



Disaster Risk Management Capacity Development
for Cities in Eastern Partnership Countries

Peer Review Framework

LES 4

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What is local DRM Peer Review?

A systematic examination and assessment of the performance of a municipality in the field of Disaster Risk Management by expert colleagues (peers) from other municipalities.



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Objectives and added-value

The Peer Review helps the “municipality under review” to:

- improve its DRM policies by giving a fresh, external view on their current situation, signalling areas for improvement and providing recommendations as well as good practices from other countries
- sensitize and engage its DRM stakeholders and commit them to a shared understanding of the situation and the way forwards

The Peer Review helps the “visiting peers” and “peers under review” to:

- learn from each other’s situation by taking back to their own municipality the lessons learnt and good practices from other countries
- engage in a sustainable peer dialogue and mutual assistance in the run up to, during and after the peer review mission

Within the frame of the CapaCities project the Peer Review serves to inform the local DRM strategy

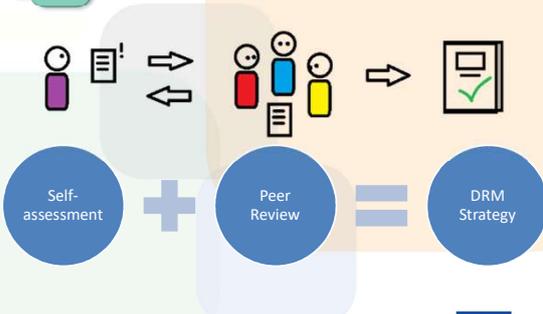


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Part of a larger process



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Relation with the Self-assessment of DRM capacities

- Peer Review and Self-assessment follow the same structure and examine the same capacities for DRM
- The Peer Review supplements the self-assessment with:
 - an independent, external view on the current situation and gaps
 - recommendations based on the visiting peers’ experience
 - good practices from other countries
- The obligation to receive an international mission and organize well-prepared meetings with local stakeholders:
 - forces the municipality under review and its stakeholders to explain to outsiders (and therefore to re-think) why DRM is organized as it is
 - creates an urgency and ‘window of opportunity’ for dialogue with stakeholders



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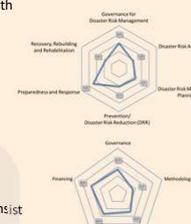
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Deliverable

The visiting peers will develop a Peer Review Report with the following content:

- Chapter 1. Introduction of the Peer Review (objective, process, justification)
- Chapter 2. Disaster Risk Governance
- Chapter 3. Disaster Risk Assessment
- Chapter 4. Disaster Risk Management Planning
- Chapter 5. Disaster Risk Reduction/Prevention
- Chapter 6. Preparedness and Response
- Chapter 7. Recovery, Rebuilding and Rehabilitation
- Chapter 8. Conclusions: prioritization of recommendations



Chapter 2 to 7 will cover all capacities and will each consist of the following paragraphs:

- Observations (description of current situation)
- Current level of capacities
- Local good practices
- Recommendations



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Instrument

For keeping track of the results, the same Excel tool will be used as for the self-assessment

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5 capacity levels

As part of the report the peers will be asked to give their own verdict on the current level of a capacity (1 to 5)

No.	Capacity	Current state	Guidance (supporting questions)
1	Governance for Disaster Risk Management	5 - We have implemented this and are learning and improving	To the national legal framework on prevention and preparedness fully implemented?
1.1	Local implementation of the national legal framework on DRM	4 - We have described this on paper and are doing it for real	Is there political leadership on DRM? Is a city coordinator for DRM assigned? Is there a core team, working group or committee of most involved stakeholders that leads the DRM process?
1.2	Local coordination and leadership on DRM	3 - We have described this on paper	Are there platforms/committees for DRM (prevention and response)? Is there a clear mandate for these structures? Are clearly defined responsibilities and roles/functions assigned to the entities participating in the implementation of prevention and preparedness measures?
1.3	Multi-stakeholder cooperation mechanism	2 - We are working on this, but not structured/systematically	Are relevant city departments part of the local DRM governance, such as spatial planning, infrastructure, public utilities, social services? How are they connected? How is DRM coordinated with them?
1.4	Involvement of all relevant city departments in DRM	1 - We don't have this	Are relevant external entities part of the local DRM governance? How are they connected? How is DRM coordinated with them?
1.5	Involvement of all relevant entities and sectors in DRM		

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Covering capacities

- The objective within the scope of CapaCities is to analyse the situation for all 63 capacities
- In the preparation for the mission the topics of the framework will be divided in such a way that there is a coherent programming of meetings with the right stakeholders
- For each capacity the instrument provides 'supporting questions'. These help to ask the right follow-up questions after a stakeholder presentation
- There is no need to take on each capacity one-by-one. A single stakeholder presentation might cover different aspects if several capacities. The peer team has to assess during the meeting whether they know enough to give a verdict on all capacities.

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Getting prepared: first step

- Setting the objective of the peer review:
 - Are the specific political wishes or needs?
 - Are there specific areas of interest that have arisen from the self-assessment?
- Scoping the peer review
 - Width: range of topics, variety of stakeholders
 - Depth: priority topics of special interest
- Selecting the approach to the peer review
 - Auditing approach: focus on independence of conclusions, status of report
 - Equal peer approach: focus on external view, new insights
 - Exchange approach: focus on discussions, receiving examples and good practices

The objective, scope and approach are defining for the rest of the preparations

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Preparations by peer team

- Short desk research: previous homework assignments, self-assessment report
- Input for programme: what kind of meetings with what kind of stakeholders?
- Role division between peers
- Clustering of topics, capacities and supporting questions for each meeting
- Day-by-day preparations of each meeting: line of questioning

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Peer team

Of each city one focal point will visit one city and the other will visit the other. Together they will be on the receiving end as city under review.

The peer team consists of four persons:

- Two focal points: one from each of the other cities
- Nico and Ruud

Roles:

- Chairman: opening of meeting, introduction of peers and mission, start of questioning, chairing of discussion/questioning
- Secretary: keeping notes, keeping track of time, signalling topics still to cover
- Regular peers

Depending on the personal preferences, these roles can be divided for the whole mission, per day or per meeting.

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What to expect

- Busy and long days
- An overload of information
- Many unanswered questions / uncertainties
- Limited time during a session, not all questions can be asked
- High pressure
- Great experience

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Preparations by municipality under review

- Define objective and scope (together with peer team) → *in case of CapaCities the whole framework*
- Explanation to Mayor and department heads to obtain their consent
- Programme: programming of topics and stakeholders (together with peer team)
- Discuss/develop external communication strategy: media attention etc.
- Session(s) with local working group to prepare programme and presentations
- Stakeholder invitations (pref. in name of Mayor); *consider informal besides formal invitations*
- Keeping track of stakeholders' subscriptions (expected attendance), *preferably with registration whether they know English or not*
- Develop own presentations of focal point
- Instruction for and check of city departments' and external stakeholders' presentations
- Meeting rooms with facilities
- Consecutive or simultaneous translation (with facilities)
- Signature lists
- On-site visits (if necessary)
- Transport and well-planned transfer time
- Meals
- Hotel
- Final briefing for hosts (Mayor, department heads)

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Outline of agenda for the mission

- Monday: arrival
- Tuesday morning: opening session with all stakeholders, presentation of objective and scope of peer review, general introduction of country/city under review and introduction of peers and their backgrounds

Tuesday afternoon to Thursday morning: different stakeholder meetings

- Thursday afternoon: closing session with all stakeholders, presentation of preliminary conclusions by peers and
- Friday: departure

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Time frames for each day

9.00: preparation meeting peer team
discuss the agenda of the day and key topics among the peers
select a number of key questions that can be used to start up the discussion
choose a lead peer for each session

10.00: stakeholder meeting(s)

12.30: lunch

14.00: stakeholder meeting(s)

16.00 conclusions meeting peer team
reflect on the process
reflect on the content discussed
jointly note main observations, capacity level and preliminary recommendations for each capacity (Excel tool)
discuss if there are topics that require additional clarification in another meeting

17.00 closure

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Different kinds of meetings

- Traditional stakeholder meeting: presentation by one or more stakeholders, followed by question & answer with peer team
- Interview: small meeting between half of peer team and 2 to 4 stakeholders (2 parallel sessions)
- On-site explanation: excursion with Q&A to specific site in order to show physical aspects of a capacity (if crucial to mission objective and scope).

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How to conduct a peer review meeting

- The lead peer gives a brief introduction to the purpose of the review (if there are new stakeholders) and of the topic of the meeting
- The country under review presents an overview of the topic under review
- The lead peer opens up the discussion with one of the prepared questions
- The whole peer team joins in the questioning

Formal and cultural expressions (speeches, gifts, drinks) are limited to the opening and closing sessions

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Asking questions

Formulate open and general questions.
Avoid:

- Do you have....
- In country X we have..., do you have the same

Instead:

- How did you develop?
- Who was involved?
- What are the next steps?
- What would you change?
- What would you like to receive recommendations on?
- What is working well?
- What have we not covered in this session?

Overall: be curious and attentive

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Practical code of conduct

- The peers sit next to each other so they can keep close contact about the progress and topics still to cover
- Ensure people finish their talk before the next question is posed
- Try to engage all participants
- Avoid personal distractions (phone)
- Always on time
- Clear and open communication and respect mutual agreements
- No alcohol during the day
- Use the coffee breaks for networking
- Report any issue/doubt

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Locations

- Main focus is the municipality:
 - City hall departments
 - Local stakeholders offices
 - Local offices of national/regional administrations
 - Local risk locations
- It is possible to include visit(s) to locations outside the municipality (regional or national government, sectoral agencies, cross-border risks), but there has to be a clear added-value in light of the objective and scope of the review

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Preparing the report

- The main conclusions will be ready at the end of the mission and shared in the closing meeting
- Nico and Ruud will finish the report afterwards, as well as a presentation of the conclusions
- The peers are consulted about the final text
- The report is sent to the focal points of the municipality under review

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Follow-up by focal points

- The focal points compare the peer review report with their own self-assessment and analyse the main differences.
- The focal points prepare a proposal for the local working group for how to transform the conclusions of the peer review (and self-assessment) into strategic objectives and concrete actions in the DRM Strategy
- The focal points and local working group consult the wider stakeholder network (at least those involved in the peer review) about the proposals for the DRM strategy. (SAM 4 can be used for it, with presence of the Core Team)
- Finish the DRM strategy and reach a final decision (Mayor, Council, with approval of the local stakeholders)

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Pitfalls for the municipality under review

- Lack of two-way communication: the municipality under review only presents and transmits, without sufficient time for questioning and dialogue
- Window dressing: the municipality under review (or certain of their stakeholders) are concerned about the review and try to come out as positive as possible.
- Individual pressure: internal or external stakeholders feel uncomfortable in the presence of other stakeholders or superiors and do not express freely because they are afraid to be blamed for faults
- Cultural/country competition: one country does not want to loose out to another and therefore presents itself better than it is
- Stakeholders are insufficiently informed and ill prepared.
- Key-stakeholders are missing.
- One stakeholder is too dominant in the conversation.
- Logistical failings
- Lost in translation: inadequate interpretation

Honesty is the key to improvement!



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Pitfalls for the visiting peers

- Using a line of questioning that is leading in a certain direction, based on own experience (don't you have this, or did you consider that?)
- Getting lost in the country-specific context (for lack of explanation/clarity, or because of huge difference with own paradigm)
- Unclear role division in the meetings
- Too detailed on topic of own interest and not enough for other topics
- Lack of time management and being late
- Fatigue, stress
- Distractions and disinterest

But we are there as a team! Together we stand strong!

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Questions?

Who is joining which mission?

- 15-19 April: Ungheni
- 20-24 May: Ararat
- 17-21 June: Kutaisi



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