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**GLOBAL EVALUATION OF THE COMMUNITY ACTION
PROGRAMME IN THE FIELD OF CIVIL PROTECTION, THE
COMMUNITY MECHANISM TO FACILITATE REINFORCED
COOPERATION IN CIVIL PROTECTION ASSISTANCE
INTERVENTIONS AND THE MARINE POLLUTION FRAMEWORK**

Case Study II – Report

**Three projects of the CIVP Action Programme and
Marine Pollution framework**

**The European Commission
Directorate-General for Environment
(DG ENV A5)**

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List of Acronyms

CM	Community Mechanism
CIVP	Civil Protection
EMSA	European Maritime Safety Agency
MIC	Monitoring and Information Centre
MP	Marine Pollution Framework
MS	Member States
DG	Directorate General

1. CASE STUDY II: THREE SELECTED PROJECTS WITHIN THE CIVP ACTION PROGRAMME AND MARINE POLLUTION

Projects analysed within this case study:

- “Major project on Fire prevention and other incidents – Actions to protect European citizens against fire”, Sweden, December 2002 - February 2004
- “Disaster medicine: Managing the psycho-social aftermath of collective emergency situations”, Belgium, July 2000 - September 2001
- “NEBAJEX (Net Environmental Benefit Analysis) Exercise combined with a pilot project”, MUMM (Belgium), CEDRE (France) and SINTEF (Norway), 2002

1.1. Background

Case study II focuses on two projects from the CIVP Action Programme (AP) and one project from Marine Pollution (MP), which included workshops meant to contribute to *information exchange, information to the public, awareness-raising and improvement of response actions*. The intention in choosing these three projects was to:

- a. update the data collection of the two respective mid-term evaluations in AP and MP (both the AP Fire prevention and the AP Disaster medicine project had been completed only after the mid-term evaluation; regarding the selected MP pilot project, during the mid-term evaluation it had been too early to measure its impact); and
- b. follow-up the two selected AP projects, which had lead to the creation of a network.

1.2. Method applied

A total of 20 qualitative interviews by phone (duration of approximately 45 minutes) was carried out, based on standardised interview guides for the respective interview group (project organizers and project participants).

1.3. Conclusions

- a. The application and selection procedure for AP projects is reported to be rather intransparent. Links between former and future projects are not sufficiently established. MP projects are said to be easier to apply for.
- b. Regarding the general presentation of EC instruments in the field of civil protection, the definition of certain issues is not very clear in the AP. Prevention issues should be highlighted more within the project priorities. Finding information on the homepage is reported to be difficult for both instruments. Priorities in MP are said to be well defined, and in accordance with obvious needs.
- c. Efficiency of budgetary (national and EC) contribution is reported to be quite satisfactory. Both AP projects achieved good results operating on a rather modest budget; this was mainly due to the project organisers' considerable identification with the projects, as well as their enthusiasm and related timely input regarding these projects. For the MP exercise, an EC contribution of 50% is considered to be insufficient.
- d. The objectives of the selected workshops / projects were generally met.
- e. The projects' contribution to national efforts in training in the field of civil protection was said to be minor.
- f. Specific results of the projects range from raising confidence, benchmarking, information sharing, sensitisation, involvement of people from distanced regions, and establishing new contacts, to output results like project reports,

comparative statistics in the Fire Safety project, a “European policy paper” in the Disaster Medicine project and the establishment of networks in both AP projects.

- g. Overall, the practical utility of the project results at the national level is reported to be a given. In particular, smaller countries and countries that are less advanced in certain areas use the results for benchmarking.
- h. The contribution of the selected projects to the objectives laid out in the respective Council Decisions comes primarily in the form of addressing the better common understanding among different stakeholders and the establishment of networks, and less in the form of information of the public or the improvement of response.
- i. Modifications of national approaches or policies through the selected projects are limited and measurable only over the longer term; a few ideas definitely might be included in the future.
- j. Obstacles to the further use of project results are the availability of reports only in English language and particularities of the existing national structures.
- k. The dissemination of project outcomes is an issue that has not been sufficiently dealt with, and which must be improved.
- l. Follow-up to projects is in most cases inexistent. The two networks resulting from the selected AP projects represent rare positive exceptions. More institutional support from the EC is desired.
- m. The expected impact of the two networks is considerable, if they receive continued support.
- n. The added value of the selected projects is multiple, especially in the areas of the understanding of differences and similarities between nations and the need for benchmarking in certain areas.

2. EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT OF THREE SELECTED PROJECTS WITHIN THE CIVP ACTION PROGRAMME AND MARINE POLLUTION

2.1. Application and selection procedure for the projects

With regard to the CIVP Action Programme (AP), there were no significant comments concerning the application procedure; one interviewee stated that the calls for proposal appear rather ad hoc.

Regarding the selection procedure, some interviewees mentioned that the selection of some of the priorities for the AP is difficult to understand, as from a practitioner’s point of view, other priority areas might have been chosen. According to several interviewees, the AP is mainly based on reactivity to incidents and has no broader ambitions, such as enhancing the coordination between Member States. One interviewee mentioned a lack of transparency of the selection procedure, as it implies a lot of lobbying before and after project approval.

As for weaknesses, apart from the topics, the majority of interviewees in the AP reported the missing link between actions. In the view of many, it does not always deserve to be called an Action Programme: there are many loose projects, which cover too many subjects and focus too much on operational issues instead of policy making issues. More continuity is therefore said to be necessary, and actions need to be connected to an overall strategy. In order to guarantee the continuity of previous actions within the AP, it was suggested to set up an informal board of experts / civil servants from earlier grants to offer advice on what had been done successfully in the past (best practices). More informal cooperation with former project organisers is expected.

It was also pointed out that there should be more links with the Community Mechanism, in which psycho-social aspects should be included to a greater extent.

Within Marine Pollution (MP), in general there seem to have been fewer problems with accessing project funding, especially when a direct contact is established through participation in the Steering Group/Committee, which is said to facilitate access to relevant information. The selection committee for MP is said to be very efficient. In addition, according to the majority of interviewees, the MP focuses on real problems.

2.2. General presentation of EC instruments in the field of civil protection

As reported by several interviewees, one problem within the AP is the definition of terms like “civil protection”, “prevention”, “protection”, “safety” etc. To several organisers it is not clear what exactly is covered within AP. In particular, referring to the fire safety project, it was said to be difficult to find an adequate place, or “home”, for this issue within the EC. An oft-repeated remark is that prevention is not sufficiently dealt with in the AP; many interviewees regret that the main focus is still on emergency issues. Prevention issues should be conceded more prominence on the agenda, so as to be able to influence people’s behaviour and move in the direction of a long-term approach.

In MP, the presentation is said to be clear enough for applicants to be able to find out about funding possibilities and procedures, in particular when the organiser is a member of the MCMP. The priorities in MP are said to be well defined, and the needs are obvious.

However, several interviewees for both AP and MP pointed out that it is not always easy to find the piece of information one is looking for on the CIVP Unit’s website.

It is considered to be a positive aspect that persons from all Member States are invited to participate in the instruments.

2.3. Efficiency of budgetary (national and EC) contribution

For major projects, a funding contribution of 75% in AP is said to be necessary, giving the best value for money for the organising entity. Apparently, this would be the only way to get high quality experts from the relevant authorities involved. At the same time, the credibility of the action is enhanced when it is carried out under the “umbrella” of the EC. Support for travel expenses and for translation is deemed to be especially valuable, since this cannot always be paid for by the national government. In the case of the Disaster Medicine project, the budget was said to be too limited, especially for translating the policy paper. In both projects, in spite of the rather modest budgets, good results were achieved because of a high degree of (financial and emotional) implication by the organising entities; enthusiasm among the organisers of the two selected AP projects was reported to have been very high.

In MP, the selected exercise being a rather scientific project, an EC contribution of 50% is said to be insufficient. In this case, one valuable institute had dropped out because it was unable to come up with the other 50% on its own, the result being a loss of valuable expertise. Interviewees pointed out repeatedly that in the future, projects in the marine pollution area will probably have to be withdrawn because of funding problems.

The selection of civil servants is reportedly not always done in the most appropriate way, which sometimes leads to the wrong people attending the workshops.

2.4. Meeting of objectives of the workshop / project

The main aim of the Swedish AP project was to put the issue of “fire prevention” on the European agenda. Generally, this objective was accomplished. But the mixture of different levels of implication among the participating experts (more presence from the operational side than from the policy side) was said to have led to conclusions that are too vague. As a conclusion, it became clear that the Member States have many similar problems to solve; that they might mutually support each other and offer advice on fire safety questions /

national fire safety goals, but a common European programme for the improvement of fire safety is said to be desirable. The comparability of statistical information about fire safety reasons from the countries is a necessary basis for judgement for all member states. A network of fire safety experts was therefore found to be necessary, in order to provide a basis for the information exchange and for the joint solution of problems.

Concerning the other two projects, no significant comments were made in this regard. However, it is interesting to note that in the Disaster Medicine project, unlike in the Fire safety project, the workshop was judged to have been of a high quality, precisely because both policy makers and operational staff had been involved, providing these groups with a rare opportunity to meet.

2.5. Project's contribution to national efforts in training in the field of civil protection

Especially in training, it was said that the need for standardisation within the AP is very high. In these three projects, training was not the goal, least of all in the AP Fire safety project and in the MP project. Instead, the objectives were benchmarking of prevention issues and looking at national legislations and statistics, and these objectives were fulfilled.

2.6. Specific results that have been achieved

Overall, the results of the three projects are satisfactory. Specific results range from raising confidence regarding own capacities, benchmarking, learning from the experience of others, information sharing, sensitisation, involving people from more distanced regions, establishing new contacts etc., to more tangible results like the reports, comparative statistics in the Fire Safety project, a "European policy paper" in the Disaster Medicine project, the creation of national platforms for psycho-social victims of disasters, getting an overview of training institutes in certain areas, getting an idea of the total number of certain groups (such as psycho-social workers in all countries), as well as network-building in both AP projects. Smaller countries in particular point out that they use the information collected in the workshop as reference material, as their limited budgets force them to make more use of benchmarking, as opposed to carrying out their own scientific research.

The *AP project on Fire safety* provided national statistics to all countries, which was highly appreciated. Generally speaking, this project has shown to the different operational levels that problems and ideas are similar all over Europe, and that the only difference is the magnitude of the problems. As a consequence of the project, a Fire Safety Network was founded in November 2004. Its aim is to enhance and encourage cooperation on fire safety issues and to eventually become a consulting group within the Commission. Currently, 17 countries participate.

The *AP Disaster Medicine project* was supposed to be transformed into a collective project, instead of a Belgian one, and interviewees stated this was what made it so efficient and effective. The fact of mixing policy makers and operational staff in this workshop was reported to have caused a change in how each group perceives the other's work. The main result was a policy paper, which is considered to be "the European Policy Paper". It is said to be a very important document, which has been disseminated to a large audience. An additional result of this project is the foundation of a network. This network is rather loose compared to the fire prevention network; exchange is done via e-mail requests and during an annual meeting. As a consequence of this project, some countries have developed a national network of psychologists from scratch. Countries like the Netherlands and Norway report to provide valuable support to this network through their knowledge centres, e.g. by providing scientific literature on the subject in English.

In the case of the MP exercise, the report showed that monitoring is possible in real time after an oil spill accident, and this affirmation could be immediately put to the test during the TRICOLOR accident. The partner organisations MUMM, SINTEF and CEDRE really got to know each other through this project and say that they will cooperate more easily in the

future. One criticism concerning this MP project is that this particular report had not yet been published on the website of the EC.

2.7. Practical utility of the project results on the national level

Overall, the results of the three projects are reported to be useful.

Small countries say that they tend to do a lot of benchmarking in other (English speaking) countries in order to understand what they are doing. This generally helps them to translate the results more easily into the national system.

Regarding the AP Fire Safety project, the Nordic countries had already done joint work (annual informal meetings on fire prevention), but apparently had been lacking the energy to do so in a more structured way. The Swedish project inspired them to take their cooperation one step further, and to include other countries. Some countries like UK, NL or GER are already quite advanced in terms of fire safety, and therefore could not find a great many new aspects relevant for their national systems; rather, they made more general use of the exchange of experiences. But the foundation of the network is said to be an important step at the national and international levels, as it will serve to exchange advice on different subjects and topics and to identify common focus areas for future work. In addition, on the regional level, the network might help establish contact to new experts. For example, regarding the issue of the obligatory installation of smoke detectors in private households, the experience of certain EU member states are said to be very helpful, even if countries with a federal structure like Germany may face problems regarding implementation.

For the AP Disaster Medicine project, it was mentioned that the guidelines that were elaborated could be very useful for Eastern European countries, but that their use will have to be assured.

Regarding MP, the results were put to use on an operational basis almost immediately in the TRICOLOR accident, which occurred at the same time. Nonetheless, it is too early to judge their overall usefulness. This project reintroduced the discussion about the use of dispersants, and a general use of the model is said to be expected.

2.8. Contribution of the project to objectives laid down in the Council Decision

The selected projects contributed to the objectives laid down in the Council Decision in the following order from highest to lowest:

1. (d) contributing to a better common understanding between different stakeholders:

Generally, yes, also given the possibility to involve both policy makers and operational staff.

2. (c) establishing a network permitting more effective cooperation between Member States in case of emergency:

Yes, but with main emphasis on prevention. These networks are supposed to also intensify the cooperation in case of emergencies, in particular in smaller countries, where the people involved are often the same.

3. (a) increasing public information, education and awareness:

No, not directly, since the projects were not targeted at the general public, but at specialists and policy makers. Even if the inclusion of results in the educational systems was intended, in all cases it is too early to evaluate the possible impact.

4. (b) increasing the degree of preparedness at national level:

Partly yes, partly no, depending on the previous level of development of the national system. In countries like Greece, where before the project no structures e.g. in disaster medicine had existed, definitely yes.

5. (e) improving the effectiveness and response in case of emergencies:

Yes, although only partially in acute emergencies. The improvement is primarily in areas such as the early assessment of dangerous trends, and the evaluation and assessment of damage.

6. (f) assuring more effective interventions:

Only indirectly, through means of prevention. Nevertheless, increased communication within a well-operating network may mean this objective can be met over the longer term. At short notice, however, this will only be possible to a very small extent.

2.9. Modifications of national approaches or policies through projects

It is important to point out that the regulations in the EU member states are often very divergent from each other. The possibilities of modifying policies are therefore limited. In this regard, most of the interviewees from member states stated that no real changes had taken place to date, but that many ideas are on the table as drafts that may lead to modifications at a later stage. In a long-term view, e.g. the awareness of psycho-social matters was raised through the AP Disaster Medicine project in many countries, given that psycho-social topics have always had a difficult standing compared with medical issues.

As a result of the MP exercise, some countries are considering the possibility of purchasing new instruments; in the MCMP it was also concluded that mathematic modelling might be an important issue for the future.

2.10. Obstacles to the use of the project results

Certain countries like Germany with its federal structure will face more difficulties when trying to apply the results of the workshop at the national level, e.g. in the area of fire protection. (The expert platform is of greater importance at the regional level, where the application of the workshop results may be easier to accomplish.)

Another oft-mentioned issue that also concerns the dissemination of results is the fact that the report is usually elaborated only in English, making it more difficult to promote and to encourage the application of the results in certain non-English speaking countries; the language barrier tends to mean that some people are left out. For the AP Disaster Medicine project in particular, it was pointed out that the translation of the Policy Paper into other languages would have been desirable, especially for the Eastern and South-Eastern European countries, where dealing with reports in English on the operational level is still rather difficult.

As a last general remark, it is obvious that changing mentalities is always a difficult and lengthy task. In particular, psycho-social care issues are low on agenda everywhere and tend to be easily forgotten.

2.11. Dissemination of project outcomes

Generally, the dissemination of project results seems to be a rather weak point. In the case of the two AP projects, the respective networks facilitate this task. Nevertheless, factors attributable both to the organisers (lack of funding for translation into other languages) and the EC (failure to publish results on the CIVP Unit's homepage) make dissemination less effective.

Within the AP Fire safety project network, it seems that good use is being made of its e-mail contact lists, which allows relevant information to circulate.

Within the AP Disaster Medicine project, the policy paper will be prepared for submission to the USA. This would be the first time that a joint European paper is presented there.

The MP exercise report was presented at the "Interspill conference" and raised interest by countries from outside of Europe, like Malaysia, which inquired about the possibility of

inviting monitoring experts. The private sector also showed interest. Generally, high-quality material has been collected for training purposes, but it has not been put to use yet.

2.12. Follow-up of the projects

It was stated repeatedly that, in general, interlinkages between different actions within AP tend to be missing. Follow-up is only rarely provided. Frequently, the organisers would appreciate feedback from the EC with regard to the work they have done.

In both AP projects that included the foundation of a network, this network has provided practically the entirety of follow-up, based on voluntary work by the people involved.

A further minor negative issue that was raised concerns the lack of institutional backup from the EC, which would be necessary and is not sufficiently guaranteed as of yet.

2.13. Impact of network

In general terms, the opinions on the two networks within AP are very favourable.

Regarding the AP Fire safety network, which was founded as recently as November 2004, it is too early to judge its impact. Yet while it will have to grow and find its position, it is said to have great potential. By now, common objectives and projects have been defined for the next two years. Although there are no concrete consequences in this respect to be reported yet, it is assumed that the exchange of opinions among the Member States involved will become more intensive, thus leading to the creation of a durable European communication structure. The EC has provided access to the CIRCA homepage in order to facilitate communication. At this stage, New Member States ask questions regarding the drafting of legislation (10 countries are said to be involved now, half of them in a very active way). Requests currently tend to be of a rather informal nature. Their aim is usually to gather information about what the EC is doing in the field of fire prevention, as well as to lobby and to exert influence (e.g. regarding consumer protection). All requests are dealt with in English, which may become a problem in the future. Many interviewees said that this network will need more recognition and has to be linked to the other organisations in Europe dealing with fire issues. Despite the pleas for institutional backup, it was stated repeatedly that the network's independence from the EC is considered to be crucial.

Regarding the network which resulted from the AP Disaster Medicine project, the lack of institutional backup by the EC was also mentioned. The network itself is seen as highly important. Countries like NL, SE and NO have knowledge centres, which seem to give valuable support to this looser network.

Regarding the MP exercise, a formal network was not among its outcomes. But it was pointed out that a thematic network would be necessary for a long-term approach, as well as for researchers. There should be more links between different projects channelled through the EC. It was suggested by one organiser that a network – the SPILL network – is already operative in the MP area, and could be connected to the EC to serve as a platform.

2.14. Added value of projects

- Possibly the most important added value of the projects is the understanding of differences and similarities between nations. This was mentioned in all interviews.
- Crosscutting issues might be linked with other EC Directorates, e.g. competition, social policies, environment etc., as the lack of links between them is one of the obvious shortcomings. The contribution of the network might be to encourage discussions (to say "lobbying" would be going too far) in this respect.
- The definition of prevention and its emphasis seem to have been clarified somewhat. The CIVP Unit seems to have become more aware of the need for fire prevention activities in the community, as the network acts at its own expenses. In addition, numerous areas for common European goals in fire safety have been detected.

- The Disaster Medicine Policy Paper was a first attempt to reach a European standard; the importance of quick intervention was recognised; lesser developed countries participated in networking, combining resources.
- Expansion of psycho-social issues to South-Eastern Europe, Greece being the first country to implement measures in this regard.
- The raising of awareness that professionals everywhere are dealing with the importance of psycho-social care issues, and that no member state needs to work on its own, since there are many similarities between the different European countries.