**TOWARDS A DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN OF HISTORICAL CENTERS: CASE STUDY OF THE HISTORICAL CENTER OF GJIROKASTRA**

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Disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, wildfires, demonstrate that extreme events can have global impacts, threatening not only human lives and economy, but also cultural heritage.

The UNESCO Venice Office, according to the priorities set by the government of Albania, have implemented the project “Natural Risk Preparedness and Mitigation - Building capacity in the field of risk mitigation for Cultural Heritage properties in Albania”. The project aimed to streamline disaster risk management in the country, using its World Heritage properties as demonstration sites. The project was conceived to assist the country in order to enhance its capacity for Disasters Risk Management (DRM) and advancement in seismological and geological vulnerability of Cultural Heritage properties.

This study identifies the key elements to take into consideration in order to draft an effective Disaster Risk Management Plan for the historic centers in Albania. In this framework, the World Heritage Property of the Historic Center of Gjirokastra is studied. The methodology used in this study and recommendations can be implemented also in the other historical sites.

***Keywords:*** Disaster, Risk Management, Cultural Heritage, Gjirokastra