



MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL PROJECT APPRAISAL COMMITTEE

For the project:

“Increasing Urban Resilience by use of ICT for Mainstreaming Disaster and Climate Risk Reduction in Armenia, FYR Macedonia and Moldova” (Increasing Urban Resilience)

Date and time: 01 December 2014
Venue: Hotel Solun, Meeting Room, Skopje

Attendees:

Alessandro Fracassetti, Deputy Resident Representative
Vesna Dzuteska-Bisheva, Assistant Resident Representative and Head of Social Inclusion Unit
Mihaela Stojkoska, Head of Governance Unit
Anita Kodzoman, Head of Energy and Environment Unit
Sonja Stefanovska Trajanoska, Programme Associate, Governance Unit
Suzana Ahmeti Janjic, Programme Associate, Social Inclusion Unit
Jasmina Belcovska Tasevska, Executive Associate
Dimitar Sekovski, Project Manager, Energy and Environment Unit
Vasko Popovski, Project Manager, Energy and Environment Unit

Presentation of the project:

The Project Manager Vasko Popovski presented the aim of the project, its objectives, main outputs, and the implementation strategy. The main project objective is to build disaster and climate risk resilience in the three countries (by Armenia, FYR Macedonia and Moldova) increasing institutional capacity, mobilizing knowledge and transferring appropriate best-practice innovation technologies. Through implementation of the project, the cooperation between the countries will be enhanced, resulting in the development of a new dimension of international co-operation in the areas of disaster and climate risk reduction. The project will particularly focus on strengthening collaboration between the selected pilot cities (Skopje, Yerevan and Hincesti) where a number of innovative techniques and methodologies will be piloted/tested.

The proposed project has four main components, three focused on national level activities and one on regional level. However, the third component is mixed with implementation of activities, both on national and local level. Therefore, to the extent possible, the activities implemented on national level will include an element of knowledge and experience sharing, replication and scaling up.

Outputs in support of this objective are as follows:

- Capacities of the local governments of the Yerevan, Skopje and Hincesti to develop and implement integrated disaster and climate risk reduction plans and programmes strengthened.
- Concept of Smart City solution for the rapid urbanization and climate change challenges developed.

- Improved availability of information and increased public awareness on disaster and climate risk in urban areas by implementation of regional and country level ICT solutions/mobile application.
- Knowledge shared on best practices and lessons learnt among the participating countries facilitated.

The national project will be implemented under the Support to NIM modality with the City of Skopje as the implementing entity/responsible partner. It will facilitate interaction, coordination and input of the relevant ministries, public organizations, research institutions and private organizations. The timeframe for implementation is two years (December 2014 – December 2016).

UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub will serve as the coordinating office for the project. The regional project shall be implemented under the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM). Istanbul Regional Hub will have a leading role for the overall coordination of the project activities and particularly for the regional level activities and UNDP COs will be responsible for implementation of the national level activities in each of the countries respectively, and will ensure close collaboration and coordination with the national stakeholders in the three countries.

The total value of the regional project is 800,000 USD. The allocation from BPPS is 100,000 USD per country and 100,000 USD for the regional component. The budget of this national project is 305,000 USD in total, out of which 100,000 USD are funded by BPPS, 100,000 USD by UNDP CO and 27,000 USD by the City of Skopje. In total 78,000 USD are considered to be unfunded and are expected to be covered by the additional contribution from the City or additional resource mobilization in IRH. During the Inception Workshop for the project held in November in Istanbul, it was stated that this project is a good opportunity to become a regional model for inclusion of ICT innovation in DRR that at a later stage could be replicated and scaled up in other countries of the region. The IRH will provide all necessary support for implementation of the activities and will try to push the envelope further. Also, this project is considered to be a "seed investment" in innovation and DRR and is a great possibility for establishing of new partnerships and broadening the innovation scope further.

Vasko Popovski mentioned that there was a reaction by the Crisis Management Centre on the modality how the project will be implemented. Therefore, based on the recent experience when the CMC has not participated in the Strumica Early Recovery project, there is a high possibility same situation to be repeated. Main reaction from the side of the CMC is regarding the establishing partnership with the City of Skopje and not considering them as a main national partner for DRR and continuing the activities within the existing project cooperation framework. Therefore, he stated that it is recommended to have a discussion with their senior management on the project implementation, as well as to investigate the possibility to sign a Project Cooperation Agreement.

Discussion:

Alessandro Fracassetti stated that this project is considered to be the first one signed directly with the City of Skopje as a partner in the area of urban resilience and a strategic partnership should be established. We have to encourage the City of Skopje to increase the cost sharing funding of the project activities to the ratio of 50% - 50%. Smart City concept is an excellent opportunity to broaden the scope of the partnership through exploring the possibilities to include also other areas concepts (e.g. energy efficiency – it can be included in the concept, since there is an interest for cooperation). With regards to the funds availability it has to be considered that we have funding constraints and therefore this project is an entry point for opening of new areas of activities and to bring additional funding opportunities.

Anita Kodzoman emphasize that the cooperation with the City will be especially strategic in the area of environment and energy, including disaster risk reduction, especially through development of the Climate Change Strategy of the City, preparation of the GHG Inventory and City Resilience Action Plan. Considering the latter, one of the possible approaches is to apply the concept of urban resilience. With regards to the participation or not participation of the CMC in the project, it is their decision. They are more than welcomed to be a part of the project implementation, but have to be fully aware that the main project partner is the City of Skopje. The preparation of the Plan will be done on the basis of the adopted municipal risk and hazard assessments.

Mihaela Stojkoska stated that this project is important for service delivery and therefore it is important to see partnership operational. In relation to this project is the new IPA project and its component on open data design that can accommodate different areas. Synergy can be established. Also, the urban resilience is closely connected to the notion of the urban governance and linkages should be considered and built upon them.

Vesna Dzuteska – Bisheva asked for clarification whether the scope of the project activities is directed to the territory and competences of the City of Skopje itself or it will also tackle the competencies and capacity issues of the ten municipalities. Also, Skopje is a city of high inequalities and therefore it is necessary to embed different approach to different realities in order to encapsulate multiple layers of Skopje.

Jasmina Belcovska said that the Smart City concept is interesting and despite the concept of Smart City in case of disaster it will be good to consider/involve other segments of the concept itself. It will be good to see what the broader regional or global experiences are. Cases of Barcelona and Amsterdam are very much interesting. Therefore a research should be done prior the implementation of the activities for the Smart City concept.

Suzana Ahmeti Janjic said that it is a good example of the issue based approach. Also, during the project implementation bigger inequalities should not be built. The scaling up activities should be timely initiated.

Within the framework of the LPAC meeting, design diagnostics exercise of the project was done within framework of the SP alignment process and it will serve as a basis for further analysis and programme development.

Conclusions and next steps:

- To emphasize the use of innovative tools and methodologies in all stages of the project implementation;
- To use this project as a successful entry-point for broader cooperation with the City of Skopje in different areas;
- To use the notes from the design diagnostics exercise;
- The project is endorsed by the LPAC members.

LPAC SIGNATORY:

1. Alessandro Fracassetti, Deputy Resident Representative



