

**DISASTER RISK REDUCTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA 2019-2023**

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

BiH Bosnia and Herzegovina

CSO Civil Society Organization

CSWs Centres for Social Welfare

DRAS Disaster Risk Analysis System

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

FBiH Entity of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

GBV Gender-Based Violence

IOM International Organization for Migration

JP Joint Programme

LDRRP Local Disaster Risk Reduction Platforms

LSGU Local Self-Government Unit

MISP The Minimum Initial Service Package

RS Entity of Republika Srpska

SDC Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

SOPs Standard Operating Procedures

SRH Sexual and Reproductive Health

ToT Training of trainers

UN United Nations

WHO World Health Organization

**GENERAL PROGRAMME AND PHASE INFORMATION**

The **“Disaster Risk Reduction for Sustainable Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina“** is a joint intervention supported and financed by the Government of Switzerland and the United Nations (UN), implemented by the UN agencies: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in partnership with domestic authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

The long-term Programme vision entails functional Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) governance across various levels and sectors in Bosnia and Herzegovina, throughout three phases. The first Programme phase consists of a four-year plan setting the ground for DRR through basic institutional capacities, coordination mechanisms, and strategic frameworks, with a total budget amounting to USD 4.321.948.

The Programme’s first phase overall goal is as follows: ***Local governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina have improved their DRR institutional capacities, frameworks, public services, and partnerships, and the population in risk-exposed localities is less vulnerable socially and economically to the effects of disasters and climate change.***

The first phase of the Programme has two main outcomes, as follows:

* **Outcome 1: At least 10 local governments have adopted DRR-featuring strategies, established partnerships for effective DRR interventions, and financed actions that build community resilience thus are better equipped to prevent and respond to disasters.**
* **Outcome 2:**  **Citizens in target localities, particularly the most vulnerable population groups, have become more resilient to disasters.**

The first Programme phase has been designed as a platform for further horizontal scaling up of a good DRR model at the local level, as well as a springboard to a *bottom-up* strengthening of a country-wide DRR governance framework and capacities. The Joint UN Programme aims to address key DRR priorities identified by local governments and various stakeholders across various sectors: protection and rescue, education, social and child protection, health, and agriculture. The Programme puts special emphasis on improving local DRR coordination mechanisms, as well as affirming risk-informed strategic planning processes with a focus on the most vulnerable population groups.

The Programme’s territorial focus is throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina focusing on a core group of **10 partner local governments** based on a pre-identified longlist of potential partner local governments highly disaster-prone. The selection process was based on the methodology for selecting 10 high-risk Local Self-Government Units (LSGUs) including willingness to actively participate and support the implementation of the Programme. Participating local government partners are **Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Prijedor, Srebrenica, Trebinje in the Republika Srpska (RS); Bihac, Kalesija, Kakanj, Gradačac, Sanski Most in the Federation of BiH (FBiH)**.

The main Programme partners are the Ministry of Security of BiH, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH, the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of FBiH, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of RS, the Ministry of Health of FBiH, Ministry of Education of FBiH, Ministry of Education and Culture of RS, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of RS, Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry of FBiH, Civil Protection Directorate of RS and Civil Protection Directorate of FBiH.

**STRATEGIC REVIEW AND OUTLOOK**

The implementation of the Programme work plan throughout years varied and from 2022 onwards was dedicated to accelerating implementation to compensate activities that were rescheduled from 2020 and part of 2021 caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, the efforts of the Programme team after initiating activities in setting up the scene and mechanism for the implementation in 2019 are sublimed in activity implementation focusing on **delivering sectoral and consolidated risk assessments, providing capacity building activities, implementing small scale measures, mainstreaming DRR priorities in local strategic development documentation and sustaining achievements together** with all Programme partners in Local Self-Government Units (LSGUs), aiming to unlock further support to higher level authorities in applying model of work vertically and horizontally throughout the country.

After experiencing delays by Covid-19 which surely affected and deprioritized work of institutional partners, it was noticeable that Programme **intervention continues to be relevant and in line** with new priorities that are lately stipulated within Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025, particularly, within Outcome 1. and Outcome 4., directly contributing to increasing the percentage of local authorities with local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030, together with SDG-centered and gender-sensitive strategies and implementation plans as part of a coherent development planning and management system.

Key milestones of the Programme were conducting the midterm review and lately the Final Evaluation of the Programme. **The Final Evaluation gathered** more than 60 stakeholders of the Programme thus reviewing and assessing the overall performance of the Programme, its results, inputs activities, partnerships, and UN-internal set-up, and if and how the delivered outputs contributed to improved local community resilience and more effective prevention, preparedness and response to disasters. The general finding of **the first phase of the Programme is successful** with many of the defined targets to be either achieved or on track to be fully achieved by the end of the Programme in June 2023. Key recommendations are leaned for further **improvement of the Joint Programme administration** (e.g. strengthening inter-UN agency coordination and coherence; engaging with other donors to discuss DRR needs in BiH, etc.) followed by actions **to inform the design of the Phase II Programme** (e.g. revising criteria for local community selection; taking into consideration relevant needs for the Phase II, etc.) including undertaking **steps to conclude the Phase I Programme** (e.g. detail spending plan development and further integration of DRR into local development strategies).

Following the Final Evaluation evidence of the Programme impact in the first phase, the foundation for bottom-up upscaling of DRR strategic solutions is set by demonstrating the effectiveness of an integrated model of disaster risk governance and livelihood enhancement in local communities across various sectors and improving coordination mechanisms and affirming risk-informed strategic planning processes with a focus on the most vulnerable population groups. Therefore, the Programme team has been engaged in conducting consultations with all institutional stakeholders from the first phase, including other relevant stakeholders, in **defining the priorities and designing the document for the second phase** of the Programme. This process coupled with the information and momentum that Bosnia and Herzegovina progressed in becoming a **member of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism** in December 2022, which will improve the capacities of the country for prevention, preparedness, and response to disasters. Furthermore, the Council of Ministers BiH adopted information for drafting and **designing a new country DRR Strategy** that will with the **new upcoming entity civil protection legislation** significantly push forward the DRR transformation agenda thus allowing the Programme achievements and model of work to be mainstreamed.

Considering that results planned within the Programme are realized, the long-term impact of the Programme is still a challenge and conditioned by **the absence of country-level leadership** in the DRR portfolio in BiH. Also, there is a need **to develop vertical DRR coordination mechanisms** as well as horizontal, country-level DRR policy and strategy frameworks and align the DRR work with the provision of the Sendai Framework and broader SDG agenda. It is evident that there is a need to **move from project-based DRR culture to a more systematic and evidence-based DRR preparedness and response culture** at all levels of Government in BiH through formalization, institutionalization, legal recognition, and acceptance of local DRR Platforms and DRR frameworks.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Programme **strengthened the capacities of Local Self-Government Units**, thus improving strategic and regulatory frameworks, and integrating multiple sectors into a cross-sectoral local coordination mechanism with relevant socio-economic stakeholders. Therefore, the Programme arrangements tackled local management support as the key prerequisites for ensuring that development from disasters is shifted not as occasional events but as a contentious threat through the management of risks generated and accumulated on an ongoing basis. The partners and team managed to **compile evidence-based documentation** with steps made in translating these priorities into **cross-sectoral DRR strategic** planning. Furthermore, this is coupled with adequate **investments in human and institutional capacities** of involved development sectors to ensure policy, institutional, and knowledge management in disaster risk reduction prioritization through further implementation.

Stakeholders involved in the Programme **actively participated and regularly are being informed** about results achievements through the Steering Committee's strategic and decision-making collaboration mechanism. Relevant partner institutions from the state, entity, and local levels are aware of progress, through capacitating risk-informed decision-making and legitimizing DRR and emergency preparedness systems, procedures, and policies at a local level.

Stakeholders in the Programme from the local communities grasped opportunities and **remained focused and actively** collaborated in all Programme activities throughout the Programme displayed immense **progress in understanding risk management**, and further advocated for a fully strategic merging of all actions with decision-makers at the local level but also with higher-level authorities through Steering Committee collaboration mechanism. Furthermore, the Programme achievements and recognition are evidenced within national achievements, best practices, and the ways forward in the achievement of the objectives and priorities of the Sendai Framework, through conducting **the first Voluntary National Report of the Midterm Review** of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The positive momentum was noted especially toward a more complex understanding of the changing nature of the risk including **risk** **governance and management** where the risk governance system has evolved during the recent period, allowing comprehensive risk reduction. The development planning process, **especially on the local level**, gained momentum and evident progress was achieved with understanding and further strengthening the incorporation of risk reduction into different developmental and planning frameworks, contributing to enhanced resilience-building.

From a sustainability point of view, the Programme team with the local stakeholders **promoted, collaborated, and seek** systemic solutions for integrating the Programme achievements toward local decision-makers and higher levels of authorities that are part of the Steering Committee collaboration mechanism. As experienced and stated by the local partners, sustainability concerns are mainly related to **formalization, institutionalization, legal recognition, and acceptance** of local DRR Platforms and DRR frameworks, making them widely accepted as effective tools for disaster risk governance in the country. Specifically, the key risk factors that need to be addressed at the current stage of Programme implementation involve a) **absence of legal recognition of the DRR platform**, b) **no stable or guaranteed sources of finance for the DRR platform and disaster risk governance measures**; and c) **limited human and institutional capacities** of various sectors involved in DRR, with moderate staff turnover rate, to regularly update the risk assessment and implement the DRR platform activities.

**OUTCOMES ACHIEVED FOR 2023**

**OUTCOME 1 – At least 10 local governments have adopted DRR-featuring strategies, established partnerships for effective DRR interventions, and financed actions that build community resilience thus are better equipped to prevent and respond to disasters.**

As per the Programme's agreed dynamics and steps, most of the team’s focus, time and effort were made to continue capacitating LDRRPs professionals, reaching essential preconditions for multi-sectoral planning and implementing further actions to prevent and respond to disasters in all partner local communities. In later stages, the work encompassed **advocating for further embedding the local DRR platforms into municipality modus operandi, including voicing out the need to the higher-level authorities for official recognition of local DRR platform model and other relevant results into their procedural work.**

Established local cross-sectoral DRR partnerships through **10 Local Disaster Risk Reduction Platforms (LDRRP)** enabled cross-institutional dialogue and coordinated the work among **139 professionals** throughout Programme lifespan**.** Platform members including specific sector sub-working groups, even though with changed priorities and stretched capacities, managed to continue their work on Programme activities started in 2019. Conducted a Needs assessment of each LDRRP in 2019 brought up three crucial and concrete capacity-building opportunities for beneficiary local governments.

Results achieved within this outcome emphasize **the path to contributing to local governments whose strategies and plans** are based on DRR evidence and cross-sectoral aspects, following relevant international DRR frameworks and guidelines. Significant to mention is a continuation of **the pathway of mainstreaming DRR cross-sectoral into the strategic framework of local governments**, following relevant international DRR frameworks and guidelines. Achieved results display the finalization of**local policy and capacity-building** development processes following discussion to sustain the Programme results with all Programme partners.

To ensure the sustainability of the work of the platforms in all local communities in the future, the discussion with all partners occurred to operationalize the modality of intersectoral work and make it an integral part of the institutional mechanism of action in all local communities. The proposed modality of DRR platform integration is acceptable and applicable by most partners in local communities where the disaster risk reduction platform will be **officially recognized** through existing documents in such a way that the local disaster risk reduction platform is appointed/organized as an expert-operational team. Nevertheless, it was suggested by all platform members and professionals **to continue activities towards higher levels of government, mainly with the entity administrations of civil protection**, so that the mode of operation of the platform as well as other positive results of the Programme (e.g. DRAS system, etc.) **find** their **place in within future procedures and operational guidelines**. Regarding the digitalization progress, the Programme Team supported partner institutions in providing further capacity building and technical support in transforming and positioning the DRAS system into the regular work of civil protection administrations, by jointly communicating and designing an enchiridion for the DRAS system development and utilization in the coming period.

The focus was to follow up on the completed consolidated cross-sectoral risk assessment process of adoption in all local communities. By the end of first phase of the Programme, **all partner local communities have prepared consolidated cross-sectoral risk assessments** and **80% of all local communities** **adopted these documents** while the process for the remaining partners’ documentation adoption is mainly conditioned by aligning these documents with new regulations in Republika Srpska and expected to occur last quarter of 2023 or at the beginning of 2024. All LSGUs management mainstreamed identified DRR priorities and measures into the **strategic development process.** Due to the different dynamicsof all local communities accompanied by a need for aligning all local strategic documents (strategies and action plans) with relatively new guidelines for integral strategic development in Republika Srpska and Federation BiH, some of LSGUs partners commenced their work while this process in other local communities occurred through action planning process.

**OUTCOME 2 – Citizens in partner localities, particularly the most vulnerable population groups, have become more resilient to disasters.**

Under this Outcome, despite delays in the Programme implementation caused by Covid-19, the Programme team with partners managed to work on improvement of DRR capacities, procedures and know-how in civil protection, social and child protection, health and agriculture sector. The team’s efforts were made to continue capacitating LDRRPs professionals, **implementing policy development and small-scale measures in several sectors, and testing the procedural know-how of DRR platform members by simulating different scenarios throughout joint simulation exercise.** The Programme team kept implementing the multisectoral model of work and together with partners executed activities relevant to improving **DRR platform members’ skills and capacities, operating procedures, action planning, and know-how** in civil protection, social and child protection, health, and agriculture sectors.

Achievements are made in **enhancing the capacities** of all partner LSGUs and enabling them to address disaster risks in an **integrated, vulnerability-sensitive and effective manner**, contributing to community resilience for 632,331 (323,291 F) citizens living in these areas. Less capacitated sectoral actions that were prioritized as part of small-scale measures through valid cross-sectoral risk assessments and action plans are mainly realized in addressing further capacity development through procurement of specific materials, and equipment or conducting education, construction work, and digitalizing their work. Capacities for camp management and coordination amplified through **tailored camp coordination and camp management (CCCM)** training of trainers (ToT) for selected staff from Civil protection, the Red Cross, and other relevant institutions from all partner LSGUs and representatives of Red Cross Associations Civil Protection Administrations at the entity level and Ministry of Security of BH. On the side of education interventions, **ten school disaster management teams were formed** enabling a cross-sectoral and holistic DRR implementation at the school level. Integrated support to **more than 6,000 children** (out of which more than 2,900 girls) provided by Teams and operationalized through developed school DRR assessments and action plans, as well as extensive DRR capacity building delivered. In all **ten Programme LSGUs, Shock-Responsive Social Protection (SRSP)/DRR SP Action Plans (DRR SP APs) were adopted** by the Centers for Social Welfare (CSWs), Mayors, and Civil Protection local departments in target communities. The DRR APs enable CSWs to undertake timely preparedness actions and plan social protection service continuity for the most vulnerable beneficiaries in emergencies, including children and families. The Plans will ensure coverage with **risk-informed social protection services**. As the baseline for the development of the DRR SP APs, the **entity-level Guidelines** for the development of Shock-Responsive Social Protection/DRR Action Plans were **developed in FBiH and RS**, validated and endorsed by the Entity Ministries of Social Policy/Social Protection and Entity-level Civil Protection Administrations.

Planned **cross-sectoral work is completed** thus making preconditions for LSGUs **to continue investing** in the ownership, commitment, and sustainability of DRR interventions through the formal adoption of DRR documentation and their adequate budgeting. On the hand supporting LSGUs in improving further operational and procedural engagement of professionals in an emergency, a step forward is made in the **development and adoption of standard operating procedures for the protection of children in emergencies, and camp management**. Furthermore, **guiding documents, practical and communication know-how**, and promotional/practical material and equipment are delivered aim to improve the knowledge and practice of health and non-health professionals to effectively address specific healthcare needs of children, youth, adolescents, and women in emergency settings enhanced.

Upon completion of all activities in 2022, the simulation exercise was organized aiming to create and sustain **a culture of preparing and allowing for stress-testing plans** and systems of risk-exposed communities to reduce challenges in the face of a crisis. Since all consolidated risk assessments are developed, the idea was to enable **professionals** (**49 (13 F)** from local DRR platforms eventually involved) to participate and experience unique opportunities where all relevant sectors have different tasks prepared to test them in real-life scenarios.

The Programme efforts contributed preparation and **identifying priority DRR actions** that increased community resilience based on multi-sectoral risk assessments and further DRR-featuring local strategies in all LSGUs. In total, there were **49 identified and realized initiatives (30 in civil protection, 10 in social/child, and 9 in education)** that showcased local authorities and decision-makers the way forward for **further system smart investments and strengthening cross-sectoral measures** in making cities resilient to disasters.

**OUTPUTS AND PERFORMANCE ACCORDING TO YEARLY PLAN OF OPERATION 2023**

As per the approved Annual Work Plans, the Programme team focused on implementing planned activities in line with adopted timelines and activities.

**OUTCOME 1 – At least 10 local governments have adopted DRR-featuring strategies, established partnerships for effective DRR interventions, and financed actions that build community resilience thus are better equipped to prevent and respond to disasters.**

Output 1.1 Local-level DRR Platforms are established to serve as locally-owned DRR coordination mechanisms and capacitated to mainstream DRR into local policies and strategies, and support community resilience-building.

After the finalization of the selection of partner municipalities, the first activity within the Programme was the establishment of LDRRPs. LDRRPs were successfully established with now 139 professionals involved in all 10 municipalities. The establishment of the LDRRPs consisted of the appointment of representatives from all relevant sectors (protection and rescue, education, social and child protection, health, and agriculture), adoption of the Terms of Reference of the LDRRPs, and initial meetings of the LDRRPs. Adopted Terms of Reference of LDRRPs clearly indicate that the overarching mandate of LDRRPs is to ensure strong local ownership and leadership of the DRR process, based on a shared understanding of DRR with its multisectoral and multi-disciplinary nature to contribute to building the community’s resilience. LDRRPs served as institutional mechanisms throughout the implementation of the Programme while at the same time, the Programme was building their capacities to ensure the sustainability of LDRRPs in the long run.

Intensive work has been conducted to engage all professionals to ensure proper capacity assessments and to focus on vulnerable groups in DRR planning and implementation. An international expert was engaged to develop a detailed multisectoral Methodology for capacity assessment of Local Disaster Risk Reduction Platforms agreed upon among all participating UN Agencies. As a result, a detailed needs assessment of each LDRRP was conducted. The assessment of the LDRRPs was conducted in accordance with the agreed Methodology through interviews of LDRRPs members with pre-defined as well as follow-up questions as needed. The assessment was done separately for each sector: (i) protection and rescue, (ii) education, (iii) social and child protection, (iv) health, and (v) agriculture through a joint meeting.

Based on the detailed needs assessment of each LDRRP, it is reported that local experts were engaged to develop three concrete capacity-building training for LSGUs: 1) Training on climate change, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development; 2) Training on project management; 3) Training on Disaster Risk Management (DRM). Training on climate change, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development has been held in 2020, while the remaining two trainings were successfully held in May and June 2021. In total 94 members (32 F and 62 M) of LDRRPs attended these trainings.

The Action plans on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (SRH&GBViE) for five partner LSGUs in Republika Srpska (Banja Luka, Prijedor, Bijeljina, Trebinje, and Srebrenica) as well as for two partner LSGUs in Federation BiH (Bihac and Sanski Most) were completed in 2021. All action plans were developed in line with previously developed entity-level framework Action Plans on SRH&GBViE in 2020. Due to scarce capacities additionally burdened by the COVID-19, professionals from other three partner LSGUs in the Federation of BiH (Gradacac, Kalesija and Kakanj) were not able to actively participate in the finalization of action plans in 2021, therefore these action plans are completed in 2022. Both Entity Ministries of Health, together with relevant disaster risk reduction experts from local communities, joined their efforts to improve DRR preparedness and response of relevant professionals by including the Minimum Initial Package of Services for Sexual and Reproductive Health in Emergencies (MISP) in local development strategies. The proposals for MISP inclusion in the remaining 9 LSGUs strategies (4 in FBiH and 5 in RS; Kakanj was resolved earlier) were presented in each local community and submitted to the coordinators of the DRR Platforms.

As part of the further capacitating of LDRRPs in all 10 LSGUs, progress was made in further anchoring the model of platforms in all local communities. This is done by communicating clear messages and requirements from the local community professionals who are stating that more systematic embedment of procedural and policy guidance is needed to have a proper fundament for further functioning of local DRR platforms. This will ensure decision-makers clear guidance but also an obligation to introduce and nurture such mechanism of work.

Output 1.2 Local government’s disaster risk assessment capacities are improved based on evidence, innovative technologies and vulnerability considerations.

Upon preparatory activities related to risk assessment to underline drivers of hazard, exposure, vulnerabilities, and capacities in the selected local communities of the Programme, communication and coordination among institutions/sectors continued to initiate the process of developing local risk, vulnerability, and safety assessments. These comprehensive assessments now determine the nature and extent of disaster risk by analysing potential hazards and evaluating existing conditions of exposure and vulnerability that together could harm people, property, services, livelihoods, and the environment on which they depend.

Detailed floods and landslides risk assessments for all 10 beneficiary municipalities are finalized. These assessments were done using DRAS and were integrated in the existing Risk Assessments of beneficiary municipalities. Following this, 10 local vulnerability risk assessments were finalized in close cooperation with Centres for Social Welfare and DRR Working Groups in the Social and Child Protection Sector/ members of Local DRR Platforms. The vulnerability risk assessments provide a comprehensive analysis of hazard exposure and vulnerability of social protection beneficiaries as well as the institutional capacity of Centres for Social Welfare (CSWs) to implement DRR measures. The assessments analysed the following: i) the level of spatial exposure and vulnerability of existing and potential social protection beneficiaries to natural and other hazards, ii) social risks and needs of existing and potential Social Protection (SP) beneficiaries related to DRR, and iii) capacities of CSWs (human and technical) for implementing DRR in coordination with other sectors.

Regarding the process of consolidation of sectoral risk assessments (floods and landslides risk assessments, social and children protection, sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence and agriculture) into Risk Assessments, all activities are conducted and drivers of hazard, exposure, vulnerabilities, and capacities in the LSGUs are underlined. Updated multi-sectoral risk assessments are consolidated and started to be an official document in LSGUs.

DRAS system has been institutionalized and represents an innovative IT tool (developed in 2016 and has already existed in 12 municipalities) in BiH. Following on further enhancement of knowledge and capacities of partners in institutions in utilizing the DRAS IT tool, 10 LSGUs of the Programme are using DRAS to access scientific floods, landslides, earthquakes, and fire hazard data. In total, 22 LSGUs so far are using the DRAS system thus displaying synergy between different initiatives within DRR in BiH. DRAS provides information about mine suspected areas for the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina as well. These scientific hazard data are of great use for decision-makers and citizens to increase disaster risk awareness for a specific locality. In line with discussions in 2020 and upon receiving a request from competent institutions from Republika Srpska in 2021, the DRAS database is separated and now all data regarding Republika Srpska are located on a server provided by the Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska. An agreement has also been reached with the Civil Protection Administration of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to transfer all DRAS data regarding FBiH and Brcko District BH from the server provided by UNDP to the server which will be provided by the Civil Protection Administration of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Public Relations (PR) campaign for promoting DRAS to the general public using posters, radio jingles and TV commercials has been held in the period from December 2020 to June 2021. The Programme Team supported partner institutions in providing additional education for the use of the DRAS system and will continue to provide support in creating a clear vision for the development and use of the DRAS system in the coming period.

In collaboration with the UNESCO Chair on Intersectoral Safety for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience SPRINT-Lab at the University of Udine, and the Universities of Sarajevo and Banja Luka, a training of BiH VISUS Survey Coordinators and Teams was completed fundamentally aiming to improve institutional capacities, and to support frameworks and partnerships at the local government level across Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as among various educational authorities in terms of school safety improvements. VISUS workshop was organized for the period from 17 to 20 May 2022, hosted by the Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering, and Geodesy of the University of Banja Luka. The workshop was led by a team of experts from the SPRINT-Lab and gathered four (1 F) professors and twelve (10 F) students from the Faculty of Architecture, University of Sarajevo, and the host faculty. After the successful both theoretical and practical learning exercises, the two local survey teams conducted 40 field school surveys across 10 selected project communities across BiH: Bihac, Sanski Most, Gradacac, Kalesija, Kakanj, Banja Luka, Prijedor, Bijeljina, Trebinje, and Srebrenica. In order to support the VISUS survey execution phase, a VISUS portal service that includes VISUS Bosnia and Herzegovina repository, web maps, and a portal for surveys was developed and customized for implementing the surveys in the BiH schools. Moreover, both Banja Luka and Sarajevo VISUS survey teams were provided with VISUS-recommended ITC equipment that will enable them to perform surveys in a professional manner. The final VISUS survey reports have been disseminated to the respective educational ministries and local communities’ authorities for further action, enabling them to identify necessary upgrades to the safety measures of surveyed schools, and providing tools and information they need to make science-backed decisions relating to where and how to invest available resources for improving school safety, and more specifically, benefit students, teachers, and other school staff members, by establishing a safer working and studying environment. The trained BiH VISUS Survey Coordinators remain the key partner in future school safety assessments in BiH and may provide expert support in scientifically based decision-making processes. In total 40 schools were assessed in BiH: 20 in Republika Srpska and 20 in Federation BiH, out of which 38 primary and 2 secondary schools, involving and considering the safety of overall 18,895 beneficiaries (M 49%, F 51%): students 16,744 (F 47%), teaching personnel 1,598 (F 71%), and non-teaching personnel (F 68%).

The collaboration successfully trained BiH VISUS Survey Coordinators and teams, conducted 40 school safety surveys across Bosnia and Herzegovina, and provided essential tools and reports to local educational authorities, enhancing their capacity to make science-backed decisions for improving school safety and benefiting nearly 18,895 students and staff in target locations.

Output 1.3 Municipal/city DRR strategic and action planning frameworks are upgraded based on multi-sectoral perspective, with focus on the vulnerable population groups.

Activities on upgrading existing methodology for mainstreaming DRR into local strategies preceded further work on DRR integration into local development strategies and action plans. The Programme supported the integration of all relevant DRR sectoral assessments and components in local development strategies in all 10 municipalities/cites. The integration efforts included relevant DRR data from sectoral risk assessments as well as extraction of strategic priority measures from DRR plans of centers for social welfare, schools, civil protection, health, and agriculture. Integration was implemented in stages by having a dedicated field consultation with DRR teams, involving local DRR Platform members and sectoral working group members. They produced detailed DRR strategic prioritization reports which resulted in 10 proposed DRR-informed local development strategies, with a focus on social protection and education. Proposals were reviewed by local sectoral teams and DRR Platforms, aiming to increase sustainability and long-term ownership of inclusive DRR measures focused on risk-proofing of schools and preschools and centers for social welfare as critical social service providers before, during and after crises and emergencies. Bearing in mind that all local communities have officially committed to translating priorities for disaster risk reduction, consolidated risk assessments have been adopted in 8 local communities (Srebrenica, Kakanj, Sanski Most, Kalesija, Bihać, Banja Luka, Bijeljina and Gradačac) and the adoption of the remaining risk assessments is expected the first half of 2024. Also, development strategies with the necessary elements of disaster risk reduction were adopted in 3 local governments (Kakanj, Kalesija and Srebrenica), in 3 local governments development strategies with DRR elements are in the adoption process (Sanski Most, Bijeljina and Gradacac), in 2 local governments existing development strategies are updated with DRR integrated implementation plans (Banja Luka and Bihac) while the process of integration of DRR priorities in local development strategies in remaining 2 local communities is completed with all DRR platform members and local economic development sectors and adoption is planned for 2024.

The effectiveness of the JP delivery has been challenged by limited resources at the local level during COVID 19, changes in the city leadership and complexity of the political environment in BiH. Although DRR Platform members and sectoral working group members have produced consolidated risk assessments and local development strategies with the necessary DRR elements for all 10 LSGUs, risk assessments have been officially adopted in 8 LSGUs and local development strategies have been adopted or updated in 5 LSGUs. Adoption of remaining consolidated risk assessments and local development strategies is planned for 2024.

**OUTCOME 2 – Citizens in partner localities, particularly the most vulnerable population groups, have become more resilient to disasters.**

Output 2.1. Local level capacities for floods and landslides prevention and preparedness are enhanced through capacity development, prevention measures and awareness raising.

In line with preparatory activities, the support was provided together with International Organization for Migration, as implementing partner, to organize and implement camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) training of trainers (ToT) in November 2021. The training strengthened capacities for camp management and camp coordination of 34 (F: 8 M: 26) participants from Civil protection, the Red Cross, and other relevant institutions from all partners LSGUs, vertically integrating higher-level authorities’ representatives of Red Cross Associations and Civil Protection Administrations at the entity level and Ministry of Security of BH at the state level. One of the training goals was to bring together partners in the CCCM sector to develop a shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities in camp management, camp coordination, and camp authorities in camps/collective centers. The training aimed to raise awareness of international protection and assistance principles, approaches, and standards in camps and camp-like settings and build competence in using CCCM guidelines and tools.

Priority DRR actions that will increase community resilience are identified based on multi-sectoral risk assessments in all 10 partner LSGUs. Implementation of these actions started in five LSGUs in 2021 and in the remaining five LGSUs in 2022. All priority DRR actions are implemented by June 2023.

Priority DRR actions in Bijeljina and Srebrenica that are implemented in 2021 were related to the procurement of flood rescue equipment such as rescue boats, outboard boat engines, boat trailers, 4x4 vehicles, personal rescue equipment for rescuers, and most necessary IT equipment for civil protection services. Priority DRR actions in, Sanski Most and Bihac are partially implemented in 2021 and were related to flooding response equipment and 4x4 vehicle in Bihac and establishing the center for early warning, alerting, and informing of citizens in Sanski Most. Construction of a flood drainage channel along Sana River in Prijedor started in 2021 but due to complex property relations between the City of Prijedor and private landowners, this activity has been cancelled. In 2022, all priority DRR actions in remaining partner LSGUs are identified and started. Two landslides were rehabilitated in Banja Luka and in Kalesija two landslides were rehabilitated as well. In Gradacac one landslide was rehabilitated. In Sanski Most, regulation of the Radinovac Stream in the length of 840 m was done. In Bihac, procurement of equipment for Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) unit such as a mobile compressor, cut-off machine, two chainsaws, mobile power generator, and toolbox with tools was completed. In Kakanj, Project Documentation for the rehabilitation of one landslide, procurement of a high-capacity centrifugal water pump, and riverbed cleaning of the Trstionica River were implemented. In Bijeljina, the reconstruction of the access ramp for rescue boats to the Sava River in Bijeljina and the procurement of one drone for the civil protection service were done. Training and certification of 35 voluntary firefighters (Bijeljina 10; Prijedor 8; Trebinje 17) were implemented. In 2023, procurement of flood rescue equipment, including 10.000 sandbags, backup power generator for fire station building, radio repeater, handheld radio stations and 4x4 vehicle[[1]](#footnote-2) was completed in Prijedor. In Banja Luka, project documentation for regulation of Rebrovacki stream and first ever in BiH digital database with landslides cadastre using GIS software are completed. Procurement of sirens and supporting equipment for early warning systems in Bihać and Sanski Most is completed. Also, procurement of water pumps and air dehumidifiers for 8 local governments is completed in 2023.

Output 2.2. Safe school environments in partner localities are established through strengthening school capacities for disaster management and risk reduction.

The Programme partnered with World Vision International in BiH (WVI BiH) to strengthen school DRR capacities by improving safe school environments in 10 selected primary and secondary schools. The school selection was conducted in partnership with the LDRRPs to ensure the best fit for the scope of intervention. Together with the competent education authorities, LDRRPs and the WVI BiH, UNICEF developed the selection framework criteria that investigated different aspects of school vulnerabilities to disasters, the number of children attending, and the previous school management experiences in the DRR area. Upon community consultations, the LDRRPs nominated the schools for intervention and the final approval by the competent educational authorities was issued.

School Disaster Management Teams were formed in all ten schools to reflect the multi-sector and holistic approach in designing the school DRR action plans. The teams are linked to the LDRRPs, and their structure is tailor-made for each school based on the available community resources. It included representatives of school management and teachers, civil protection, local governance, CSWs, health centers, police, fire departments, centres for mental health, local CSOs, and parent and student associations.

All School Disaster Management Teams went through the envisaged DRR capacity-building programme, which resulted in the developed school DRR assessments and the corresponding action plans. The Programme provided training opportunities for 94 teachers and school staff (out of which 53 are female) on how to integrate DRR into their teaching plans, reaching around 3,370 (1,550 girls) children. Evacuation drills were held in eight schools in partnership with civil protection, police, ambulance, Red Cross, and fire departments, followed by stakeholder debriefings on how to improve evacuation protocols. Furthermore, one evacuation exercise in the school in Kakanj was conducted, with the participation of all relevant community stakeholders, first responders, school staff, and children. This exercise was also used as an exemplary activity to mark the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, highlighting the importance of disaster-safe school environments.

The schools received technical and financial support to implement small-scale interventions tailored to their needs and priorities. Nine schools completed their projects, including installing fire alarms, setting up video surveillance, repairing of heating system, and procuring fire extinguishers and first aid kits.

About 7,500 child-friendly leaflets with guidelines on what to do in case of emergencies were distributed and awareness-raising activities were organized for students on the International Day of DRR (October 13th). The conference Safe School Environment- Messages and Recommendations was held in September 2022, aiming to promote good DRR practices in the education sector. Representatives of competent and coordinating ministries of education, civil protection, LDRRPs, parents, and children attended, resulting in 14 priority recommendations for improving DRR in education, further shared with all education authorities in BiH.

The achieved results fully correspond to the planned ones. especially in view of connecting the cross-sectoral school DRR teams with broader city/municipal DRR Platforms. This integration has significantly enhanced local-level disaster preparedness referrals, positioning educational facilities as a critical infrastructure focus in the disaster resilience agenda as well as soft capacity-building delivered with education professionals and children.

Output 2.3. Institutional preparedness and DRR capacities of social and child protection systems in partner localities are strengthened.

As part of the capacity development efforts in the social sectors, dedicated DRR working groups in social and child protection sectors were established and linked to local DRR Platforms in 10 target locations. The WGs are chaired by the Centres for Social Welfare (CSWs) and consist of representatives from CSWs, Civil Protection, Municipal Departments for Social Affairs, and local CSOs focused on dealing with vulnerable population.

In 2020, two key capacity-strengthening interventions in the social and child protection sector were held: i) a DRR workshop on the role of SP in DRR with a focus on vulnerability risk assessments for RS target locations and Gradacac (workshop for FBiH WGs was held in 2019) and ii) online workshops focused on DRR and contingency planning of social and child protection sectors for FBiH and RS locations. The first workshop was held from 6-7 February 2020 and gathered 26 representatives from Social and Child Protection Working Groups/DRR Platforms representatives – local CSWs, Civil Protection Units, Red Cross, vulnerability-focused CSOs, municipal/city departments from social welfare. In addition, the workshop was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of RS. To stimulate horizontal knowledge transfer and cross-municipal cooperation, the workshop involved practical insight into a pilot example of CSW vulnerability risk assessment and DRR action plan conducted in the Municipality of Doboj in 2016, facilitated by a Doboj Civil Protection representative. The workshops focused also on vulnerability risks related to child protection-specific elements, as future action planning will consolidate indications for specific child protection components.

Due to the COVID-19 situation, the second round of workshops on DRR and contingency planning in the social and child protection sector was conducted in an online format and gathered 18 participants from FBiH and 16 from RS Social and Child Protection Working Groups (WGs)/ DRR Platform members. The two-day workshops were held on 19-20 November (FBiH) and 26-27 November (Banja Luka, Prijedor, Trebinje, Srebrenica) and 17 December (Bijeljina – organized separately and in shortened form due to the COVID-19 workload and limited availability of WG members). The workshop’s focus was on increasing participants’ knowledge and capacities to apply practical tools and approaches for developing Multi-hazard DRR and Preparedness Action Plans and Contingency procedures for CSWs in crisis situations. The workshops involved sessions by representatives of entity-level civil protection administrations to ensure the transfer of knowledge and practical advice on the official methodologies for developing protection and rescue plans and their adaptation to SP preparedness plans. In addition, the workshop for FBiH WGs included a session on the findings of COVID-19 Impact assessment in social protection sectors conducted in 5 FBiH Cantons to ensure synergies and adequate representation of pandemic risks in CSW crisis preparedness plans. Both workshops were attended by representatives of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and RS Ministry of Health and Social Welfare – the members of the Joint UN Swiss DRR Programme Steering Committee.

In 2021, 10 Shock-Responsive Social Protection (SRSP)/DRR Action Plans (DRR APs) were developed and adopted by the Centers for Social Welfare (CSWs), Mayors, and civil protection local departments in target communities. The DRR APs enable CSWs to undertake timely preparedness actions and plan social protection service continuity for the most vulnerable beneficiaries in emergencies, including children and families. As a baseline for the development of the DRR APs, the entity-level Guidelines for Shock-Responsive Social Protection/DRR Action Plans were developed in FBiH and RS, validated and endorsed by the Entity Ministries of Social Policy/Social Protection and Entity-level Civil Protection Administrations.

Following the adoption of DRR SP APs, the Programme supported 10 CSWs to design DRR grant projects incentivizing the implementation of key preparedness measures adopted in the APs. This resulted in directly and indirectly benefitting 39,231 (16,947 F) social protection beneficiaries, including 10,483 children (5,032 F) as well as enhancing DRR capacities of more than 200 social protection professionals to ensure service continuity in crisis. This was achieved through DRR skills-building exercises and training, the provision of protective DRR equipment and small-scale retrofitting of CSW premises, the establishment of DRR-informed databases of beneficiaries, and the provision of IT equipment.

Through these Action Plans implementations, the most vulnerable social protection beneficiaries mentioned above and identified through risk assessments, notably families and children from economically deprived households, single-parent households, as well as people and children with disabilities, were empowered to apply DRR skills by identifying risks in their communities and demonstrating adequate behavioural skills in emergencies, accessing prevention and protection services and emergency providers during and after a crisis, coupled with crisis response equipment and tested through disaster simulation drills. This was coupled with community-level DRR awareness raising focused on the role and services provided by CSWs in emergencies, in coordination with civil protection. Furthermore, UNICEF advocated maximizing ownership and sustainability of small-scale project results, leading to 10 CSWs leveraging 18 percent of co-funding to implement Action Plans (APs) with long-term commitments being mainstreamed in 10 local development strategies. Ten APs were tested in joint field crisis simulation exercises in close partnership with the disaster management sector.

As part of a broader DRR programming through other projects, intending to support horizontal scale-up of DRR integration in social protection, DRR champion SP professionals engaged from the DRR JP target CSWs (CSW Kalesija) in knowledge transfer activities and training related to the establishment of the DRR social protection model in 5 new locations in FBiH.

As part of work on the child protection component of the DRR programme, UNICEF initiated two partnerships: in Republika Srpska with the Association of Social Workers RS and in Federation BiH with World Vision. The key elements of cooperation are based on the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for child protection in 10 targeted locations in BiH. Child protection system and its main outreach service providers – CSWs need support in the standardization of referrals in cases of emergencies and crises. Although various child protection key documents and protocols are designed and implemented, they are fragmented. Furthermore, the Programme supported the development and adoption of SOP for the protection of children in emergencies. In close cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Republika Srpska and the Association of Social Service Workforce Professionals of Republika Srpska, Programme supported the preparation and adoption of SoPs for the CSWs in five municipalities in Republika Srpska which have been adopted. In FBIH, in close cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and in partnership with World Vision, centers for social welfare in five FBiH locations were supported to develop and adopt SoPs for the protection of children in emergency situations.

The achieved results exceeded the planned ones, as local-level successes have elevated to strategic commitments by entity-level governments, as outlined in the Shock-Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) Road Maps. These road maps, combined with system-level reform plans for emergency cash transfers, pave the way for a large-scale expansion of sustainable, government-led, and government-funded SRSP interventions. Additionally, in 2023, Bosnia and Herzegovina became the first country in the Western Balkans to institutionalize a local shock-responsive social protection model in its government’s strategic planning processes, detailed in entity-level Social Protection Strategies.

Output 2.4. Preparedness and DRR capacities of local governments and healthcare institutions in partner localities to effectively address specific health-care needs of children, youth and adolescents, and women in emergency settings enhanced.

The mapping of institutions, organizations, and integrated sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender-based violence (GBV) services include different Primary Health Care (PHC) departments through which SRH services are provided (gynecology, family medicine, emergency, mental health). The mapping also included also non-health institutions and organizations involved in the provision of GBV services in LSGUs (civil protection, social protection, police, CSOs, etc.). Working groups were appointed in both entities and a survey methodology was developed (including questionnaires), which provided a solid ground for mapping to be started in the selected LSGUs in the FBiH and the RS. Data collection started in 2019 and was continued in 2020 following the part of Mapping that was finalized in the municipalities of Prijedor and Gradacac. The fieldwork included the rest of the eight municipalities in BiH (FBiH: Bihac, Sanski Most, Kalesija, Kakanj; RS: Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Trebinje and Srebrenica). After the fieldwork was completed, the working groups finalized reports on Mapping for Federation BiH and Republika Srpska. A total of 214 respondents participated in the Mapping, including health professionals (73%) and professionals from other relevant sectors, institutions and organizations (27%).

The Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) represents a set of activities that should be implemented at the onset of every humanitarian crisis in a coordinated manner by appropriately trained health and non-health professionals. To proceed with activities regarding Sexual and Reproductive Health and Gender-Based Violence in emergencies (SRH and GBViE), as an added value to the Programme, the FBiH and RS entity ministries of health appointed working groups to develop entity level Action Plans for SRH and GBViE. Developed documents for FBiH and RS are based on the Minimum Initial Services Package (MISP) in emergencies. The entity-level Action Plans for SRH and GBViE were presented and discussed with DRR Platforms and relevant local community professionals and will further serve as a framework for adapting to the specifics of local communities.

Close at hand, the MISP for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) in emergencies has a series of crucial, lifesaving activities required to respond to the SRH and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) related needs of affected populations at the onset of a humanitarian crisis, are implemented by appropriately trained health and non-health professionals. A total number of 252 trained professionals passed through several MISP training conducted encompassing health professionals, and non-health professionals, including but not limited to DRR Platforms members, social and protection services, police force, and more, and youth involved in the development and DRR preparedness and response in their respective communities. With the above-mentioned results, the number of trained professionals exceeded the target initially foreseen by the project.

In addition, educational and advocacy material for the 10 LSGUs and the general public was developed. These included brochures on “Safe Motherhood in emergencies” targeted for pregnant women and their families to be distributed in emergencies; informative pocket-size leaflets for the professionals and general public explaining MISP objectives; and posters for the key DRR offices in the LSGUs which report the contact of the SRH coordinator as well as the course of life-saving actions according to MISP. SRH coordinators and relevant offices were also provided with the list of professionals trained on MISP in their respective communities, as well as “dignity kits” for GBV survivors, to be distributed shall the need arise.

The achieved results fully correspond to the planned ones. Added value was achieved through the development of Action Plans for sexual and reproductive health in emergencies at the entity level, which served as the basis for the creation of action plans at the level of local communities. Also, the training on MISP for SRH in emergencies included health and non-health professionals working directly with women and girls, which contributed to better coordination in the response to emergency situations between the relevant sectors. As for the training of relevant experts, the achieved results exceeded the planned ones, more precisely, the number of trained experts exceeded the planned ones. Additionally, dignity kits for women and girls procured for 10 local communities should ensure an adequate response for survivors of GBV in emergencies.

To address the ‘supply side’ of immunization problems, in collaboration with John Hopkins University, a global package on Interpersonal communication (IPC) on immunization was adapted to the local context and ToT was conducted for 15 trainers, pediatricians and epidemiologists from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The ToT boosted the confidence of health professionals in interacting with parents which should improve vaccine behaviours in all situations, including as an emergency preparedness measure. This package, together with the outbreak preparedness and response plan for emergencies, will tackle further immunization in emergencies, in consultation with Institutes of Public Health (IPHs).

In cooperation with the Institutes of Public Health of the Federation BiH and Republika Srpska, the Programme supported six workshops in the field of Interpersonal / Direct Communication on immunization and 140 (124 F) health workers, from 10 target locations in DRR JP participated. The education program was developed by UNICEF and John Hopkins Center for communication programs while educators were experts from the Federation BiH and Republika Srpska who have undergone training organized by UNICEF and Johns Hopkins Center.

Training content included benefits of professional and technical aspects of immunization: how vaccines work and contribute to health, data on coverage and trends, disease risks and immunization calendar, procedures and protocols for the correctness of vaccines, indecision regarding immunization, different types of vaccines against COVID-19 and mechanism of action of different types of vaccines, regular vaccination according to the immunization calendar during the COVID-19 pandemic. By improving the knowledge and skills of healthcare workers in interpersonal communication as well as in media relations, it can significantly improve the scope of vaccination. The analysis of the tests concluded that training had a significant impact on the change of knowledge and attitudes of the participants, with improved perception of the intersection of the health care worker with parents/guardians, as well as that the health care worker’s ability to give an adequate answer to questions about immunization.

As part of efforts to increase the currently low breastfeeding rate in BiH, four maternity wards were accredited and six new initiated in cooperation with the Agency for Certification, Accreditation and Health Care Improvement (ASKVA) of the Republika Srpska. In the FBiH the accreditation process became self-sustaining, and maternity wards due for re-accreditation are funding this with their own resources. All maternity wards in charge of DRR JP locations in the FBiH and 3 locations in the RS were included in those activities. These achievements contribute to the overall systems strengthening thus positioning breastfeeding support also as an emergency preparedness measure.

Furthermore, as part of the ongoing humanitarian response to the refugee/migrant situation in BiH, mother-baby corners were established in Una-Sana Canton, enabling access to a safe and private space for breastfeeding, psychosocial counselling and information on infant and young child feeding to mothers and children. In addition, the Protocol for properly using Baby Milk Substitutes (BMS) was developed informing the use of breastmilk substitutes in humanitarian settings.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the crucial role of the health systems in the response to the pandemic as of March 2020, healthcare institutions had to prioritize their work and postpone already initiated activities in the Programme. Therefore, two Working Groups (at the entity level) appointed to develop Measles Outbreak Plans had to postpone the work since most group members are members of Crisis Teams at the Entity level. In the area of nutrition and supporting health systems, raising awareness, and promoting exclusive breastfeeding practices before, during, and after emergencies in target localities, all preparatory activities were completed. Through partnerships with the Public Health Institute of Republika Srpska (PHI RS) and NGO Fenix, supported activities increased the knowledge, awareness, and accountability of 10 primary health care centers in providing quality breastfeeding support to mothers/families. This resulted in 10 Breastfeeding Support Centers formed within Paediatric Departments and equipped to provide support to families from pregnancy to early parenthood through evidence-based instruction and resources, as part of an integrative health care service for lactation and postpartum. More than 210 health professionals (pediatricians, pediatric nurses, home visiting nurses, gynaecologists, midwives, family medicine doctors, and family medicine nurses) improved their knowledge and capacities in supporting new mothers in breastfeeding and promoting exclusive breastfeeding practices before, during, and after emergencies in selected municipalities. These efforts were summed up in the developed Manual on providing support to breastfeeding.

Support continued to the Baby-Friendly Hospitals accreditation of another six maternity wards in Republika Srpska to help increase the current low breastfeeding rate. It is of utmost importance to maintain quality service continuity in the emergency context.

Output 2.5. Capacities of agriculture sector and vulnerable farmers in partner localities to increase disaster preparedness and reduce disaster losses are strengthened.

In line with the expected results, activities to raise awareness of the importance of disaster risk reduction occurred to help reduce the adverse impacts of natural hazard-induced disasters on agriculture among the relevant agricultural stakeholders. It has enhanced the capacities of agriculture partners to conduct municipality disaster risk assessments. It proved essential for them to have a clear understanding of the existing disaster risks, vulnerabilities and existing policy and institutional capacities to help risk-informed planning and decision-making for the agriculture sector and specifically vulnerable farmers. Through the implementation and establishment of LDRRPs, focusing on the relevant agricultural stakeholders, the Programme intervention enhanced coordination and collaboration of disaster risk reduction and management activities at the various levels (local to national) and across sectors and stakeholders.

Based on needs assessments, ten rounds of training (1 per municipality) with 15 farmers participating from each, thus having 150 farmers (F: 57, M: 93) in total trained and awareness on DRR good practices raised. In each local community, Farmer Field groups organized a field day to showcase primarily local policymakers and other professionals their previous work and made an effort to utilize this methodology.

Significant impact was visible in achieving sustainability by strengthening partnerships and alliances of the agriculture CSOs/NGOs in the LDRRPs with the other relevant stakeholders of the platform, meaning these partnerships continue beyond the lifespan of the Programme. This work resulted in connecting other FAO initiatives thus supporting the local community work (USK Canton and Bihac will continue to develop agriculture strategy at the cantonal level with relevant elements for the City of Bihac development strategy) in further strengthening the agriculture sector.

Output 2.6. Local level capacities, tools and procedures for disaster preparedness are tested in practice to improve cross-sectoral coordination for effective disaster response.

To promote a culture of DRR and enhance preparedness for effective response, the simulation exercise (SimEx) was organized to support the preparation of risk-exposed communities and allow for stress-testing plans and systems aiming to reduce challenges in the face of a crisis. The simulation exercise is based on the “Emergency Simulation Exercise Scenario”, a complementary report to the “Review and Summary of Risk Assessments of Municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina”. The scenario was designed from existing risk assessments of each municipality and consisted of a General Scenario for SimEx Bosnia and Herzegovina, followed by 10 scenarios for each municipality: Banja Luka, Bihać, Bijeljina, Gradačac, Kakanj, Kalesija, Prijedor, Sanski Most, Srebrenica, and Trebinje.

The guiding principles for delivering this SimEx were to practice and assess emergency response structures at strategic and operational levels (including emergency and contingency plans and procedures as well as human and technical capacities), improve inter-institutional and cross-sectoral cooperation and provide lessons learned and recommendations for improvement of the emergency response system in targeted local governments. The methodology has been guided by risk assessments, preparedness plans, SOPs, business continuity plans, and other relevant documents and tools specific to each of the 10 municipalities both developed within the JP DRR or previously existing in municipalities. It has been ensured that a multisectoral approach (protection and rescue, health, education, social protection, agriculture) and focus on vulnerable categories of the population (children, women with a focus on pregnant women and survivors of gender-based violence, elderly, people with disabilities, etc.) are cross-cutting segments of the simulation exercise.

The simulation exercise took place in Prijedor, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, from the 28th to the 30th of November 2022. In total, 8 out of 10 municipalities attended the exercise: Banja Luka, Bihać, Bijeljina, Gradačac, Kakanj, Prijedor, Sanski Most, and Trebinje encompassing 49 (13 F) professionals from local DRR platforms.

All DRR platform members are previously prepared and informed about the exercise, which included basic information about the general scenario. During the exercise, each municipality was provided with injects, i.e., additional descriptions of the main scenario related to several sectors: protection & rescue, agriculture, education, health & child protection. Also, questions were provided relevant to the recovery period (one month after the hazardous events).

Key takeaways and findings from all involved participants emphasize the multisectoral approach during this exercise as a unique opportunity for experience, information, and knowledge exchange among different municipalities and professionals. Also, participants underlined that the exercise enabled them to identify areas that lack cooperation among sectors, as well as gaps requiring more collaboration. Most participants expressed contentment that the exercise was multisectoral and that the scenario was highly complex and designed in a way that required multisectoral problem-solving, which was different from previous exercises which focused mainly on civil protection.

Besides learnings through the SimEx, participants stated several areas of improvement highlighting a need to enhance education and conduct awareness-raising campaigns about disaster risk management (particularly general public as well as politicians), improve early warning systems related to earthquakes, and have more experience exchange events, both locally but also on a regional level.

**TRANSVERSAL THEMES**

Gender equality and vulnerability informed DRR translated in the Programme’s initial introductory activities encompass the integration of gender, age, disability, and cultural perspective in DRR. The importance of equal participation of women and men and recognition of the needs of vulnerable population groups in DRR governance and strategic planning processes was facilitated via initial activities to ensure equal benefits for males and females from DRR interventions.

Throughout the selection process of LSGUs and presenting characteristics of the Programme, gender particularities, and DRR needs were emphasized to address the importance of women empowerment and advocate for equal participation of women and men in DRR governance and strategic planning processes. Utilizing an integrated model of disaster risk governance focusing on vulnerability-sensitive disaster management systems and mechanisms at the local level, established **local DRR platforms** (139 members, 30% women) serve as a platform to discuss and define DRR-related actions focusing on improving understanding of general gender issues and channelling voice of the most vulnerable community members.

Women and men benefited from the results achieved, under different sector capacity-building opportunities, with almost the same percentage of women and men educated on DRR-specific themes (women’s involvement varied from at least 37% up to nearly 60% percent of participation).

Climate change as a long-term change in the average weather patterns causing effects relevant to the BiH context such as drought, floods, landslides,reduced agricultural yields, and health and social impacts are addressed through the Programme prevention activities.

Regarding improving social inclusion and vulnerability-sensitive DRR strategic frameworks, gender aspects are integrated into the Framework methodology for conducting local vulnerability assessments in the FBiH through the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data on child vulnerabilities. The methodology encourages the Centers for Social Welfare and other actors to integrate gender lenses for all age groups by applying age and gender-disaggregated data and analysis from a life-cycle perspective. Furthermore, social inclusion elements were strongly integrated into education and social protection DRR mainstreaming efforts in local development strategies. This was ensured through **focusing formulation of DRR measures** to ensure equality and equity aspects are covered through making education services more resilient and accessible pre, during, and after emergencies and social protection services being flexible to cover additional beneficiaries or reprioritize focus to those affected by emergencies. All DRR measures integrated into strategies are **informed by vulnerability data on children and families** extracted from risk assessments of schools and CSWs. The DRAS system is operationalized in order to enhance local disaster prevention and preparedness planning capacities. Within DRAS module 2, issues of vulnerable categories are planned to be visible thus enabling locating of people that fall into vulnerable categories on the map within DRAS and overlapping this information with hazard maps. This provides direct insight into how vulnerable individuals are exposed to hazards and enables the inclusion of this information into disaster prevention and preparedness planning as well as response to disasters.

Human rights and an inclusive approach to DRR continued to be an integrative element of DRR JP interventions. Over the course of the **development of child protection DRR SoPs**, a specific focus was placed on vulnerable children through addressing protection risks that carry a high likelihood in emergencies, such as family separation, violence, neglect, and abuse. These procedures provide a formal referral pathway for ensuring child rights are being protected in emergencies with adequate care provision and support to entire families. Furthermore, the implementation of DRR social protection action plans was informed by targeting the most vulnerable social protection beneficiaries as identified in risk assessments **to ensure equity and inclusion aspects** are covered in project assistance targeting (e.g. distribution of DRR protective equipment, awareness-raising activities, simulation drills, etc.). vulnerability targeting was fully informed by community-specific context – e.g. in some communities, families of people and children with vulnerabilities prevailed, while in some the focus on minorities was prioritized (e.g. Roma population in Kakanj Municipality).

More to add is that progress has been made in promoting and embedding gender-sensitive planning and teaching extracting priorities related to improving practice, procedures, and know-how to the SRH and GBV. Further strategic planning in all 10 selected locations will **enable practitioners and decision-makers strategic guidance** based on evidence on how to address priorities and respond to the needs of affected populations at the onset of a humanitarian crisis.

**FINANCES AND MANAGEMENT**

When it comes to challenges that affected the management of the Programme, the team invested a lot of effort and engagement to set solid foundations for the Programme implementation in the forthcoming years. Harmonized multi-agency modality and approach displayed and ensured commitment to jointly and timely implement strategies, plans, and mitigation measures to overcome different challenges mainly related to discussing and obtaining the final partner approvals to join the Programme.

Regarding risk monitoring and management, continuous DRR knowledge sharing, promotion, and advocacy efforts are important for promoting new concepts and areas of cooperation. A lot of effort was invested to promote the Programme goal and concept as a long-term process in establishing broad-based and systemic local DRR governance. This included providing information, ensuring understanding, and rallying all involved parties around the benefits of the multi-sector approach concept and its future integration and enhancement **within the existing institutional frameworks and systems.** This way the UN team managed to provide clear expectations about intervention and to emphasize strong ownership of LSGUs in securing their support to improve the work and ensure the sustainability of **Local Disaster Risk Reduction Platforms** in years to come.

Due to the dynamics of the Programme implementation and held consultations with the Swiss Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, **certain changes regarding the Programme document and the budget with a focus on Programme extension and co-financing modality** occurred in 2021, savings in 2022 and additional funds in 2023. Considering these changes, participating agencies have timely reviewed the work plan, and proposed adjustments to the budget. All proposed changes are communicated and presented to the Steering Committee members and the total Programme budget finally amounted to USD 4.446.809, including the additionally contracted SDC resources of USD 105,000.

As of December 31, 2023, total Programme costs for the entire Programme lifecycle, including SDC and UN expenditures (with Gov BiH expenditures), amounted to **USD 4,345,271[[2]](#footnote-3)** or 98**%** of the overall Programme budget. The net funded amount by the **SDC through MPTFO** was **USD 2,479,950** and the PUNOs expenditures amounted to **USD 2,473,426** or **99.73%** of funds received through MPTFO. The amount of resources allocated towards gender equality is **USD 428,393** or **17.31%** of funds received through MPTFO.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Designation** | **Budgeted, period 2019-2023** | **Cumulative realized, period  01 January 2019 - 30 June 2023** | **Realized, period 01 January - 30 June 2023** | **SDC** | **UN** | **GOV** | **%** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |
|  | **Administrated Programme funds** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***Outcome 1*** | | **734,307** | **681,186** | **52,596** | **44,350** | **8,246** | **0** | **93%** |
|  | Output 1.1 | 156,867 | *153,899* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 98% |
|  | Output 1.2 | 455,218 | *423,670* | 31,887 | 31,887 | 0 | 0 | 93% |
|  | Output 1.3 | 122,222 | *103,617* | 20,709 | 12,463 | 8,246 | 0 | 85% |
| ***Outcome 2*** | | **2,168,321** | **2,071,243** | **380,062** | **200,606** | **179,456** | **0** | **96%** |
|  | Output 2.1 | *1,044,023* | *1,044,023* | 311,094 | 167,411 | 143,682 | *0* | 93% |
|  | Output 2.2 | *204,564* | *204,564* | 11,332 |  | 11,332 | *0* | 95% |
|  | Output 2.3 | *262,761* | *262,761* | 56,484 | 32,042 | 24,442 | *0* | 115% |
|  | Output 2.4 | *354,853* | *354,853* | 0 | 0 | 0 | *0* | 95% |
|  | Output 2.5 | *127140.16* | *127140.16* | 0 | 0 | 0 | *0* | 100% |
|  | Output 2.6 | *77,903* | *77,903* | 1,152 | 1,152 | 0 | *0* | 82% |
| **Project Management and Operational Costs** | | **985,430** | **1,025,086** | **64,098** | **52,640** | **11,458** | **0** | **104%** |
|  | *3.1. UNDP* | *342,116* | 342,116 | *39,377* | *39,254* | *5,869* | *0* | *93%* |
|  | *3.2. UNICEF* | *397,766* | 397,766 | *13,263* | *13,263* | *5,589* | *0* | *100%* |
|  | *3.3. UNESCO* | *100,102* | 100,102 | *0* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *167%* |
|  | *3.4. UNFPA* | *117,090* | 117,090 | *0* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *152%* |
|  | *3.5. FAO* | *68,013* | 68,013 | *0* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *80%* |
| **UN Common Coordination Costs** | | **237,741** | **256,619** | **41,652** | **41,652** | **0** | **0** | **108%** |
|  | *4.1. Staff* | *203,461* | *217,701* | *32,171* | *32,171* | *0* | *0* | *107%* |
|  | *4.2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials* | *20,480* | *23,882* | *8,302* | *8,302* | *0* | *0* | *117%* |
|  | *4.3. Travel* | *13,800* | *15,037* | *1,179* | *1,179* | *0* | *0* | *109%* |
| **Other Joint Activities** | | **133,720** | **127,168** | **36,111** | **36,111** | **0** | **0** | **95%** |
|  | *5.1. Evaluation and plans* | *45,941* | *34,654* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *75%* |
|  | *5.2. Communication and visibility* | *74,300* | *83,338* | *33,920* | *33,920* | *0* | *0* | *112%* |
|  | *5.3. Miscellaneous* | *8,320* | *3,810* | *238* | *238* | *0* | *0* | *46%* |
|  | *5.4. Steering Committee and Advisory Board meetings* | *5,159* | *5,366* | *1,953* | *1,953* | *0* | *0* | *104%* |
| **Indirect Programme Costs** | | **187,290** | **186,559** | **27,231** | **27,231** | **0** | **0** | **100%** |
|  | *UNDP* | *70,906* | 76,295 | *15,765* | *15,765* | *0* | *0* | *108%* |
|  | *UNICEF* | *40,755* | 40,755 | *3,171* | *3,171* | *0* | *0* | *100%* |
|  | *UNESCO* | *5,034* | 5,016 | *1,803* | *1,803* | *0* | *0* | *100%* |
|  | *UNFPA* | *9,158* | 9,153 |  | 0 | *0* | *0* | *100%* |
|  | *FAO* | *11,774* | 11,362 | *-2* | *-2* | *0* | *0* | *96%* |
|  | *[UN COMMON COORDINATION](" \l "RANGE!A42)[[[3]](#footnote-4)](" \l "RANGE!A42)* | *24,612* | 18,928 | *5,443* | *5,443* | *0* | *0* | *77%* |
|  | *MPTF* | *25,050* | 25,050 | *1,050* | *1,050* | *0* | *0* | *100%* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL USD** | | **4,446,809** | **4,347,863** | **601,741** | **402,590** | **199,160** | **0** | **98%** |

**LESSONS LEARNT**

Below is a brief overview of main lessons that were learned during the Programme lifecycle:

* Given the fact that the Programme started in 2019, major efforts were associated with establishment of crucial partnerships within the Programme. Even though the Programme concept set focus on LSGUs work, entity levels of authorities were involved in a build-up phase of the Programme throughout the consultations, presentations and negotiations processes and support, and continue to be involved in upcoming activities. These endeavours prompted the Programme to establish and maintain communication and cooperation with all relevant authorities. Also, during the period of experiencing challenges in gaining approval from RS institutions, the Programme continued to be active with the FBiH LSGUs. Notwithstanding the occurred and unexpected withdrawal of some LSGUs in the FBiH, the Programme team continued to work on preparatory and advocacy activities, so that once new local and RS entity authorities have provided clearance and approvals everything was prepared for appropriate partnership establishment at the local level, which completed a decision-making process regarding the Programme in general.
* The COVID-19 pandemic yielded increased awareness and commitment of BiH authorities at levels to invest in DRR capacity-strengthening. However, it also impacted partners’ availability and capacities to fully engage in DRR activities, given the limited resources and shifting priorities due to the COVID-19 response. It is needed to improve coordination and collaboration at the local level when it comes to the membership of municipal / city emergency headquarters by formally including all relevant stakeholders.
* The COVID-19 crisis re-confirmed the urgency to approach DRR from a multi-hazard perspective, considering all risks and related impacts in risk analysis and preparedness planning. There is a need to enable and involve all relevant professionals in preparedness planning including developing contingency plans. Close cooperation with civil protection departments and other actors should be enabled to ensure a common understanding of roles and division of responsibilities, chain of coordination, necessary resources, and capacities.
* Occurred changes in LSGUs management structure, LDRRPs, and WGs composition brought several delays in partners’ engagement on the ground as well as the need to invest more time in re-introducing the approach and an overall DRR JP results structure to the newly nominated structure of professionals in LSGUs. In situations where changes happened showed a lack of knowledge and information transfer between former and existing governance structures regarding development priorities and ongoing initiatives. Hence, in some locations, more efforts are invested and still needed to shift the perception of the LDRRPs and priorities as project-formed mechanisms to a fully local-government-owned mechanism to integrate and systemically adopt DRR in regular local government affairs.
* More investments are needed to enhance the ownership, commitment, and sustainability of DRR interventions, especially among the stakeholders/sectors that were traditionally not fully included in DRR coordination and implementation in BiH (e.g. social sectors). Some partners continue to have limited awareness of the need to integrate and prioritize DRR in a regular, day-to-day sectoral management approach.
* DRR approach focused on population vulnerabilities, informed by social and economic risk factors, needs to be further promoted in public and within the DRR practitioners’ community. While important achievements are made, there are still prevailing needs to formalize the role of social and child protection, education, and health in the integrated DRR models, e.g. within DRR Platforms and legislative frameworks. While the Programme facilitated these links at the local level, vertical scaling up at policy and system levels is needed to ensure country-wide replication and sustainability.
* MISP is a set of crucial, lifesaving activities and it will be necessary to continue working on the capacity building of healthcare and other professionals in order to improve the provision of the same and provide reliable SRHR health-related information for the population with a focus on women, girls, and youth. For this purpose, it is necessary to enable the use of new methods and advanced technologies.
* DRR financing is a critical gap for ensuring full local sustainability of DRR interventions beyond programme support. More advocacy and tailored solutions are needed in the DRR financial planning across sectors to ensure long-term resources are available for regular implementation of DRR measures formulated across various sectoral plans, local development strategies, etc.
* Continuous advocacy that was done with relevant Ministries on system-level integration of DRR in legislation, policies, and Government-led programs, such as the DRAS system or shock-responsive social protection, is of critical importance to ensure the long-term sustainability of interventions.
* Despite various positive factors in implementing the Programme, the key risk factors that need to be addressed in further work are the absence of legal recognition and limited human and institutional capacities of various sectors involved in DRR, with a moderate staff turnover rate.
* Due to the various combined challenges in past years followed by the war in Ukraine, the supply chain noticeably differed from past experiences resulting in delays and higher prices, especially relevant for procurement in the Programme. However, it is expected that public expenditure will increase in the forthcoming period, due to the government’s response to rising inflation and the energy crisis which could affect or delay the prioritization of DRR actions and measures.

**ANNEXES**

1. **DRR JP Media Report.**
2. **DRR JP Logical Framework.**

1. Delivery of 4x4 vehicle was delayed beyond the JP closure date. In coordination with the donor, the UNDP funds were transferred to another UNDP project and payment has been completed when the vehicle was delivered. The donor agreed for this procurement to be presented as UNDP contribution in the narrative report. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. This includes funds provided through the Joint Programme Fund account as well as co-funding resources. Reporting on the amount transferred and expended through the Joint Programme Fund account will be shown in MPTF’s Consolidated Annual Financial Report and found on: <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/JBA10>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Indirect costs for UN Common Coordination are calculated under all UNDP costs. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)