set of disaster reduction indicators.
- The participatory component involves relevant groups, including various government bodies, the private sector, NGOs and academic institutions.
- The resource mobilization component obtains resources required for developing National Platforms for DRR and carrying out their planned tasks.

institutions, such as the Military Academy and police training facilities, by planning to interpolate crisis management modules in their existing curriculums. In this respect, CMC together with the Military Academy defined the undergraduate and graduate curricula in the field of crisis management and rescue and protection. Furthermore, CMC and the State University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius agreed to establish post-graduate studies covering different risks and threats. Finally, the establishing of special training for the CMC staff in different aspects of prevention and mitigation has been agreed to upon with the same University.

### **NGO Network**

The strengthening of capacities, preparedness and response to disasters at national, regional and local level depends on a strong commitment by all segments of the civil society, especially the non-governmental organizations. For this purpose, as a part of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, CMC established an NGO network with over forty NGOs and associations of professionals covering a wide variety of issues, such as: environment, forestry, agriculture, firefighting, hunting, fishing, mountaineering, sports, gender issues, health, engineering, mining, chemistry, technology, IT, underwater activities, as well as the various student's associations. In this manner, the engagement of volunteer groups and the presence of the NGO sector is put high on the Platform's agenda.

In this respect, CMC has established cooperation with the following NGOs: the Red Cross of the Republic of Macedonia; Organization of Military Officers (retired); Macedonian Medical Society; Association of Nurses and Paramedics; Women's National Council; Macedonian Women's Lobby; National Alliance of Associations of Retired People; National Council of Organizations of People with Handicap; Environmental Movement; Federation of Mountain Sports of Macedonia; National Association of Private Forest Owners; Firefighting Union of Macedonia; Hunting Federation of Macedonia; Alliance for Underwater Activities; Kayak Federation; Macedonian Fishing Federation; Agriculture Union; Union of Scouts; Union

of Technical Associations; Union of Inventors; Engineering Institution of Macedonia; Chamber of Geodesics; Association of Mining Engineers AGRICOLA; Association of Physicists of Macedonia; Union of Chemists and Technicians; IT Association; AMSM; National Union of Drivers of Macedonia; Aeronautical Federation; National Radio Amateurs Union; Student's Unions from all public and private universities with which CMC signed cooperation agreements.

### **Business Sector Network**

The role of business in disaster risk reduction is moving forward, from participation in disaster relief, towards active involvement in disaster resilience. Private - public partnerships nowadays promote greater scope for engagement and more opportunities for the private sector. For this purpose, the business sector is included in the National Platform. Such is the enhanced cooperation with the National Economic Chamber and a number of private companies and enterprises from the pharmaceutical, food processing, chemical, transport and the electrical power industry, etc. A number of the private companies with well developed lab capacities are also part of the NLN.

### **Religious Communities Network**

With the development of DRR practices and the exchange of positive experiences worldwide, the religious communities become part of the solution. To further this end, CMC, supported by the Government Commission for Relations with the Religious Communities and Groups, established a Religious Communities Network with the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Islamic Religious Community, the Catholic Church, the Evangelical-Methodist Church, and the Jewish Community in the Republic of Macedonia.

## IV. Activities

The National Platform for DRR has a number of important activities in all phases of disaster risk reduction and crisis management in general. These include:

- Coordinating the multi-stakeholder collaboration for DRR;
- Fostering the development of culture of safety through *public awareness* raising;
- Facilitating the integration of DRR into national policies, plans and programs;
- Coordinating joint efforts among stakeholders to reduce vulnerability of people;
- Information gathering, forecasting and analysis of risks and dangers;
- Providing decision makers with reliable and up-to-date data;
- Providing advice and proposing measures and activities for management of emergencies;
- Developing and maintaining risks mapping;
- Mapping of resources to be deployed for preparedness and in the event of a emergencies;
- Crisis response planning and operational procedures development;
- Development of possible risk and disaster scenarios;
- Implementation of the 112 Emergency Calls System;
- Alarming the population in the event of a emergencies;

**Public awareness:** key factor in effective disaster risk reduction. Its development is pursued, for example, through the development and dissemination of information through media and educational channels, the establishment of information centres, networks, and community or participation actions, and advocacy by senior public officials and community leaders.

- Conducting training for crisis management;
- Developing a general strategy for the various risks and threats;
- Developing functional strategies for prevention, reaction and rehabilitation;
- Developing policies for prevention, reaction and rehabilitation;
- Developing operational strategies for implementation of the policies for prevention, reaction and rehabilitation;
- Developing appropriate legislation that regulates prevention, reaction and rehabilitation;
- Support services

## **V. The Way Ahead**

The purpose of the National Platform for DRR is to reduce the losses of lives and goods. This demands active involvement of the communities and the citizens in terms of awareness raising, preventive actions, continuous preparations and regular drills that will test the level of readiness.

The fact that we are not isolated islands and disasters have no borders, we all have to aim to spread the positive experiences and lessons learned in order to enhance the cooperation and coordinating mechanisms within the Regional and Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

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