Funded by the European Union

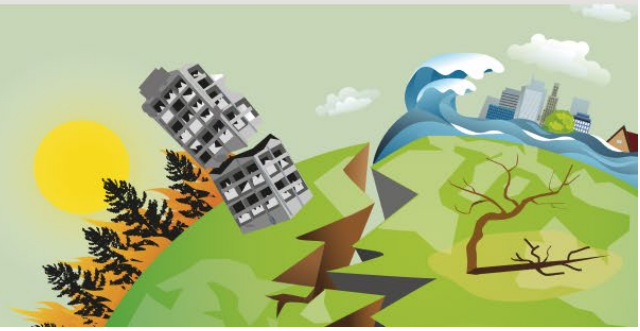
GFDRR Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery

Administered by THE WORLD BANK IBRD • IDA | WORLD BANK GROUP

TAFF

Technical Assistance Financing Facility for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness

Component 1: Country-specific technical assistance



Last update: September 2026

Malta:

Resilience, Early Warning, and Advancing Disaster Preparedness (READY)

Overview

Grant Size	€550,000
Duration	August 2026 – February 2028
Key hazard(s)	Multi-hazard (floods, wildfire, earthquake, heatwave)
Key word(s)	Institutional framework, policy coherence, risk preparedness, response coordination, early warning systems, contingency planning, community engagement

Context

As a small island state located in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, the Republic of Malta is exposed to a diverse range of hazards, such as coastal inundation, flooding, earthquakes, wildfires, and extreme urban heat. Considering high population density and economic activities along its coastline, a comprehensive emergency preparedness and response (EP&R) framework is critical for Malta's population and the economy. Although Malta's current EP&R system is relatively robust, there are limitations, such as its reactionary nature and reliance on informal links between government ministries, departments, and agencies to conduct risk assessments and national coordination efforts. With improved institutional and statutory empowerment, community engagement, and contingency planning initiatives, Malta has the potential to reflect the modern standards that emphasizes a "whole-of-society" approach to emergency preparedness and resilience. Optimizing Malta's existing EP&R system and establishing a National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) can contribute to shifting current practice from focus on response towards anticipation and prevention.

The Civil Protection Department (CPD) within the Ministry for Home Affairs and Security leads disaster coordination, response, and rescue operations. Although the Civil Protection Act (1999) and the Emergency Powers Act (1964) provide the CPD with a mandate for emergency response and coordination, CPD lacks practical interagency autonomy to conduct contingency planning, including identifying risks and developing early warning systems (EWS) to support national readiness. Such legal gaps hinder the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs), and prevent uniform engagement across key stakeholders, including engagement with marginalized and vulnerable populations. These challenges correspond to the findings of the Ready2Respond assessment completed in 2026 (WB 2026).

Objective

The objective of this project is to improve community resilience and strengthen anticipatory emergency preparedness systems that would allow the CPD to modernize Malta's EP&R system, in alignment with good practice in the European Union and globally. This will be achieved by focusing on three key areas: (i) disaster risk reduction arrangements; (ii) EWS; and (iii) contingency planning and community preparedness. These efforts aim to contribute an anticipatory and holistic system to managing emergencies in line with international good practices, and to reducing the social and economic impacts of natural hazards.

Key Activities and Expected Results

The project comprises three key elements.

First, under 'Upgrading legal, institutional and regulatory structures for preparedness and response', recommendations will be made to improve the existing legal framework to establish clear duties and responsibilities across all related ministries, departments, and agencies, and formalizing existing good practice. As part of this activity, recommendations for the overall EP&R Framework – including arrangements for a potential multi-agency NEOC – and associated SOPs will be developed.

Second, under 'Enhancing Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems', the current system will be assessed, and in consultation with an early warning technical working group (EW-TWG), a roadmap for improving EWS will be developed to strengthen end-to-end impact-based warnings. This roadmap will cover elements such as digital dissemination platforms, hydrometeorological monitoring ability, and risk data accessibility. In line with EWS international standards and the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC Article 110), the EW-TWG would put forward recommendations for regulatory amendments and investments to modernize the EWS.

Third, under 'Strengthening Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning', technical support will be provided to identify gaps for developing high resolution multi-hazard risk assessments, develop an annual program of community risk awareness and preparedness to make communication and related activities more consistent, and provide recommendations to improve contingency and preparedness plans, as well as SOPs for high-risk areas and key hazards. Improved risk analytics can also guide post-disaster financing arrangements and instruments. The current building codes for fire and seismic safety, and the current safety review procedures for critical public buildings and infrastructure will be rapidly assessed and recommendations prepared.

In terms of expected results, the activities are intended to provide the Government of Malta and the CPD with a diagnostic and recommendations to guide future reforms at the institutional, legal, and technical levels to ensure a systemic transition from a reactive to a proactive EP&R framework. Diagnostic reports and corresponding investment roadmaps and technical recommendations can guide future efforts to increase preparedness, infrastructure resilience, and community safety engagements. Improved risk assessments can inform enhanced contingency planning and decrease disaster impacts while strengthening a systematic and "whole-of-society" approach.

Sustainability and Coordination

The findings and outputs of the project will be disseminated among stakeholders in Malta. Diagnostics and technical recommendations aligning with EU legislation, including EEC Article 110, the 2015-2030 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and good practice, are expected to contribute to improved multi-agency collaboration and communication, as well as consistency among existing protocols, toolkits and risk assessment methodologies. The development of an investment roadmap for multi-hazard EWS can guide designated authorities in their future investments and projects beyond the grant's duration. Overall, the grant will seek to help competent authorities move from fragmented and reactive approaches toward a coherent, preventive, and climate-resilient disaster risk management framework, strengthening institutional capacity to scale up disaster and climate resilience in line with EU and national priorities

Coordination between agencies and key stakeholders can be enhanced through improvements in the EP&R system, including the potential NEOC, and the legal framework for planning, preparedness, and response integration across sectors. Reinforcing inter-agency collaboration between civil protection and external actors is a critical element of effective EP&R and EWS.

Contacts

World Bank/GFDRR team: Atishay Abbhi, Sr. DRM Specialist; Caleb Johnson, Land Administration Specialist. UCPM_TAFF@worldbank.org.

Counterparts: Malta Civil Protection Department.