



## 5<sup>th</sup> National Advisory Group Meeting

14 March 2019, Minsk, Belarus

### Meeting Report

#### **Official Opening - Welcome note and introduction**

The meeting started with the welcoming remarks given by Mr Gennady Lasuta, Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations of Belarus and the PPRD East 2 Steering Committee member, Ms Natallia Stasevich, Sector Manager of the Operations Section, Delegation of the European Union to Belarus, and Mr Sergej Anagnosti, PPRD East 2 Team Leader.

**Overview of the overall PPRD East 2 Programme achievements** was given by Mr Anagnosti, who specified main activities and achievements of the Phase 2 of the PPRD East Programme in Partner Countries that started in November 2014, was supposed to end in November 2018 but received a no-cost extension till the end of May 2019. PPRD East 2 is being focused on the legal approximation and creating institutional sustainability which was complemented with extensive capacity building. Within 4,5 years of implementation the Programme managed to create partnerships, ownerships and various networks. PPRD East 2 also established good cooperation and coordination with a number of different projects, initiatives and organisations to avoid the overlapping and also to complement each other and to build upon contributions of other institutions to Partner Countries.

Then Mr Anagnosti presented Activity Areas, which Belarus did not select for implementation at the national level:

- **Flood Risk Management and Disaster Risk Assessment**, demonstrating the main results achieved in the Partner Countries and recommendations/guidelines developed by the Programme.
- **Disaster Loss Data collection and processing**, presenting the main activities undertaken in four Partner Countries to improve the data accessibility and comparability at national, regional and European level as well as to assist Partner Countries in changing national legislation to reflect and share the data collected.
- **ERRA**, briefly describing the main steps undertaken by PPRD East 2 although the upgrade of ERRA was postponed by Contracting Authority to the next phase of the PPRD East Programme until it is decided who would administrate and maintain the system at the regional level.

**Raising Awareness about Disasters (RAD)** was presented by Mr Antonín Petr, PPRD East 2 Capacity Building Key Expert, who focused on the achievements and performed activities at the regional level:

- 1 regional workshop held for experts from Partner Countries involved in drafting National Communication Strategies and 1 regional workshop for CP communication experts and journalists from Partner Countries;
- development of Guidelines for drafting National Communication Strategies;
- support to Partner Countries to develop their National Communication Strategies for RAD;

- special workshop for journalist students from Moldova who played the role of journalists during the EU MOLDEX 2017 exercise.

When talking about **Civil Protection Volunteerism (CPV)** Mr Petr briefly described:

- the study tour to Finland and Denmark aimed at offering and showing two different legal and institutional frameworks governing CPV in the EU;
- the regional workshop on CPV to provide Partner Countries regional forum to exchange the experience in developing and establishing the national CPV legal and institutional systems, and to introduce the EU Aid Volunteers initiative;
- 4 documents developed by the Programme to support the establishment of legal and institutional frameworks for CPV, one of them developed on a specific request of the MES of Belarus;
- and presented a video developed by the Programme in a form of Public Service Announcement. When the video is finalised in national languages of all Partner Countries, it will be shared with them to support them in promotion of volunteerism in civil protection and to motivate people to become CP volunteers.

Mr Anagnosti summed up the presentation on the PPRD East 2 achievements at the regional level with some statistics: 95 events (40 regional/55 national) were organised between December 2014 and March 2019 in which participated 2907 representatives from civil protection/disaster risk management authorities, national governmental institutions and other stakeholders.

Mr Anagnosti also highlighted the main PPRD East 2 Lessons Learned recommendations.

Ms Svetlana Shotskaya, the National Programme Coordinator, presented the overview of the main achievements and results of the PPRD East 2 at the national level. In general, in the framework of the Programme Belarus:

- created and in December 2018 updated the Country Profile;
- received various documents and recommendations developed by the Programme experts;
- took part in 46 Programme events (36 regional and 10 national) with a total of number of over 300 participants.

Thanks to the Programme Belarus was also able to participate in various European events, programmes and field exercises.

Mr Lasuta emphasized the significant and successful role of the Programme in achieving progress in priorities selected by Belarus.

**Civil Protection Capacity Building** was presented by Mr Michael Elmquist, PPRD East 2 Civil Protection Key Expert, who showed the progression of regional activities completed throughout the Programme:

- Training Programme which includes 4 basic, 2 operational management and 2 advanced training courses
- Regional Table-top exercise (held simultaneously in 6 Partner Countries, 3 EU Member Countries and the ERCC, Brussels) leading into

- Full-scale field exercise MOLDEX 2017 with the key objectives being: cooperation, coordination, communication and host nation support, was held in Moldova on 18-21 September 2017 with participation of 151 foreign rescuers from 8 countries, 560 participants from Moldova and 90 trainers, evaluators, observers, EUCPT, etc. The exercise video was presented.
- Lessons learnt approach and those from the full-scale field exercise were analysed during 2 workshops and 1 regional conference.
- A follow-up workshop on coordination of international disaster assistance, held in the format of “train the trainers”.
- Under the aegis of the “Exchange of Experts” programme, several visits of experts from Partner Countries to participating states of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism were arranged, including an Urban Search and Rescue team from Belarus that had attended an EU Module Exercise (MODEX) in Denmark.

It was noted that an additional benefit of the civil protection capacity building programme was the inclusion of lectures on the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in the curriculum of the Civil Protection University of Belarus.

The afternoon discussion was dedicated to the presentation of national implementation of the three priorities selected by Belarus.

Ms Larisa Basalaj, Chief Specialist of the Principal Department of State System of Prevention and Liquidation of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence of the MES of Belarus, and National Focal Point for HNS, complemented the National Programme Coordinator and emphasized that within the Activity Area – **Host Nation Support** – a significant step has been made by Belarus. Given the knowledge received during the PPRD East 2 training courses, workshops, participation in the full-scale field exercise MOLDEX 2017 and, most importantly, based on the EU Guidelines on HNS developed by the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and presented by the Programme experts, Belarus developed the draft Regulation on procedures to be undertaken by Belarus on Host Nation Support in emergency situations. This regulation was tested during the HNS TTX conducted on 13 March 2019 at the Republican Centre for Management and Response to Emergency Situations with the participation of the HNS related governmental institutions and the PPRD East 2 experts who also provided relevant comments to the draft Regulation. In the nearest future the Regulation is supposed to be adjusted and forwarded for approval to the Emergency Situation Committee at the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus.

The current situation in Belarus on **Civil Protection Voluntarism** was presented by Mr Anatolij Baliabin, Deputy Head of the Department of Emergency Services and Disaster Management of the MES of Belarus, CPV National Focal Point, who pointed out that PPRD East 2 impacted on the development of the legislation of the Republic of Belarus. Namely, a new draft of the Law on Fire Safety and the Resolution of the Government were developed (both are at the final stage of approval by the Government), and the Resolution of the Ministry of Emergency Situations will be developed once the Resolution of the Government was approved. The following improvements would be introduced to the new Law on Fire Safety:

- 4 additional articles would regulate voluntary fire-fighting units;
- there would be 3 types of voluntary units: a fire-fighting team (to assist in fire-fighting with the use of fire machinery), a fire-fighting brigade (to assist in fire-fighting with the



- use of only fire protection equipment) and a fire-technical commission (people with technical education and able to identify how to bring the object into the safe conditions);
- the new Law would introduce the following division: professional emergency services would be regulated by the Law on Emergency Services and the Status of Rescuer; freelance fire-fighting units – by the Law on Fire Safety and Resolution of Government; whereas voluntary public unions and their fire-fighting units – by legislation for public associations.

The MES is annually updating database about existing volunteer teams and their resources and capacities but once the new Law on Fire Safety is adopted such database will be much more precise as it will also include information on the volunteers who will be trained and certified.

Mr Vitaly Tarashkevich, Specialist of the Division on Response to Emergency Situations and Search of the Belarusian Red Cross Society, pointed out that jointly with the MES they have already conducted special trainings for volunteers at the University of Civil Protection as well as plan to continue doing this besides other activities focused on attracting spontaneous volunteers via social networks, website and the MES application, their training and further developing internal volunteers database as part of the MES application “Help is near”.

As for **Raising Awareness about Disasters (RAD)** Ms Shotskaya admitted that Belarus understands the necessity of having the adequate National Communication Strategy (NCS) for RAD and will come back to the earlier developed NCS draft and continue working on the NCS agreed with the relevant governmental institutions. But besides the development of this basic document a lot has been done at the national level to raise awareness on disaster risk management, including informative campaigns in mass media, awareness raising in schools, etc.

Mr Anagnosti informed on **Visibility and Programme Management** and pointed out the PPRD East 2 website is active representing Programme newsletters, reports and news on all activities. All information is available on-line on the Programme web site.

The meeting was concluded with closing remarks from representatives of the ministries and institutions involved in National Advisory Group expressing positive attitude to the Programme Phase 2 and looking forward to the start of the Phase 3.

Mr Anagnosti officially closed the meeting encouraging the MES to express its priorities and wishes to be implemented during the Phase 3 within the next 5 years.