

Info sheet of Host Nation Support Tabletop Exercise outside the EU and the UCPM areas

EU-RESPOND

GENERAL INFORMATION

The **EU-RESPOND** project (2025–2028) is implemented under a service contract awarded by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (**DG ECHO**) following procurement procedure EC-ECHO/2025/OP/0002.

Through the design, planning, implementation and self-evaluation of **three Host Nation Support Tabletop Exercises (HNS TTX) in Armenia, Saint-Martin/Sint Maarten and Tunisia**, the project supports national authorities in developing and refining national HNS plans and procedures to ensure smooth deployment and integration of European assistance during emergencies. Particular attention is given to legal, administrative and coordination frameworks that may affect the rapid mobilisation and operational effectiveness of assistance through the UCPM.

PROJECT PARTNERS

The project is implemented by a **consortium** of five experienced public and private institutions from four different countries. They combine operational, institutional and training expertise in civil protection, Host Nation Support systems and international disaster response:

- Talent Development Support (TDS-Group) – France (Coordinator)
- Resilience Solutions Resch (RSR) – Austria
- Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Crisis Management (DGSCGC) – France
- Directorate-General for Civil Protection (DPCP- IBZ) – Belgium
- Educational Complex of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIAEC) – Armenia

EXERCISE OBJECTIVES

As defined under the Contract, **six main exercise objectives are:**

1. Identify areas for improvement and recommendations for host nation support procedures at international, national and operational level to facilitate the reception and integration of UCPM assistance into the response operations of a disaster-stricken country.
2. Identify synergies between EU HNS guidelines and the National HNS procedures and test the national emergency response framework and cross-sectoral cooperation mechanisms at both strategic and operational levels in the area of host nation support.
3. Test the deployment and operations of UCPM response capacities and raise awareness about their needs in terms of host nation support.
4. Improve coordination, communication and reporting as well as to enhance operational cooperation between the national authorities, local emergency management authorities, UCPM response capacities, international organisations, humanitarian actors and other agencies with a role in emergency response or host nation support activities.
5. Test and improve modules’, other response capacities’, TASTs’ and national response capabilities SOPs in all phases of the mission cycle.
6. Provide a learning opportunity for all actors involved in UCPM interventions.

EXERCISE SCENARIOS & TIMELINE

Each exercise will last for a minimum of **four days** and will simulate **all phases of the mission cycle**, including mobilisation, arrival, operations, and handover. Each of them is based on a realistic disaster scenario reflecting national risk contexts and past emergencies:

- **Armenia (4-9 October 2026):** Major **earthquake** affecting the Yerevan region, building on lessons from the 1988 Spitak earthquake, requiring international assistance including Urban Search and Rescue, Emergency Medical Teams, Water Purification, Emergency Shelter and Emergency Energy Supply.
- **Saint-Martin / Sint Maarten (30 March – 3 April 2027):** Severe **hurricane** scenario, inspired by Hurricane Irma (2017), including cross-border coordination challenges requiring a range of modules and other response capacities, such as Urban Search and Rescue, Emergency Medical Teams, Emergency Shelter, Emergency Energy Supply, Coastal and freshwater pollution response, as well as transport and logistics.
- **Tunisia (May 2028):** Large-scale **wildfire** scenario, reflecting recent severe wildfire seasons (e.g. 2023), requiring the mobilisation of Aerial forest firefighting module using helicopters, Aerial forest firefighting module using airplanes, Ground forest firefighting, Ground forest firefighting using vehicles, as well as Emergency Medical Teams and Emergency Shelter.

TRAINING ACTIVITIES

To support effective participation and long-term capacity-building in the host country, the project includes dedicated training activities tailored to the national context and institutional framework:

HNS Liaison Officer Training:

A targeted training for national stakeholders in the host country, focusing on roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms during international assistance operations, in line with national procedures and the EU Host Nation Support Guidelines (2024).

Awareness Sessions on UCPM and HNS:

Introductory sessions for a broader range of national actors, providing an overview of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, Host Nation Support concepts, and relevant international coordination mechanisms, with a focus on their application within the host country's disaster management system.

TARGET AUDIENCE AND PARTICIPATION

Each Tabletop Exercise will bring together a broad range of national and international actors involved in disaster response and Host Nation Support.

The **expected participation** per exercise includes:

- 6 EUCPT experts, including the ERCC Liaison Officer
- 2 TAST members
- 1 UNDAC expert associated to the EUCPT
- 20 key management personnel representing up to 10 modules and other response capacities
- At least 20 national participants from the host country
- Additional participants including observers, role players (e.g. NGOs, media, EU delegation, international organisations)

For further information please contact eu-respond@tds-group.fr