



Shkodra Red Cross Staff viewing the flood impact from the Castle of Shkodra 2010-2011 Credit: Albania Red Cross

Who are we?

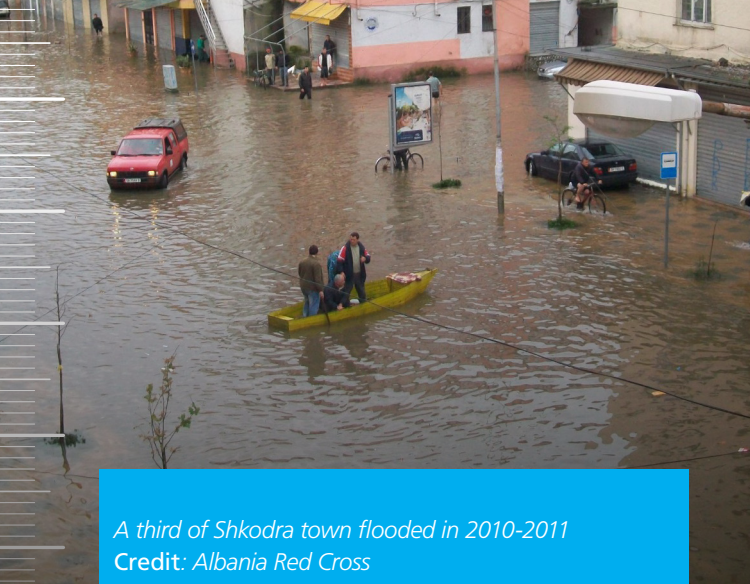
The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance (ZFRA) is a multi-sectoral partnership focusing on finding practical ways to help communities in developed and developing countries strengthen their resilience to flood risk.

Our definition of resilience:

The ability of a system, community, or society to pursue its social, ecological, and economic development and growth objectives, while managing its disaster risk over time in a mutually reinforcing way.

Vision: Floods have no negative impact on people's and businesses' ability to thrive.

Goal: To increase social, political, and financial investment in community-based flood resilience-building through public, private, and third sector partnerships.



*A third of Shkodra town flooded in 2010-2011
Credit: Albania Red Cross*

Impact of flooding in Albania

Albania is a flood-prone country that has faced changing rainfall patterns with stronger and longer rainfall periods over the past 15 years. The inadequate infrastructure increases the severity of floods every few years in the northern part of Albania (especially in the fertile, low-lying areas of Shkoder, Lezha, Fier, and Lushnje) and landslides affect villages situated in sloping areas. The country experienced particularly severe flooding in 2010–2011, 2015, and 2017.

Eight main Albanian rivers, grouped in six watersheds, traverse the country from east to west. Floods in Albania are generally of pluvial origin and occur in the period November to March when the country receives about 80–85 per cent of its annual precipitation. The consequences of this, which could once be overcome by prevention measures, can be significantly more serious in Albania today. Apart from the changes in length and intensity of rainfall periods, this is due to the deterioration of dyke systems, drainage channels, pumping stations, and other flood-control facilities and installations, which lack regular maintenance or repair. Another threat is the water reservoirs for hydropower purposes, which require draining in case of heavy rainfall. The situation is further worsened by illegal constructions next to river basins causing streams of water to descend into towns.



ZFRA partner working in Albania

The Albanian Red Cross (ARC) is an independent, humanitarian, voluntary organization, founded in Tirana on 4 October 1921. It is the oldest and largest humanitarian organization in Albania.

The ARC has 39 branches across the country, with an active volunteer network of 2,500 people. Thanks to its volunteers ARC is always present where humanitarian aid is needed, standing with the people, the beneficiary families or the numerous communities affected by natural disasters.

The core competency of the ARC lies in the provision of humanitarian aid during crises and disasters and in any other situation of vulnerability, health promotion, disaster and risk reduction, and the social inclusion of vulnerable groups. ARC contributes to raising awareness about risks and vulnerability, as well as the reduction of the impact of emergency situations.

ARC is also engaged in transmitting the concerns and interests of vulnerable people through its advocacy efforts to the decision-making authorities.



Shkodra Branch volunteers conducting fieldwork for ZFRA

Credit: Albania Red Cross

ZFRA objectives in Albania:

- Enhance the capacities of the selected communities to plan for and to respond to/recover effectively from flood events.
- Enhance knowledge and behaviour change in the target communities to strengthen their resilience to flood risks.
- Increase Albanian Red Cross capacity to support community disaster risk reduction and resilience interventions.

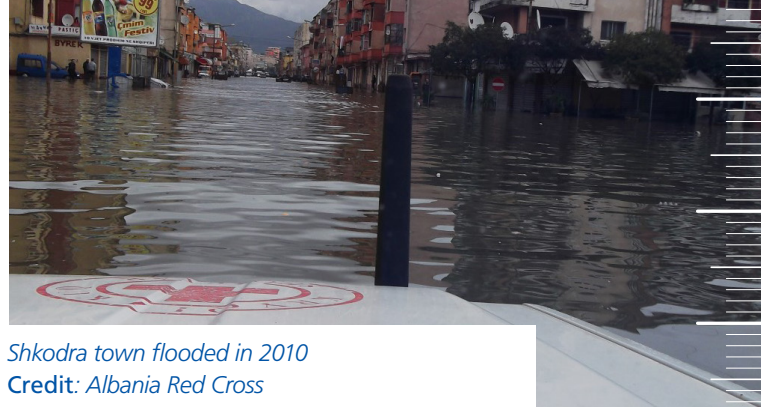
The communities we are working with

Many resilience-building actions can be taken at community level, as communities often know best how and where they need to build resilience. Working with communities, we can demonstrate tangible impact on people's lives and learn from best practices, which can help to shape policy at a higher level.

The Shkodra Prefecture is located in the north-west of Albania, 120 km from the capital, Tirana. The hydrological situation consists of a combination of overland flow in the Drini, Buna, Kiri, and Gjadri rivers.

This municipality is situated below the three hydropower reservoirs of Fierza, Koman, and Vau i Dejës. The people living in these low-lying areas are at risk because notable increases in the level of water in these reservoirs means the dams need to be opened and water released.

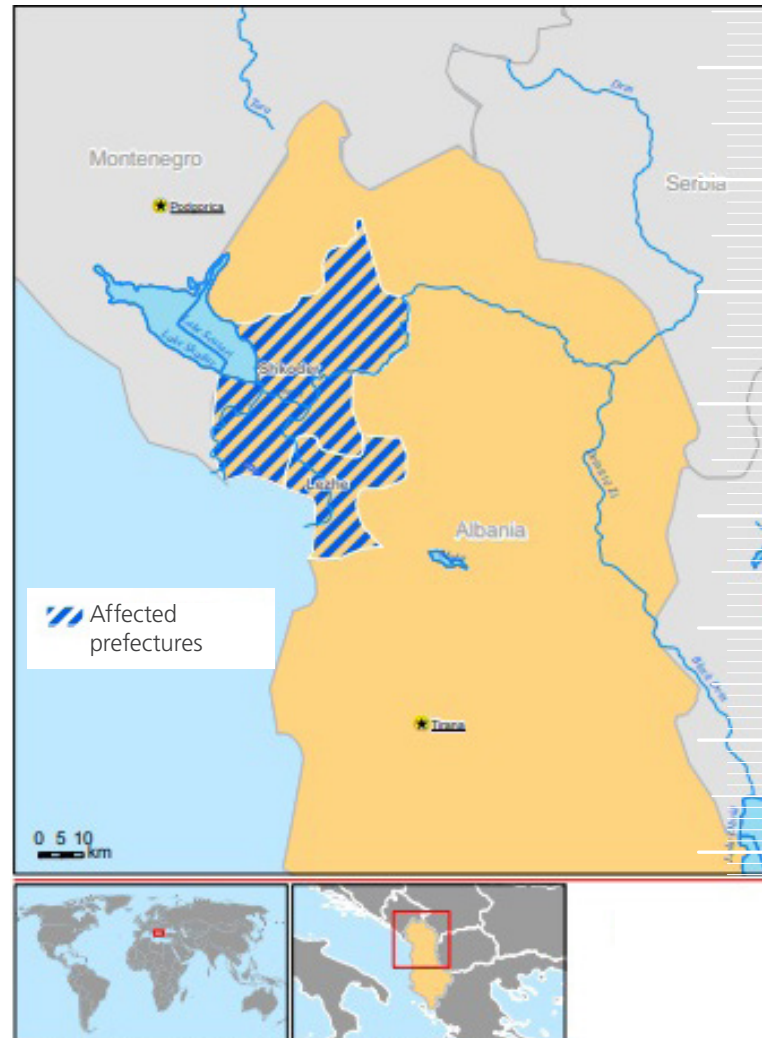
The areas have experienced continuous heavy rainfall and a periodic snow-melting process in the north and north-west of the country. In the Drini River basin, where three water catchment areas have been built for hydroelectric purposes, precipitation is relatively higher than in other parts of Albania, which results in major flooding when the water from the catchment areas has to be released. Within the scope of the ZFRA, we are working in four administrative units in the Shkodra Municipality: Dajçi, Obot, Bërdicë, and Ajasëm. These communities are at the highest risk of flooding nationally. We selected them for the flood resilience project because of the complexity of problems they face, ranging from the very dangerous location of their houses to factors related to coordination with the Shkodra Municipality, the civil emergency directory, and structures managing the hydropower system before, during, and after floods.



Shkodra town flooded in 2010

Credit: Albania Red Cross

Duration of the Albania ZFRA programme: September 2018–June 2023



Shkodra branch volunteer conducting FRMC household interview in Dajç

Credit: Albania Red Cross

The Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities



Fisherman being interviewed by volunteer in Dajç/Shkodër as part of FRMC data collection
Credit: Albania Red Cross

The Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities (FRMC) framework comprises two parts: the Alliance's framework for measuring community flood resilience and an associated tool for implementing the framework in practice.

Uses of the FRMC:

- As the first measurement of resilience to be applied on a large scale; fully integrated into community programming
- To help analyse problems before seeking solutions
- To support impact measurement
- To generate data for empirical evidence on flood resilience

The Flood Resilience Portals

The Alliance's Flood Resilience Portals are online spaces for sharing practical knowledge about why and how to build community flood resilience. They bring together the knowledge generated and exchanged through the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance and beyond.

 www.floodresilience.net

 [@floodalliance](https://twitter.com/floodalliance)



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