

United Nations Development Programme
Country: the FYR of MACEDONIA

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Project Title: Emergency Coordination Support to Municipality of Strumica

Executing Entity/Implementing Partner: UNDP

Implementing Entity/Responsible Partners: Municipality of Strumica

Brief Description

The extremely dry conditions and successive heat waves have led to wildfires throughout the country. Particularly affected has been the area of Strumica, which also has a mixed ethnic community including Roma. In the Municipality of Strumica, 4 people have died, 18 have been badly injured, informal housing settlements have been under threat, and valuable forest resources have been lost. The Municipality has declared a state of emergency. Given the long term partnership between UNDP, Municipality of Strumica and the national disaster risk management the Municipality has requested UNDP to provide support in coordination, preparation of need assessment and implementation of immediate recovery activities.

The proposed project aims to continue to provide immediate support to the local authorities in strengthening their capacities for better coordination, in preparing needs assessment and supporting the early recovery response measures that will also aim to make people become more resilient to future natural disasters. It should be noted that there is expected to be a reoccurrence of heat waves later this summer with the attendant risk of forest fires and wildfires.

The main activities will be to provide technical assistance to the Municipality of Strumica in coordination, preparation of needs assessment and implementation of early recovery activities for the recent wildfires. UNDP will support the coordination process led by the Municipality of Strumica and will ensure that the needs of the affected people and livelihoods are properly addressed. In addition, special attention will be given to the vulnerable groups mainly represented by the Turkish and Roma community living in an informal housing settlement near to the affected forest.

The needs assessment will reveal the real extent of damages caused by the wildfires in July and August 2012, and enable the municipality to prepare an adequate early recovery plan. In the basis of the needs assessment UNDP and national institutions will support municipal authorities in undertaking integrated early recovery activities. Through these processes UNDP will strengthen the municipal and national capacities for coordination and implementation of inclusive natural disaster based assessments, which will also be applicable for future disaster response efforts and should lead to the establishment of a proper municipal mechanism for undertaking disaster risk assessments and the preparation of municipal strategies for disaster risk management.

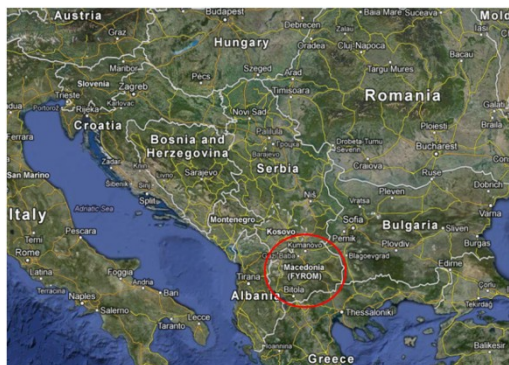
Management Arrangements : Direct Implementation

Total resources required	\$87,000
Total allocated resource	\$87,000
○ UNDP BCPR	\$77,000
○ Local Government	\$10,000
○ UNDP CO	
○ Other	

Situation Analysis

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been badly affected by the wildfires in July and August 2012 induced by the extremely dry ground conditions as a result of the a severe heat wave affecting the entire Southeastern European region. At its peak on 24th of July 2012, there were several wildfires in the country. Presently, the majority of the fires have been put under control. However with a predicted reoccurrence of heat waves later this summer, there is an attendant risk of new forest fires and wildfires.

As result of the approximately 300 recent wildfires, several settlements and villages in the Municipality of Strumica have been directly affected by the fire, two villages evacuated and one settlement where Roma people are representing the majority of the population is currently displaced. Also, similar to wildfires in 2007, the country's recent wildfires have directly affected two officially proclaimed national parks and several national protected areas are damaged and require a special ecosystem based plan for recovery.



Population: 54,636 inhabitants, of which city of Strumica: 35,311 inhabitants (census 2002)
Temporarily evacuated population: 10,000
Displaced population: 1,400
 Displaced Roma population: 1,200
Unemployment rate: 40.52%
Area: 322 square kilometres.
 Elevation: 256 m
 Mountains: Belasica (1883 m), Ograzden (1746 m), and Elenica (970 m)
 Rivers: Strumica (34,50 km) , Vodocha (20,50 km) , Turija (9 km) Trakajna (4.96 km).
 Climate: Mediterranean.
 Sunny days: 230 days, or 2370 hours annually.
 Rainfall: 600 l /m³
 Wind: north-westerly and south-westerly.



Municipality of Strumica
 South-Eastern part of FYR Macedonia.

Strumica is the most affected municipality where 4 people have died and 18 people have been badly injured, and has declared a state of emergency. One informal housing settlement

where approximately 1,000 mixed Turkish and Roma people live has faced immediate threat. The wildfire has also affected the regional road, disrupting trade and commerce. The municipality is taking care for covering their current needs.



Picture 1: The starting point of the wildfire and 100 houses under immediate threat (end point of the city)
Source: Municipality off Strumica and local Red Cross office

The area of 400ha covered with endemic white pine forest was completely destroyed. Due to the immediate threat to the city, citizens were mobilized and provided voluntary support to the local and national institutions to put the fire under control.



Picture 2: affected forest with white pine in one day – approximately 300ha
Source: Municipality off Strumica and local Red Cross office

Currently, the wildfires are under control. The municipality is currently also mobilizing resources and preparing for the announced new heat waves during the rest of the season. Being stretched to the limits during the recent wildfire outbreaks, the municipality has very limited capacities to properly respond to possible new wave of wildfires in its territory.

The municipality is also facing problems with reliability of specialised equipment. The current equipment available to local and national authorities for dealing with wildfires are limited and cannot cover the needs. In addition, the stock of existing equipment was damaged during the response period.

It is clear that the municipality and country itself are facing challenge that requires strong commitment from all stakeholders. Coordination of the parallel response and recovery activities will be the challenge that municipality seems to be ready to undertake if coordination support is provided. In that regards UNDP has been requested by the municipality to be that support agency that will replicate the activities undertaken on a national level during the forest fires in 2007 but this time in a local level by engaging wide stakeholders' participation for implementation of integrated coordination and recovery preparation activities.

The present estimate of losses is incomplete due to lack of capacity on the ground. UNDP has recognised the need of strengthening the capacities of the local authorities for proper development of situation reports and included this task in the project framework under the coordination activities. The reports that are expected to be developed by leadership of international and national experts are going to be developed jointly with the municipality and the directorate for rescue and protection in order to ensure equal level of knowledge and experience in both, local and national institutions.

Local and National Response:

Since the wildfires started and were active during the country's peak summer holidays, the National Government through the Directorate for Protection and Rescue has been providing continuous support to Strumica and other municipalities in fighting the fires and response efforts. However, a continuous season of multiple, simultaneous wildfires have taxed the capacities of both national and local authorities.

The international donor community has to date not been active in providing support to the affected municipality.

As a long term partner of the Municipality, UNDP has received request for support from the Mayor of Strumica, for the coordination, assessment, and planning required to properly respond to the crisis and to support recovery efforts.

Remaining needs

- The Mayor of Strumica has requested coordination support from UNDP;
- UNDP has also been requested to prepare the needs assessment that should guide the early recovery plan for addressing the immediate and long-term early recovery activities;
- The fire fighting equipment for the municipal fire brigade is being underlined as an immediate need, as it has been recognized as the main gap in efforts to contain the fire. This is especially important to the municipality because a new heat wave is expected at the end of August and early September. UNDP support in delivery of this equipment will be of extraordinary importance for the response management;
 - ✓ 100 specialized backpacks with hand pump and hose, a simple, portable reservoir for water and/or foam concentrate are of immediate need to the municipal authorities;
 - ✓ At least 100 sets of basic fire fighting safety clothing should be purchased to be available to the volunteers;
- Re-Forestation is expected to be done through the government financed 5 year plan for planting trees across the Country.
- The capacities to prepare an early recovery plan need to be boosted with additional specialized expertise, recognized as a UNDP advantage in this area due to the internal UNDP BCPR capacities but also because of the experience in development of this kind of documents at the national and local level;
- Assistance with food and non food items (shelters, mattresses, blankets, bed linen, tents etc.) for up to 100 families for up to 20 days are required. The Red Cross in coordination with the municipality will start the procedure and if necessary UNDP will support this activity but not exceeding 5% from the grant allocation;
- The assessment of specific needs concerning vulnerable people, namely the mixed Turkish and Roma community and the provision of appropriate recovery measures is recognized as an important part of the process of developing the needs assessment and early recovery plan;
- Gender specific needs are recognized as a specific issue requiring efforts to strengthen the capacities of the authorities to make the needs assessment and recovery plan gender sensitive.

Request for assistance

The municipal authority's effort to support response and recovery is challenged by the shortage of the necessary resources and human capacity, which have been largely exhausted or consumed through fire fighting and emergency coordination efforts in the immediate response. Key capacity gaps identified in the aftermath of the disaster include coordination, as well as needs assessment and recovery planning. Additionally, the lack of personnel and proper firefighting equipment has hindered the response. In order to address these needs, the Municipality of

Strumica, which is a long term partner of UNDP, has requested assistance from United Nations Development Programme in coordination, needs assessment, and planning for immediate emergency response and early recovery. UNDP will work with the municipality to strengthen its capacities during the response and recovery process.

Project Outputs and Activities

The overall objective of the project is to provide immediate assistance to response needs, establishment of proper municipal coordination to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the damages caused and to identify immediate needs for recovery. In parallel to also strengthen the capacity of the Municipality to better prepare for an early recovery process and strengthen municipal capacities for undertaking planning and implementation processes to make citizens become more resilient to natural disasters.

The expected outputs from this assistance are:

a) Coordination capacities strengthened:

- ✓ Support to municipal and national authorities in coordination efforts related to emergency response and recovery, and the integration of disaster risk reduction.

Scale of operation:

- UNDP will support the municipality in mobilising the overall DRM system's stakeholders to ensure their participation in joint process of recovery;
- UNDP will ensure that all stakeholders are interviewed during the preparation of the needs assessment study;
- UNDP will provide advice to the municipality in delegating the roles to different institutions/organizations within the process of future implementation of the proposed recovery activities;
- UNDP will coordinate the process of discussion with the affected Turkish and Roma community in compiling all the necessary information related to their needs and challenges;
- UNDP will provide support to municipality to standardise the information flow in case of emergency response needs between the forest management authorities "Macedonian Forests", the fire fighting brigades, directorate for protection and rescue, Red Cross, Macedonian army and the volunteers.
- UNDP will strengthen the capacities of- and collaboration between municipality of Strumica and national DRM system for joint accession to the international donor community and request support for addressing the needs of the municipality;
- Since the new heat wave is expected for the forthcoming period, UNDP will serve as an advisor to the municipality in better distribution of the reliable human and technical capacities and their timely sending of the request for specific support

from the Directorate for protection and rescue and Macedonian army (air tractors and helicopters) as well as to other governmental bodies;

Linkages between municipal and national authorities/actions:

- National government is responsible for maintenance of the highways and regional roads. UNDP will ensure fluid communication between the municipality and the central government (through Ministry of transport and communications) to timely deliver repair the affected road;
 - UNDP will monitor the communication between the municipality and central government in using the capacities of the Ministry of labour and social policy in providing psycho-social support to the affected population especially the Roma community where possibilities for long term activities are going to be investigated;
 - UNDP will enable communication between municipality of Strumica and Ministry of environment and physical planning for addressing the issues related to the affected forest, the endemic white pine, the biodiversity and the possible change in the micro climate of the south east region due to the forest fires in 2007 and 2012;
- ✓ Support the process of better updated the Situation Reports, stressing recovery needs, and support resource mobilization.
 - ✓ Provide technical support and advice to local and national institutions and organisation on aid coordination in humanitarian settings focusing on recovery needs.

b) Municipal Needs Assessment Study developed:

- ✓ Hire experts to lead the needs assessment; hire local experts to support the needs assessment development process; develop specific ToRs; develop detailed work plans; ensure that the actions of other possible organizations are not overlapping;
- ✓ Support the relevant Government agencies in carrying out a needs assessment including damage assessment information; sector based assessments integrated in the needs assessment; and ensure that the assessments address cross-cutting issues (vulnerable groups, gender, people living with disabilities);
- ✓ Conduct a three-week needs assessment of affected locations, focusing on recovery needs in the most vulnerable areas.

c) Municipal Early Recovery Plan prepared:

- ✓ hiring expert for ongoing consolidation of the inputs provided by the expert for preparation of the needs assessment;
- ✓ ensuring support from the coordination group for validation of the recommendations provided by the expert for the development of the needs assessment;
- ✓ development of the early recovery plan focused on:
 - short-, medium- and long-term rejuvenation and recovery of the affected areas; restoration of livelihoods;
 - increasing the resilience of people living in the informal settlements and other vulnerable groups;

- rehabilitation of the critical community infrastructure;
- critical inventory for proper implementation of the emergency activities;
- necessary demonstration projects for strengthening the capacities of the local authorities in disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation;
- increasing the coordination in undertaking emergency activities; and
- propose resource mobilization mechanisms for emergency activities and early recovery planning.

The project outputs are expected to be achieved through wide stakeholder participation and through specific analysis of the needs and challenges of the mixed Turkish and Roma community, considered to be the most vulnerable group affected by the natural disasters. During the period of implementation of the four above mentioned outputs, the local and national specialized institutions will be accompanied by the local NGOs representing vulnerable groups and other citizens.

Also, UNDP will use its knowledge and experience in the area of gender mainstreaming and inclusive participation of people with disabilities.

Output 1: Strengthened coordination for delivery of integrated early recovery assistance

UNDP strives to support to municipal and national authorities in coordination efforts related to emergency response and recovery; integrated way of updating the Situation Reports; and provide technical support and advice to local and national institutions and organisation on aid coordination in humanitarian settings focusing on recovery needs.

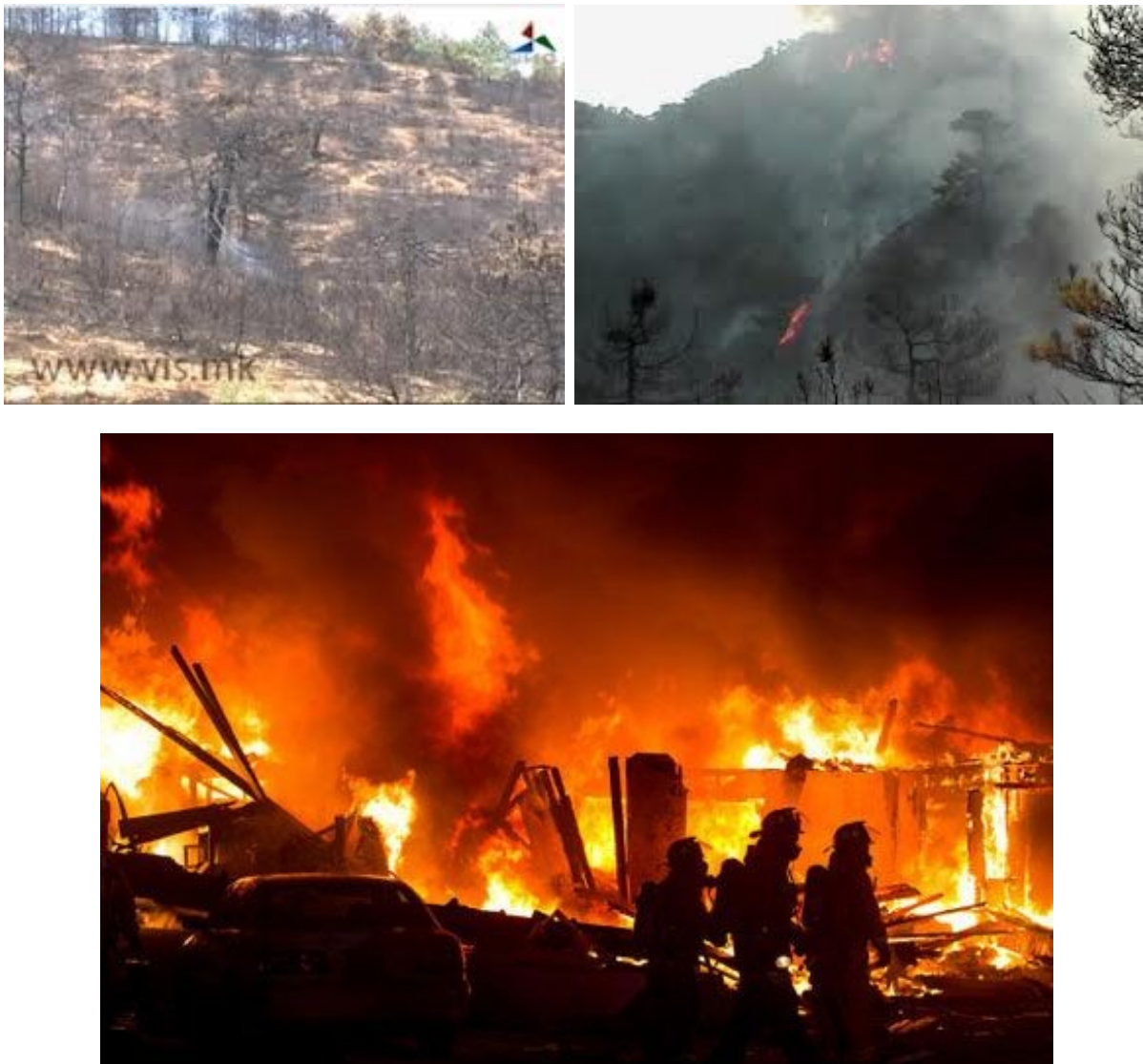
UNDP will provide assistance to the Municipality of Strumica for coordinating the national and local institutions and organization that are part of the Disaster Risk Management System for inclusive process of preparation of the Damage Assessment Study, the Early Recovery Plan and implementation of the Immediate Early Recovery Activities.

The Early Recovery Plan will be based on inputs of joint coordination team of UNDP, Municipality and Directorate for Protection and Rescue, who will organize consultations focus group discussions with different stakeholders.

UNDP will use ensure the involvement of the vulnerable groups (especially the mixed Turkish and Roma community) within the process of decision making and planning but also will strive to have these groups also on board within the process of implementation of the recovery and public awareness activities. This will strengthen the capacities of the more marginalized communities to understand the DRM prevention models, make sure they are included in the early warning phase but also continue building their own capacities in making their community become more resilient to natural disasters.

Output 2: Developed needs assessment study

The needs assessment study will be carried out over the period of three weeks. The needs assessment study will reveal the loss of livelihoods, impact on informal settlements and housing; social implications of recent fires; effects of recent wildfires on local biodiversity and ecosystems; economic implications in forestry, agriculture and other affected sectors (short-, mid- and long-term effects); challenges faced by municipal and national authorities.



The results of the wildfires in municipality of Strumica - August 2012
Source: local TV media

Through implementation of this activity UNDP will aim to strengthen the national inter-agency and cross-practice coordination and implementation capacities. This activity will come up with an agreed Needs Assessment report. This deliverable will be achieved through implementation of the three activities:

- Hire experts to lead the needs assessment; hire local experts to support the needs assessment development process; develop specific ToRs; develop detailed work plans; ensure that the actions with the other possible organizations are not overlapping;
- Support the relevant Government agencies in needs assessment including the damage assessment information; sector based assessments integration in the needs assessment; and ensure that the assessments address cross-cutting issues;
- Conduct a three-week needs assessment of affected locations, focusing on recovery needs in the most vulnerable areas.
- Coordination team will ensure that the needs assessment and early recovery plan are compatible and provides clear guidance for implementation of the early recovery activities.

Output 3: Early recovery plan developed based on the needs assessment

The Early Recovery Plan for wildfires will then be prepared based on the assessment results. The plan is expected to provide clear recommendation to the municipality and national authorities how to precede with implementation of activities that are going to increase the resilience of the municipality to the natural disasters but mainly to wildfires.

The Early Recovery Plan will be developed by the local expert and will be adopted by the Municipality of Strumica and Directorate for Protection and Rescue that according to their competencies are expected to later on lead the process of recovery and implementation of disaster risk and hazard mitigation measures.

The early recovery plan will be focused on the affected areas but will also provide guidance for strengthen the resilience off the non-affected areas that are subject to risks and hazards from wildfires but also to other natural disasters.

For development of the early recovery plan it is expected that following activities will be undertaken:

- ✓ hiring expert for ongoing consolidation of the inputs provided by the expert for preparation of the needs assessment;
- ✓ ensuring support from coordination group for validation of the recommendations provided by the expert for development of the needs assessment;
- ✓ development of the early recovery plan focused on:
 - ✓ short-, medium- and long-term rejuvenation and recovery of the affected areas;
 - ✓ restoration of livelihoods;
 - ✓ increasing the resilience of the people living in the informal settlements and other vulnerable groups;
 - ✓ rehabilitation of the critical community infrastructure;
 - ✓ critical inventory for proper implementation of the emergency activities;
 - ✓ necessary demonstration projects for strengthening the capacities of the local authorities in disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation;

- ✓ increasing the coordination in undertaking emergency activities; and
- ✓ propose resource mobilization mechanisms for emergency activities and early recovery planning.

Management Arrangements

UNDP will use the standard direct implementation modality while coordination group and advisory team are going to be established to serve as the main national technical resource for implementation of the project.

UNDP Country Office will provide overall coordination and planning role during the needs assessment, early recovery and development of integrated risk and hazard assessment processes while technical assistance will be supported by the national institutions and local experts. The UNDP CO will use its internal capacities by engaging its current project team for disaster risk management and it will be supported by the Country's UN Disaster Risk Management Team.

UNDP will activate the local and national DRM system in joint decision making, planning and implementation processes. UNDP will ensure that during the implementation of the proposed project activities the National Directorate for Protection and Rescue, Public Enterprise "Macedonian Forests", Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, Red Cross and local NGOs are going to be involved and represent the advisory team for this project.

Apart of the UNDP CO, Municipality of Strumica and Directorate for protection and Rescue as part of the coordination team will be also responsible for ensuring the quality of the deliverables in order to undertake the full ownership of the project and after the project ends to continue addressing the findings of the two developed document into their annual plans.

UNDP's current project team working on disaster and climate risk assessment will represent the project implementation unit of this project fully supported by the UNDP CO's environment unit and will ensure that the findings from both projects are complementary.

The financial and administration operating procedures will be fully in accordance to the UNDP rules and procedures.

The reporting will be obligation to UNDP CO supported by the Municipality of Strumica and Directorate for Protection and Rescue.

The administration processes are going to be implemented by using the standard UNDP rules and procedures.

The lessons learned will be shared with the other municipalities in the Country and active measures will be replicated by the directorate for protection and rescue as much as possible across the Country.

The CO's gender mainstreaming into DRM activities (in 2010 recognized as global UNDP BCPR's best practice) will continue with demonstration of innovative approaches in addressing gender equality and ensure proactive participation of the persons with disabilities and marginalized people.

Annual Work Plan: Year 2012 / 2013

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	PARTNER	PLANNED BUDGET		
			Fund Source	Budget Description	Amount
<p>Preparation and implementation of municipal wildfire early recovery programme</p> <p><u>Indicators:</u></p> <p>1. Needs Assessment adopted by Municipality;</p> <p>2. Early Recovery Plan adopted by Municipality;</p> <p>3. Immediate recovery activities implemented.</p> <p><u>Target:</u></p> <p>Municipality of Strumica implements integrated early recovery activities. Municipality has established proper DRM system focused on preventive measures and addresses the needs of vulnerable groups</p> <p><u>Baseline:</u></p> <p>Municipality is regularly facing dangerous wildfires, floods and landslides. Municipality has no plan for early recovery and no integrated system for prevention.</p>	<p>Preparation of municipal needs assessment report:</p> <p>Hire experts to lead the needs assessment;</p> <p>Coordination with the other organisation for capturing the whole reliable set of inputs;</p> <p>Conduct a three-week needs assessment of affected locations;</p> <p>Ensure that the needs assessment and early recovery plan are compatible.</p>	<p>Municipality of Strumica Protection and Rescue Directorate (PRD);</p> <p>Public Enterprise "Macedonian Forests", Fire Fighting Unit; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (MAFWE), Red Cross and local NGOs</p>	UNDP TRAC 3	<p>1. Int'l Expert: \$10,000</p> <p>2. National Expert: \$5,000</p> <p>3. Support Consultant: \$3,000</p> <p>4. Travel: \$4,000</p>	\$22,000
	<p>Preparation of municipal early recovery plan: ongoing consolidation of the inputs;</p> <p>support to validation of the recommendations for development of the needs assessment</p> <p>development of the early recovery plan;</p>	<p>Municipality of Strumica, Protection and Rescue Directorate</p> <p>"Macedonian Forests", Fire Fighting Unit; MAFWE, MoEPP, Red Cross Local NGOs</p>	UNDP TRAC 3	<p>1. National Expert: \$5,000</p> <p>2. Transport: \$4,000</p> <p>3. Service Contract: \$9,000</p>	18,000
	<p>Support to overall process of coordination:</p> <p>Support the coordination efforts in emergency response and recovery</p> <p>Support the Situation Reports updates, stressing recovery needs, and support resource mobilization.</p> <p>Technical support and advice on aid coordination in humanitarian settings focusing on recovery needs.</p>	<p>Municipality of Strumica, Protection and Rescue Directorate</p> <p>"Macedonian Forests", Fire Fighting Unit; MAFWE, MoEPP Red Cross Local NGOs</p>	<p>UNDP TRAC 3</p> <p>Municipality</p>	<p>1. Service Contract: \$15,000</p> <p>2. Service Companies: \$10,000</p> <p>3. National Experts: \$10,000</p> <p>4. Travel: \$5,000</p>	\$40,000
	Evaluation with lessons learned and best practices outlined	Municipality of Strumica	UNDP TRAC 3	<p>1. Evaluator: \$4,000</p> <p>2. Travel: \$1,000</p> <p>3. Support officer: \$2,000</p>	7,000
	TOTAL TRAC requested				\$77,000
	TOTAL project budget:				\$87,000