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SEE URBAN
South East Europe Urban Resilience Building Action Network



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Belgrade, 19 May 2017

Minutes from the First Round-Table Discussion of the regional project “SEE URBAN – South East Europe Urban Resilience Building Action Network” in Belgrade, 16.05.2017.

Key-note Speakers:

Mr. Žarko Petrović, Programme Analyst for Resilient Development, UNDP Serbia

Mr. Karl Karl-Heinz Vogel, Attaché, Programme Manager for Disaster and Prevention Management, Agricultural & Environmental Management, DEU Serbia

dr Ivan Bošnjak, State Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government

Ms. Sandra Nedeljković, Deputy Director, Public Investment Management Office

Mr. Krunoslav Katić, UNDP technical advisor

Ms. Ružica Slišković-Bartoloti, President of the Croatian Counties / Cities DRR Platform (CCCP)

Mr. Tomislav Jarmić, advisor at the Croatian Counties / Cities DRR Platform (CCCP)

Ms. Mima Stanoevska, Centre for Development of South-East Region (CDSER), FYR of Macedonia

Facilitator:

Mr. Miroslav Tadić, Portfolio Manager for Climate Change and DRR, UNDP Serbia

Presenters:

Mr. Zdravko Maksimović, City Administration, City of Kraljevo

Mr. Saša Spasić, Municipal Administration, Municipality of Ub

Mr. Dejan Kamber, Municipal Administration, Urban Municipality of Obrenovac

Debate Facilitator:

Ms. Ana Mitić-Radulović, DRR Associate, UNDP Serbia

- The Round-Table Discussion was held as the first in a serial of national meetings within the “SEE URBAN – South East Europe Urban Resilience Building Action Network” regional project. Purpose of the project is adaptation and implementation of best practice examples of local cooperation and networking for disaster risk reduction (DRR) in South East Europe, to reduce consequences of disasters and protect people, environment and assets.
- **Mr. Žarko Petrović**, Programme Analyst for Resilient Development at the UNDP Serbia, welcomed all the participants and attendees and briefly informed them about the UNDP Serbia previous and planned DRR projects and activities, stressing the importance of prevention in DRR.
- Warm welcome and strong support was also expressed by **Mr. Karl Karl-Heinz Vogel**, Attaché and Programme Manager for Disaster and Prevention Management at the Delegation of the European



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Union to the Republic of Serbia. He confirmed the importance of this project and wished a successful implementation.

- **dr Ivan Bošnjak**, State Secretary at the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, drew attention of the audience to the importance of local cooperation in DRR, as well as the engagement of youth.
- More on the results achieved in local cooperation in DRR activities and local networking in river-basins was presented by **Ms. Sandra Nedeljković**, Deputy Director of the Public Investment Management Office. She also provided concise overview of Serbian regulatory and policy framework in DRR.
- Objectives and activities of the SEE URBAN project were presented by **Mr. Krunoslav Katić**, UNDP technical advisor. He also reported on project actions undertaken so far, and presented analysis of the first project participants segregated by gender, age, education, etc. He presented impressions from initial project meetings expressed in the first evaluation forms, and concluded that attitudes are mainly positive, but with awareness that practical implementation is necessary in further phases of SEE URBAN implementation. Finally, he presented future project activities and invited participants for active engagement for common solutions.
- A good local level urban DRR networking model was presented by **Ms. Ružica Slišković-Bartoloti**, President of the Croatian Counties / Cities DRR Platform (CCCP).
- **Mr. Tomislav Jarmić**, the project advisor for Serbia at the Croatian Counties / Cities Platform (CCCP), elaborated more in detail on CCCP's structure, operational mechanisms, responsibilities and previous activities. He underlined that local cooperation in DRR was initiated to improve implementation of DRR regulations and overcome barriers encountered in practice. CCCP was established to allow common activities and joint projects, but it strongly cooperates with other associations with complementary mandates, as well as with Public Administration for Protection and Rescuing.
- **Ms. Mima Stanojevska** from the Centre for Development of South-East Region (CDSEER), FYR of Macedonia, talked about Centre's good practice in EU projects preparation and implementation, especially in IPA cross-border-cooperation programmes. She also presented the Strumica River Basin Management Plan.
- In the second session of the event, attention was given to the local cooperation model developed on the river-basin level in Serbia, namely in the river-basins of the Western Morava River and the Kolubara River up to now.
- **Mr. Zdravko Maksimović** from the City of Kraljevo presented previous activities and plans in the Western Morava River Basin. He talked about previous hazards (earthquake in 2010, floods in 2014) and assessed risks in the area. He explained the logic behind DRR local cooperation on the river-basin level and highlighted the need for future common Assembly, Fund, Regional Centre, Enterprise, etc. He stressed the importance of education and awareness raising and advocated for joint efforts for efficient DRR on the local level. Among further plans, he emphasized development of the "Study on Improvement of Water Protection in the Western Morava River Basin" and GIS usage for monitoring and management of emergencies. He presented current Western Morava River Basin website and explained how to access adopted documents, how to report on observed risk as a citizen, etc.

UNDP in the Republic of Serbia

Bulevar Zorana Djindjića 64, 11070 Beograd, Republic of Serbia

Tel: +381 (0)11 4155 310 • Fax: +381 (0)11 4155 499 • E-mail: registry.rs@undp.org • www.rs.undp.org



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- **Mr. Saša Spasić** from the City of Kraljevo presented activities conducted in the Kolubara River Basin. He talked about the previously developed “Study on Improvement of Water Protection in the Kolubara River Basin”, and the common plan to act through two working groups: political and technical. First operational plans include common procurement of the equipment on the river-basin level and the common web-site development. Further deployment of the local cooperation model could be in the form of the Regional DRR Agency and joint financial planning is foreseen (1% of the local budget should be invested in the prevention). Moreover, training for GIS application in DRR is planned for local DRR coordinators, and common models of natural resources and hazards should be developed. Interoperability and further exploitation of the georeferenced data is foreseen for various DRR activities.
- Finally, **Mr. Zdravko Maksimović** presented the Draft Study on local cooperation model based on the example of the Western Morava River Basin, containing normative, institutional, functional and financial data. Brief description of the past disasters and lessons learnt in emergency response will be included, as well as strengths and opportunities, needs and further plans for the river-basin networking model. Moreover, the Study will provide recommendations for up-scaling and replication of the presented model for networking and cooperation on the river-basin level and recommendations for regional and cross-border cooperation in DRR.
- During the discussion, the following issues were debated:
 - Institutionalization of the river-basin cooperation in the form of an Association (CCCP’s model) or an Agency (a company).
 - CCCP, as an association, does not have employees. Its members are officially nominated employees of the local self-governments (LSGs) and counties. It has its own bank account for common activities. Members of the association (legal entities - LSGs) pay annual membership (in total app. 10.000 EUR a year), which can be used as a contribution (co-financing) in project proposals preparation. Moreover, the association can make an Agreement with its founders (LSGs) and transfer financial resources from local budgets to the association, if needed. Per Croatian laws, an association may be transformed into an Institution, similar to a company. This example was also discussed from the point of view of future institutional organization of the municipalities in Serbia under the river basin frameworks. The information and experience of the Croatian municipalities could be used as a good starting point for discussing similar model in the Republic of Serbia.
 - Discussion was also held on a possible institutional solution that could assist river basin alliances in DRR in Serbia to become more operational, in particular from the resource mobilization and project development perspectives. A company, in a form of an Agency or a Regional Centre, would need to have a Manager and possibly other employees, but current restrictions in employment policies may pose barriers for such organization. On the other hand, salaries of those employees could be presented as a contribution (co-financing) in project proposals preparation, and a Company itself could participate as an “Affiliated entity” to LSGs.
 - Strengths and shortcomings of various model for further organization and cooperation is still to be examined during following technical meetings. Analytical study will provide contribution by analyzing some of the possible options.

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- SEE URBAN will form an Expert Working Group, comprised on nominated representatives of the central level institutions (Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, PIMO, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Interior – Sector for Emergency Situations, Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, SCTM and PWE Srbija vode), as well as local level Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries of the formed and initiated river-basins cooperations (the Western Morava, the Kolubara, the Great Morava and the Danube – left tributaries: Banat watercourses).

Conclusions and follow up activities:

It has been jointly concluded that:

- Local level organization and cooperation in DRR should be conducted in the most efficient manner, according to the joint risks, and may be based on administrative or geographical "borders".
- GIS application in DRR should be strengthened and enforced for various proactive measures.
- Further technical consultation may be expected in early June.