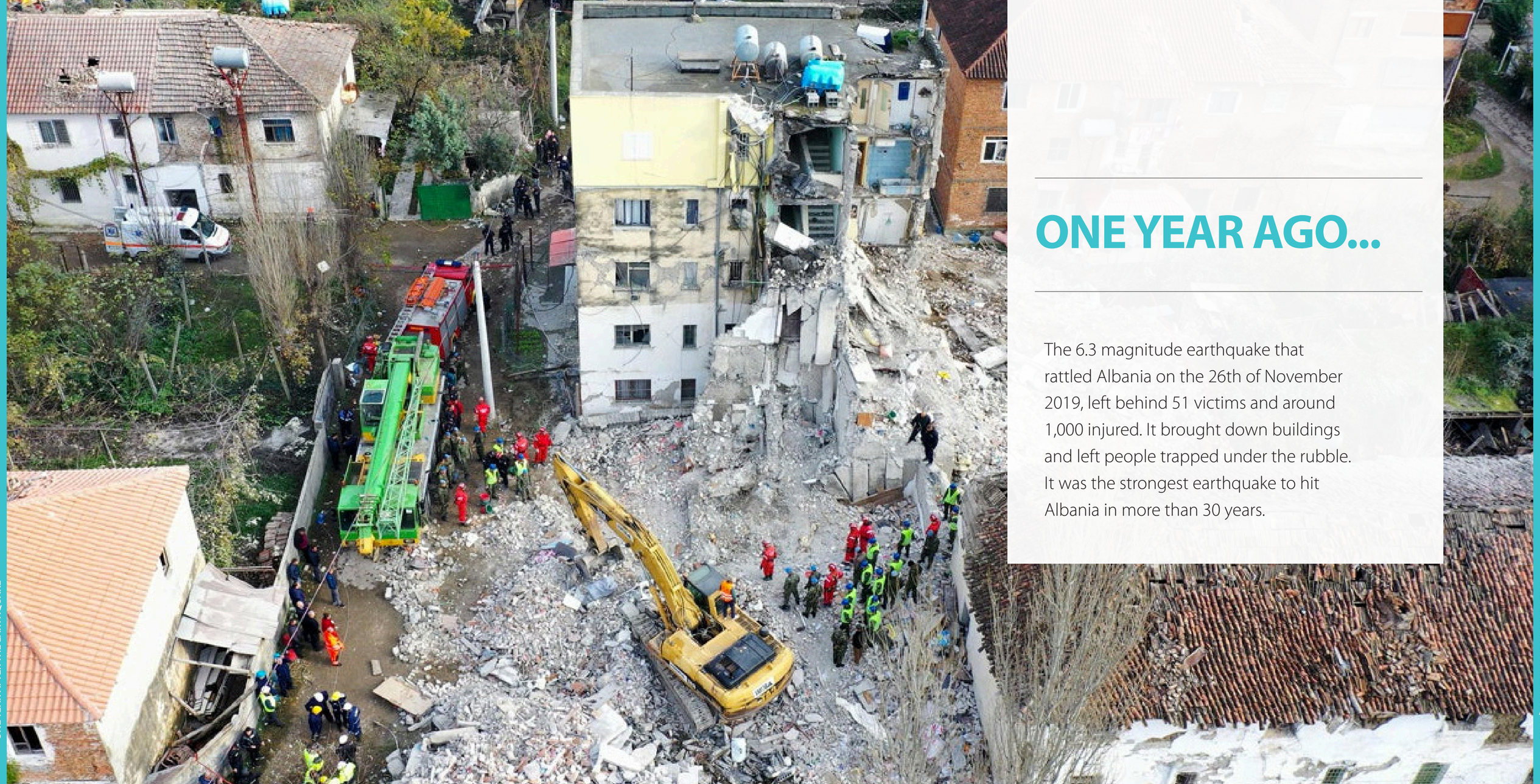
ONE YEAR AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE

UNDP



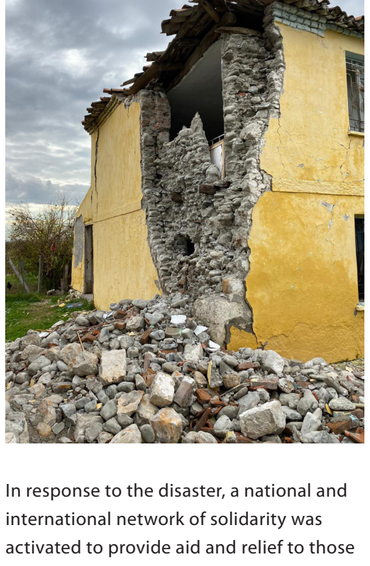
ONE YEAR AGO...

The 6.3 magnitude earthquake that rattled Albania on the 26th of November 2019, left behind 51 victims and around 1,000 injured. It brought down buildings and left people trapped under the rubble. It was the strongest earthquake to hit Albania in more than 30 years.

UNDP assists Albania in the aftermath of the earthquake

Eleven municipalities situated in three prefectures, with an approximate population of 1,185,286 people, suffered varying degrees of damage from the earthquake. 202,291 people were affected directly or indirectly, with around 17,090 affected inhabitants having to vacate their homes.

The earthquake impacted thousands of lives and livelihoods, sweeping away what took citizens years to build – trapping them in deeper vulnerability and exacerbating existing poverty. The elderly, children, fragile households and people living with disabilities were severely affected. Besides the immediate shock, in the mid-term, the earthquake did not only damage buildings and homes, but also the economy and many livelihoods, especially that of economically vulnerable households.



In response to the disaster, a national and international network of solidarity was activated to provide aid and relief to those affected.

UNDP was among those to respond immediately, on the second day, with immediate food and non-food items to over 1600 people, including Roma and Egyptians, in 3 municipalities (Lezha, Kruja and Tirana), where UNDP has projects and is seen as a long-standing partner. This was done in cooperation with local governments and local CSOs.

Part of the actions included supporting volunteering mechanisms and self-help initiatives to contribute to community resilience, as well as building a local community platform in Durres to promote (i) transparency and awareness on emergency response and gender responsive recovery effort and (ii) participatory decision-making in planning, prioritization and recovery activities.

To strengthen the recovery efforts, UNDP drew on its vast reservoir of knowledge and expertise in post-disaster emergency response and early recovery, and deployed a team of international experts to provide technical advice to the government on tested methodologies for immediate response, recovery and reconstruction, as well as coordination between the central and local governments.

HOUSEHOLD DAMAGE ASSESSMENT (HDA) SURVEY

3122
HOUSEHOLDS
WERE VISITED

12718
PEOPLE
WERE REGISTERED

80+
SURVEYORS
WERE MOBILIZED DAILY TO GATHER INFORMATION

UNDP assesses damages in the house holds in the earthquake affected communities

In partnership with the Albanian National Institute of Statistics, UNDP ran a mini Income and Living Conditions Survey (SILC) to asses living conditions of affected citizens through innovative methodologies for data collection, which was later used by the Government for rapid decisions regarding priority assistance and subsequent recovery plan.

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"UNDP mobilized international expertise immediately through our global networks. This is one of the roles of UNDP - to connect knowledge and digital solutions from one continent to another"

Limya Eltayeb
UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE IN ALBANIA

In partnership with the government, the inter-ministerial Emergency Committee, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and the EU Civil Protection Unit, UNDP introduced the Household and Building Damage Assessment methodology to support authorities assess the damage and impact on residential and non-residential infrastructure and collect geo-referenced information.
UNDP made available its own staff and mobilized over 80 volunteers to ensure coverage of the areas to be assessed and complete the exercise in the shortest time. By the 23rd of December, the situation of 3,122 households was assessed, and 12,718 people were registered in 4 municipalities. The data generated, informed the government and international development partners to prioritize assistance and refine humanitarian response and recovery.

PDNA & DONOR CONFERENCE

Following an official request from the government, UNDP assumed the lead technical support role within the UN family for the Post Disaster Needs Assessment, together with the World Bank and under the overall lead of the European Union.

802.86

MILLION EUROS

CALCULATED RECOVERY NEEDS FOR THE HOUSING SECTOR

95

MILLION EUROS

CALCULATED RECOVERY COSTS FOR THE EDUCATION SECTOR

UNDP led two PDNA sectors for assessment, specifically, (i) community infrastructure, and (ii) tourism and employment (composed of the subsectors of manufacturing, tourism, employment, culture, agriculture, and businesses). The EU was co-leader in the community infrastructure sector. In two other sectors, specifically (i) civil protection & disaster risk reduction, as well as (ii) social protection, UNDP co-led together with the EU as the lead.

The PDNA revealed that the total destruction and loss in the 11 municipalities amounted to 985.1 million EUR, of which 843.9 million EUR represented the value of destroyed physical assets and 141.2 million EUR referred to losses.

The estimated total recovery needs were 1,076.15 billion EUR across all sectors. Needs in the Housing sector alone were 802.86 million EUR, which represented 75% of all needs. The recovery of the Education sector was estimated to cost about 95 million EUR or nearly 9% of the total, and recovery costs for the Infrastructure sector were 61 million EUR or 6%. Within the Infrastructure sector, over half of the recovery needs were in the Energy and Government Buildings sub-sectors, with 12.9 million EUR and 26.5 million EUR, respectively. The Productive sector represented 4.2% of all the recovery needs, with the largest share being in Business and Employment sub-sector (Manufacturing and Trade) with 27.84 million EUR. Civil protection & DRR had a similar share of needs with 4.4%.

Informed by the results of the PDNA, an EU-led Donor Conference, to appeal for international financial support to the recovery and reconstruction of Albania, was organised in Brussels on 17 February 2020. The Conference was led by the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and by the Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama. Over 1 billion Euros were committed for the recovery and reconstruction efforts.

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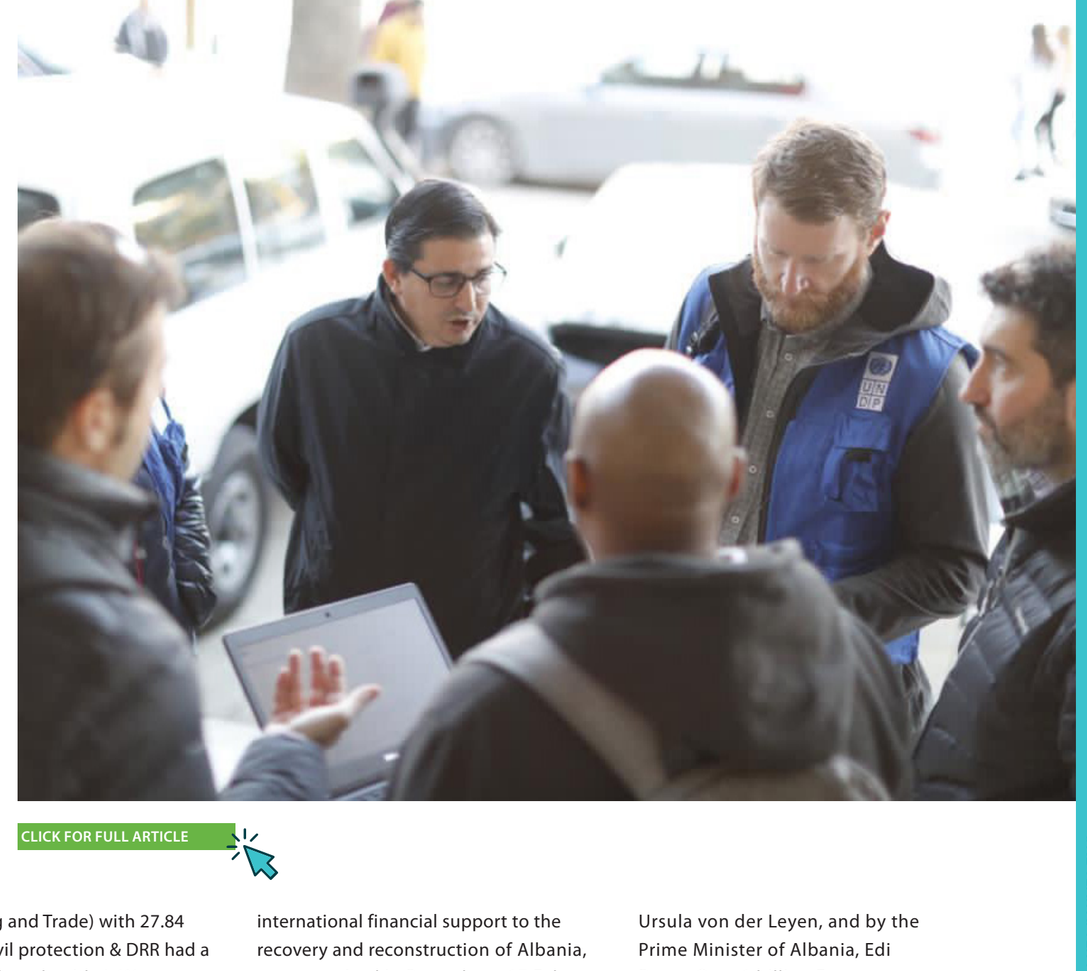

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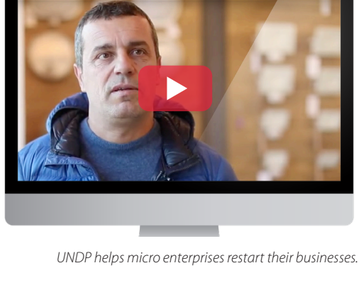
RECOVERY EFFORTS

Concurrently to the preparation of the PDNA, UNDP immediately deployed its teams and programmatic approaches to support the recovery and reconstruction efforts. It launched, in December 2019, pilot initiatives along three key pillars, to kick start short, medium, and long-term solutions and pave the way for a sustained recovery.



UNDP helps micro enterprises restart their businesses.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY & RESILIENCE

To tackle significant market disruption leading to loss of employment, UNDP supported some of the affected populations to recover and stabilize their businesses and sources of livelihood in the short, medium and long-term.

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Data from UNDP's economic recovery programme indicated that after the earthquake, micro-businesses suffered:

- 47%, physic structure damages;
- 80%, equipment damages;
- 100%, merchandise damages.

For this reason, UNDP supported both the productive and the services sectors with an emergency employment and enterprise recovery approach.

'IN – MOTION' METHODOLOGY

Following a field survey of 150 micro-businesses, and through piloting the 'In-Motion' methodology successfully tested in other disaster-affected countries, 15 micro-businesses in Durres were supported by UNDP to recover their enterprises by: (i) strengthening their capacities, (ii) increasing their competitiveness, and (iii) improving their business infrastructure and marketing, including their commercial image.

38%

OF ALL PRIVATE SECTOR

WORKERS ARE EMPLOYED IN MICRO-BUSINESSES.

94%

OF ALL COMPANIES

IN ALBANIA ARE MICRO-BUSINESSES.

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INFRASTRUCTURE

The destruction and loss of shelter and infrastructure, added to the post-traumatic stress and vulnerability, negatively influenced communities' ability to recover in the long-term.
The PDNA indicated that 321 educational institutions were damaged in the 11 affected municipalities, representing 24% of all educational establishments in the country. The municipalities of Tirana and Durres had the highest share of damage, with 55% and 21%, respectively. The total value of damage and losses in the education sector was estimated at 72.35 million EUR (8.9 billion ALL).
The European Union, through the "EU4Schools" Programme, contributed 65 million EUR to the recovery of educational facilities, as part of its financial commitment during the International Donors Conference. The "EU4Schools" Programme, implemented by UNDP Albania - and to which UNDP has also contributed 765,000 EUR - has, as its overall goal, the restoration of municipal education facilities, including basic furnishing, equipment, IT facilities, while applying European and international standards. As part of the programme,

- 58 educational facilities will be recovered, from which 31 educational facilities will be fully reconstructed and 27 will be repaired.
- 20,000 school children and teachers will directly benefit as part of the "EU4Schools" Programme.

20000

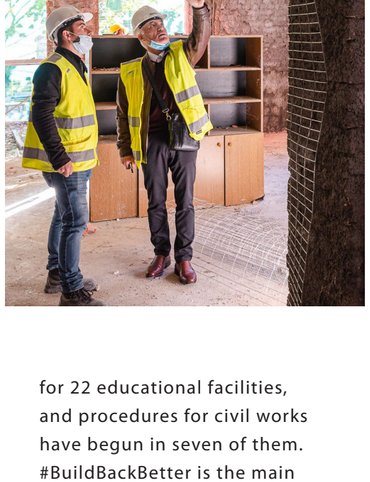
PEOPLE

SCHOOL CHILDREN AND TEACHERS WILL DIRECTLY BENEFIT, AS PART OF THE "EU4SCHOOLS" PROGRAMME.

65

MILLION EUROS

COMMITTED FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION FOR THE "EU4SCHOOLS" PROGRAMME



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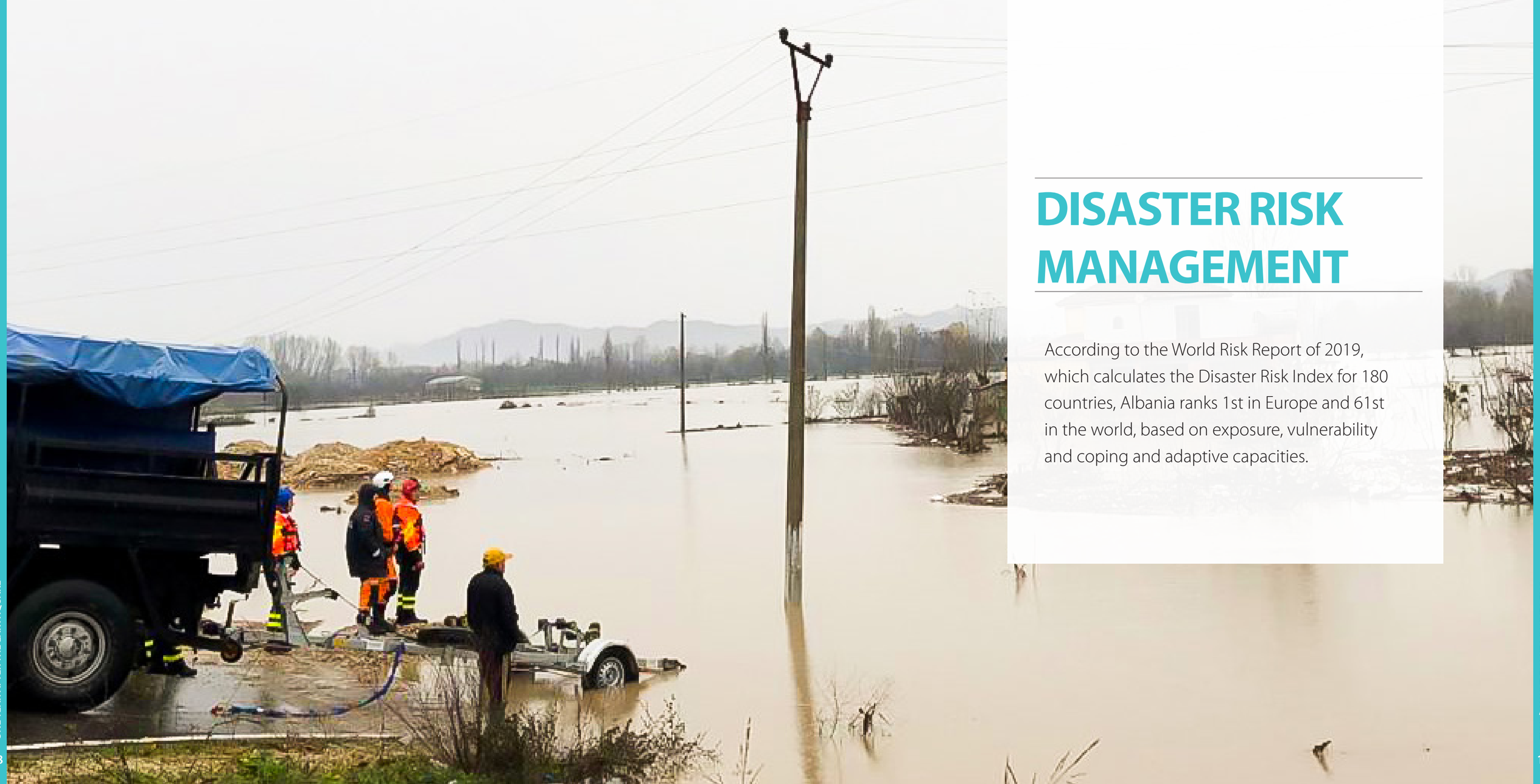
All UNDP initiatives incorporate #BuildBackBetter and #BuildBackTogether approaches. A vital part of the 'EU4Schools' Programme recovery process is ensuring the participation and engagement of community members in the process of rebuilding educational facilities, as well as providing communities with increased transparency, accountability and inclusiveness through an interactive Platform launched for this purpose. The platform, which is updated in real time, ensures the affected community has a voice, and that they engage in the reconstruction and rehabilitation process.
So far…

- More than 700 people – students, teachers, parents and other community members – have participated in 22 consultation meetings providing their suggestions on how they want the new schools.
- Memorandums of Understanding have been signed with the eleven targeted municipalities to identify roles and responsibilities of each party in the process.
- Detailed designs are finalized for 22 educational facilities, and procedures for civil works have begun in seven of them.

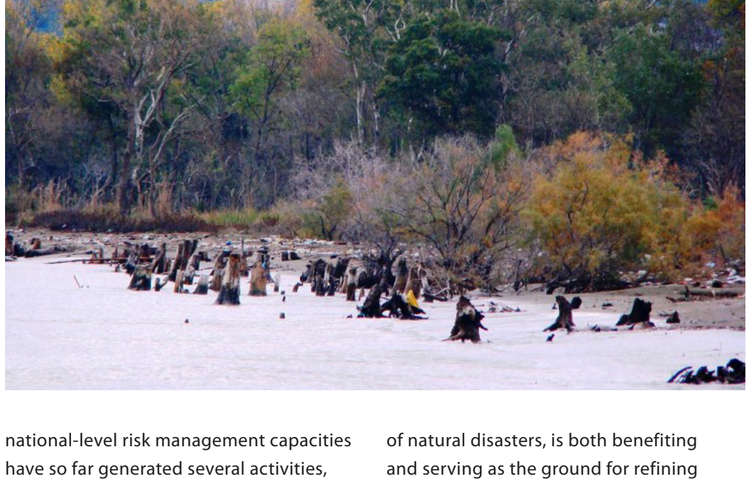
#BuildBackBetter is the main principle followed throughout all processes, aiming to offer better education services to Albanian citizens.



DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

According to the World Risk Report of 2019, which calculates the Disaster Risk Index for 180 countries, Albania ranks 1st in Europe and 61st in the world, based on exposure, vulnerability and coping and adaptive capacities.

According to the World Risk Report of 2019, which calculates the Disaster Risk Index for 180 countries, Albania ranks 1st in Europe and 61st in the world, based on exposure, vulnerability and coping and adaptive capacities. This makes Albania one out of the ten countries in the world with the highest economic risk from multiple hazards: 88.5% of GDP generated and 86% of total territory is exposed to two or more disasters.



The November 26 earthquake highlighted the shortcomings in Albania's ability to successfully recover from possible future natural disasters, such as the country's non-systemic approach to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), the fact that DRR is not integrated into sectoral and multi-sectoral plans, or that the National Strategy on DRR is still in draft form since 2014. Presently, there is no multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder National Platform for advancing national commitment to Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in Albania, despite the country's high exposure to risks and low coping capacities to face them.

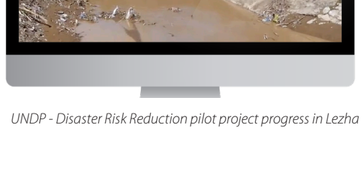
In December of 2019, two pilots were launched to kick start both local and national responses.

In follow-up to the pilot, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior, the National Agency of Civil Protection and UNDP, initiated a national-level support programme to bridge the gap between Albania's high exposure to risk and the necessity to have in place adaptive capacities. UNDP's efforts at building national-level risk management capacities have so far generated several activities, from reviewing strategic documents and policies on DRR at different levels, to developing stakeholder analyses and capacity assessment. Furthermore, DRM stakeholders have been successfully classified as per their roles and expectations in the DRM system. Another novelty for Albania is the fact that UNDP has completed a Platform of Stakeholder Participation for each stakeholder in the process of DRM system development.

Furthermore, and in line with the recent national legal framework requiring all municipalities to have in place their local DRR Strategies, Civil Emergency Plans and a functional operational and well-coordinated DRR structure, UNDP has selected the Municipality of Lezhe to pilot a local-level DRM module.

Lezhe, being a municipality with high risk of natural disasters, is both benefiting and serving as the ground for refining and detailing a replicable model of the approach, methodology and application of DRR measures for the other municipalities.

So far, UNDP has completed: (i) a participatory Risk Assessment of the municipality, through extensive consultations with local community members and experts, (ii) populating a Geographic Information System (GIS) platform with data and information to create the multi-risk profiles for the municipality, (iii) an advanced draft of the Municipal Civil Emergency Plan, which is undergoing the last round of consultations, and (iv) an outline of the future municipal DRR Strategy.



UNDP - Disaster Risk Reduction pilot project progress in Lezha

Of course, sustainability, capacity building and citizen awareness are central to all UNDP efforts on the ground. UNDP plans to replicate this model in additional municipalities, as well as standardize and transfer the local DRR model to the relevant institutions.

The main outputs of the recent national-level DRR support programme will ensure Albania has in place a National DRR Platform for institutional dialogue, a National DRR Strategy and a National Emergency Plan, while at the same time a blueprint of local DRR instruments and organizational approaches is sufficiently tested in diverse municipal typologies and replicable to all 61 Albanian municipalities.

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