Arctic Council WG-Observer session, EPPR
Project: Prevention, Preparedness and Response for Small Communities

2018

Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR)

Arctic Council Secretariat
http://hdl.handle.net/11374/2142

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Theme 3: Engagement with the Arctic communities: focus on small community preparedness

EPPR Project: Prevention, Preparedness and Response for Small Communities

This project was approved in June 2015 and is co-led by Norway, Canada, U.S., and AIA. The first phase of the project (2015-2017) developed a community self-assessment tool that gathered information to better understand community preparedness and risk exposure. The survey was distributed to 350 communities ranging from 150 to 15,000 people and/or significantly distant (120 miles) from response centers. Community leaders and local emergency response officials were asked to complete the questionnaire. The outcomes from this phase of the project are: greater awareness of risk and preparedness at the local level and access to best practices; the ability for national governments to address misperceptions or lack of awareness; the identification of gaps in preparedness relative to risk. Three deliverables were approved by Ministers at the Fairbanks Ministerial in May 2017, an interactive map displaying the data from the survey tool, a database of survey responses, and a resource guide in the form of a short brochure to share with small communities.

The second phase of the project was approved at the EPPR Working Group meeting in Malmö in December 2017. Phase 2 of the project seeks to focus on distributing information and raising awareness within communities to encourage improved planning and readiness should an oil spill incident take place. EPPR will develop short videos following the three headlines from the Phase 1 report: risk and impact, planning and training, and response principles. These short videos can be easily shared on social media for awareness purposes. Funding for the project is currently funding being provided by Norway and Canada, however the PG is currently investigating other funding sources.

EPPR has discussed other possible partners in this project. The project might have interest for observer countries and organizations.

Questions

- Is oil spill response (OSR), search and rescue and natural disaster preparedness in small or remote communities an issue for your country or organization? If so, what tools and strategies are in place to ensure that communities are prepared for, and could respond to, an emergency?
- What kinds of strategies do you employ to ensure a high level of engagement from communities in preparing for an oil spill, search and rescue incident, or natural disaster?
- Do you have any lessons learned from actual incidents that could be shared with our project that are relevant in an Arctic context?