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EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ON-SITE ASSISTANCE

to the IPA III
Beneficiaries,
the Southern
and the Eastern
Neighborhood
Countries (OSA)

Project implemented by



External Technical On-Site Assistance

to the IPA III Beneficiaries, the Southern and the Eastern Neighborhood Countries (OSA)



BUDGET

EUR 3 MILLION 239 000



PROJECT DURATION

► 01/02/2023 ■ 31/01/2027



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To provide technical support to DG ECHO, partners/beneficiaries, regional organisations and contribute to the smooth implementation of civil protection cooperation programmes.

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

IPA III beneficiaries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Türkiye, and Kosovo*.

Southern Neighbourhood Countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine**, Tunisia and Mauritania.

Eastern Partnership Countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

To provide ad-hoc technical assistance (TA) in rapid response to partners' civil protection authorities' needs.

To support sustainable capacity-building of partners respective civil protection for disaster risk prevention, preparedness, and response based on a multi-hazard approach and interaction with the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM).

To strengthen technical cooperation at subregional and regional level between all relevant governmental actors and civil society stakeholders as well as the scientific community, promoting an inclusive approach to prevention, preparedness and response to natural and man-made hazards.

MAIN RESULTS EXPECTED

Improve the local and regional technical cooperation, and support capacity-building, on disaster risks and disaster prevention policies, and awareness raised on disaster risk prevention.

Enhance the role of the UfM, and DPPI SEE as regional platforms for dialogue on civil protection and disaster risk management.

Enhance the exchange of good practices and strengthen local capacities on awareness campaigns.

Support the implementation of joint educational events or initiatives between interested countries.

Ensure that a roster of experts is established and maintained, effectively linking all relevant stakeholders.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on the status, and in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

** This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on these issues.

RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE IPA III REGION

Providing Technical Assistance (TA) in Response to Partners Ad-Hoc Needs

► MONTENEGRO / PDNA Solutions

Montenegro has taken a significant step forward in disaster risk reduction and recovery, supported by EU-funded OSA expertise. In close cooperation with the Rescue and Protection Directorate (RPD) of the Ministry of Interior, OSA facilitated the development of a unique, nationally harmonised Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) Methodology, complete with sector-specific annexes and a tailored training programme for public servants. This work laid the foundation for the creation of a comprehensive PDNA Guidebook and the design of a fully integrated, open-source PDNA software solution, interoperable with the national Multi-Hazard Information System (MEMHIS). The new digital tool enables secure, mobile-compatible collection and analysis of disaster loss data, supporting evidence-based recovery planning and resource mobilisation. Through these activities, OSA has strengthened Montenegro's institutional capacity, ensured alignment with EU disaster resilience goals, and reinforced the robustness and continuity of the country's civil protection system.

► BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In cooperation with the Ministry of Security, an OSA-supported expert is developing a harmonised training programme for civil servants in disaster risk management. This initiative includes mapping and analysing existing legislation, preparing a modular curriculum and training materials, and ensuring alignment with both national law and EU Civil Protection Mechanism standards. By fostering institutional coordination and professional development, the project strengthens Bosnia and Herzegovina's capacity for rapid, effective response to disasters, reinforcing national resilience and operational readiness across all levels of government.



► KOSOVO*



Following the severe January 2026 floods, Kosovo's Emergency Management Agency (EMA) initiated a large-scale damage assessment in coordination with local and central committees. An international expert, deployed through the OSA Project, is supporting Kosovo's Emergency Management Agency in aligning its damage assessment methodology with EU and international standards. This support includes comparative analysis, recommendations for regulatory revision, and guidance in meeting European Union Solidarity Fund requirements, strengthening Kosovo's capacity for evidence-based disaster response and recovery.

RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNER COUNTRIES

Providing Technical Assistance (TA) in Response to Partners Ad-Hoc Needs

► **ARMENIA / DRM Volunteerism** ► **MOLDOVA / High-level Roundtable**

Armenia is advancing the development of a comprehensive disaster risk management volunteer system, supported by OSA technical expertise. A tandem of international and national experts is working with the Ministry of Internal Affairs to review and align legislation, benchmark international and EU best practices, and propose an integrated model for volunteer engagement in DRM. This initiative will deliver actionable recommendations, legal amendments, and an institutional roadmap—ensuring Armenia’s volunteer system is robust, inclusive, and fully aligned with the national DRM strategy and EU Civil Protection Mechanism standards.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (GIES) convened a high-level roundtable in Chisinau to enhance coordination among international partners in civil protection and disaster risk management. The event aligned with ongoing and planned donor support with Moldova’s national priorities, promoted synergies, and advanced integration with EU standards and the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. By facilitating strategic dialogue and mapping partner initiatives, this roundtable has successfully strengthened Moldova’s institutional capacity and lay the groundwork for a regular donor coordination platform in the sector.

► **TUNISIA / Train-the-Trainer Programme**

The PPRD Med Subregional Train-the-Trainer Programme #1 has taken place at the El Mouradi Gammarth Hotel in Tunis, bringing together civil protection professionals from Mauritania, Tunisia, Algeria, Jordan, and other Mediterranean partners. Under the operational support of Col. Maj. Mohamed Ataknit, OSA Expert, the five-day hybrid training combined plenary sessions on advanced methodologies, such as InSAR data interpretation, FAST Flood tools, and multi-hazard scenario planning, with hands-on, country-specific exercises. The programme was designed to build regional technical capacity, promote interoperability, and ensure knowledge transfer for national replication. Our Expert Mohamed’s coordination ensured smooth delivery, robust risk mitigation, and effective peer exchange, reinforcing OSA’s commitment to institutional strengthening and operational excellence in disaster risk management.

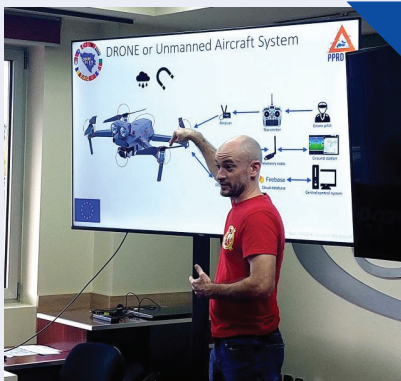
► **CYPRUS / Wildfire Risks Workshop**

The OSA project is currently facilitating the organisation and delivery of the 3rd Euro-Mediterranean High-Level Workshop on Fire Risks, taking place from 6 to 8 May 2026 in Paphos, Cyprus, under the auspices of the Cyprus Presidency. Led by our Expert Mohamed, who is supporting this initiative under the OSA program, the event brings together regional civil protection authorities, experts, and partners to address wildfire risk across the Mediterranean. OSA’s facilitation ensures effective coordination of sessions on strategic policy frameworks, integrated wildfire risk management, operational readiness, and multi-country cooperation. By fostering knowledge exchange and supporting collaborative planning, OSA enhances institutional capacity and strengthens the region’s preparedness and response to wildfire emergencies.

PAST ACTIVITIES - HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Providing Technical Assistance (TA) in Response to Partners Ad-Hoc Needs

► IPA III - Drone SOPs in Serbia



Serbia's Ministry of Interior has developed and adopted comprehensive drone SOPs for fire and rescue operations, with OSA support ensuring alignment with EU standards. These SOPs establish clear protocols for the deployment, roles, and responsibilities of drone operators, ensuring safe, effective, and interoperable use of unmanned aerial systems in disaster response. The adoption of these SOPs marks a significant step in modernising Serbia's civil protection capabilities and aligning operational practice with EU standards and international best practices.

► EN - TRACK 1 Support to Moldova



OSA Project supported the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (GIES) in developing a project proposal for submission under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Technical Assistance for Disaster Risk Management (Track 1) grants. The support also included a webinar for GIES staff on UCPM application best practices and proposal writing essentials.

► SN - Support during Emergencies



Operational coordination was provided during the Derna floods in Libya and the cross-border forest fires affecting Algeria and Tunisia, with the OSA expert acting as liaison to facilitate response and cooperation. OSA Project is also supporting Mauritania in developing a civil protection volunteerism system, in collaboration with PPRD Med and Tunisian authorities, while continuing to foster workshops, knowledge exchange, and strategic partnerships with DG ECHO, UNDRR ROAS, and the League of Arab States.

next STEPS

- ▶ The OSA Project actively fosters regional cooperation and the sharing of knowledge across partner beneficiaries and stakeholders. Through targeted events, workshops, and ongoing collaboration, the project strengthens ties and promotes best practices for disaster risk management.

▶ **Participation in Major Forums: 9th EU CP FORUM - November 2026**

OSA will join leading stakeholders at the 9th European Civil Protection Forum in Brussels, the premier EU event for sharing knowledge and advancing cooperation in disaster risk management.



[More info](#)



▶ **Workshops and Pilot Initiatives: Moldova Comparative Analysis**

With OSA project support, an international expert is conducting a comprehensive comparative study of Moldova's General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (GIES), benchmarking its human resources, equipment, and operational structures against EU best practices. The analysis will identify critical capacity gaps and provide actionable recommendations to strengthen national preparedness, align with EU standards, and enhance Moldova's engagement in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

▶ **Strategic Partnership: Regional Conference on Lessons Learning and Host Nation Support**



The OSA project is organising a three-day Regional Conference in Bodrum, Türkiye, bringing together senior civil protection and disaster risk management authorities from IPA III beneficiaries, Eastern Neighbourhood countries, and EU partners. The conference will focus on transforming lessons identified from Host Nation Support (HNS) operations into institutionalised learning and operational improvements. Through expert technical sessions, interactive workshops, and case studies, participants will develop actionable recommendations to strengthen HNS, enhance regional preparedness, and foster alignment with the updated EU HNSG and UCPM frameworks. The event aims to facilitate peer exchange, drive innovation in lessons learning, and support the integration of best practices across the region.

Contact the OSA Project Team

For inquiries, support requests, or collaboration opportunities related to disaster risk management and civil protection in your region, please contact your regional OSA expert:



IPA III Region (Western Balkans & Türkiye)

Sergej Anagnosti

✉ sergej.anagnosti@gopa.eu

Bio: *Sergej Anagnosti is a senior disaster risk management and climate adaptation specialist with over 30 years of international experience leading EU, UN, and World Bank programmes across the Western Balkans and beyond.*

📍 **Geographic Responsibility**
IPA III Region



Southern Neighbourhood (Southern Partnership Countries)

Mohamed Ataknit

✉ mohamed.ataknit@gopa.eu

Bio: *Mohamed Ataknit is a senior civil protection and crisis management expert, currently serving as EU Long-Term On-Site Advisor for Southern Neighbourhood countries. Based in Tunis, he previously led the Tunisian National School for Civil Protection as Colonel Major for 8 years, and held key national roles in crisis management and training.*

📍 **Geographic Responsibility**
Southern Neighbourhood



Eastern Neighbourhood (Eastern Partnership Countries)

Sergiu Gradinaru

✉ sergiu.gradinaru@gopa.eu

Bio: *Sergiu Gradinaru is a disaster risk management expert and Long-Term Non-Key Expert for the Eastern Partnership under the OSA project, supporting DG ECHO to strengthen regional preparedness and response capacities.*

📍 **Geographic Responsibility**

Eastern Neighbourhood (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine)