THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK MID-TERM REVIEW FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

PRESS RELEASE
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On the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), the Joint Programme of the United Nations and the Government of Switzerland “Disaster Risk Reduction for Sustainable Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, organized a round table in Sarajevo, to present the “Mid-term review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction” of the country, as well as to discuss its accomplishments and the way forward.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a signatory country, is implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which is an inter-governmental agreement that aims to prevent and respond to disaster risks across the globe and significantly reduce disaster risk and loss of life, livelihood, and health.

On this occasion, Selmo Cikotić, Minister of Security of BiH pointed out that the mid-term report on the implementation of the Sendai Framework is another important step for the protection and rescue system, and that BiH will be among the first countries in the region, to submit a Report on Implementation of the DRR Framework for the period 2015-2022. In order for BiH to demonstrate its implementation of strategic activities in disasters risk reduction, further development of measures need to be included by the sectors, that will ensure the integration of disaster risk management into relevant development policies at all levels of government.

The Joint Programme, which is supported and funded by the Swiss Government and the United Nations (UN) in the amount of BAM 7.1 million, is introducing systemic solutions which will ensure the achievement of the Sendai Framework’s key DRR priorities at the local level in cooperation with representatives of the following sectors: protection and rescue, education, social and child protection, health and agriculture, in accordance with the needs of the BiH citizens and the challenges they are facing.

Dr. Ingrid Macdonald, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in BiH said: "As we are approaching the midpoint of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR, it is an opportune time to assess progress, and examine the challenges faced in BiH. Globally, the facts
are unequivocal. The climate crisis is already threatening lives and livelihoods around the world. We face more frequent and intense fires, floods, droughts, including in BiH. If local communities, the private sector, and public institutions are not ready to mitigate and respond effectively hazards can easily turn into disasters that threaten the gains of Sustainable Development. Early action saves lives, reduces suffering, and cuts costs. We have come a long way, however, increased investment in DRR is central to sustainable development in BiH. The time for smart choices is now”.

The key findings of the evaluation of the implementation of the Sendai framework for BiH highlighting the need for action in four areas: 1) understanding the risk of disasters; 2) strengthening disaster risk management; 3) investing in DRR to increase resilience; and 4) strengthening disaster preparedness for effective response and improved rebuilding during recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

The Sendai Framework is a global instrument which together with other instruments, such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s), formulates long-term development vision for humanity. It provides member states with concrete actions to protect development gains from the risk of natural disasters. Member states are developing their own approaches to ensure transformation of global goals into their national and sub-national policies, development frameworks and specific actions.

Daniel Hunn, the Ambassador of Switzerland to Bosnia and Herzegovina underlined that “much like BiH, Switzerland is a mountainous country that lives with the risks of natural hazards. In Switzerland, we shifted our focus from managing disasters to prevention and risk management. How do we do that? By integrating a multi-hazard analysis, improving governance, and combining measures of prevention – risk mitigation – preparedness – response – and recovery. Prevention pays off financially, socially, and ecologically! This needs holistic thinking, the comprehensive approach that the Sendai Framework is offering us. This approach involves coordination among the different national, cantonal, and local level decision-makers, including all sectors and affected communities. It is a process that requires time, both in Switzerland and in BiH.”

The round table was organized as part of the Sustainable Development Week in BiH 2022/ SDGs Week, a platform for actions, consultations, and discussions supporting the advancement of the SDG’s in BiH.
Participants highlighted the ongoing importance of risk awareness and disaster risk reduction at all levels of governance in BiH, underscoring that one dollar invested in disaster preparedness can prevent seven dollars’ worth of disaster-related economic losses – a considerable return on investment.

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