

RAPID EMERGENCY ASSESSMENT AND COORDINATION TEAM (REACT)

Murghob, Gorno-Badakhshan, Tajikistan: 7.2 Magnitude Earthquake

Situation Update No. 1 (as of 7 December 2015)



This report is produced by REACT in collaboration with Government and humanitarian partners. It covers the period of 7 December 2015. The next report will be issued on or around 8 December 2015.

Highlights

- At least one person has been trapped and killed under rock-falls according to Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan branch in Gorno-Badakhshan.
- Likelihood of structural outburst of lake Sarez is high as the epicenter of the quake was at least 20 km away from the lake.
- Several unconfirmed reports inform of number of damages to households in the communities living near the epicenter.
- Geographic complexities of the area coupled with rockfalls may impede accessing the affected communities.
- Shelter, NFI, health, food, and WASH may be sectors of concern depending on the extent of damage caused.



Source: OCHA, UNCS

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

14,100

Population living in affected district

To be confirmed

Population affected

To be confirmed

Displaced

Situation Overview

A 7.2 Magnitude earthquake occurred in Murghob district of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) at around 12.50 local time on 7 December 2015. As of 7 December late evening, at least one person has been reportedly trapped under the falling rock and killed while driving on one of the roads in the affected areas. According to unconfirmed reports, a number of houses have been damaged and destroyed in communities nearby the epicenter.

A potential aggravating factor could be the rupture of the unstable Usoi dam of lake Sarez, which formed more than 100 years ago as a result of a devastating earthquake. Although, initial information received from both national and local Committee of Emergency Situations (CoES) indicate that lake Sarez is stable after the quake, it is essential to closely monitor the dam and lake during expected aftershocks. An outburst of lake Sarez would directly result in large-scale flooding affecting millions of people living downstream along the Bartang, Panj and Amu Darya rivers.

The Committee of Emergency Situations, local authorities and FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance are initiating a rapid damage and needs assessment of the affected areas. By end of 8 December, more detailed information with initially confirmed figures on damage and needs would be available for further dissemination.

The REACT Secretariat is in close communication with CoES, local authorities and humanitarian partners operating in Gorno-Badakhshan to obtain information. Depending on confirmed information on the severity of damage and humanitarian needs, REACT may call for an extra-ordinary meeting to take a decision for a quick joint Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Assessment that could be deployed immediately, but no later than 9 December 2015.

Humanitarian Response

Sector specific information on needs, damages, gaps and constraints will be updated in due time as more information is available. Due to challenging geography, existing vulnerability and severe weather conditions in the district, it is expected that health, shelter, food, non-food items (NFI), and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), maybe the sectors of highest concern.

Murghob District profile

Murghob is a district in Tajikistan, occupying the eastern two-thirds of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province. It borders on Afghanistan to the south, China's Xinjiang region to the east, and Kyrgyzstan to the north. Within Tajikistan, it borders to the west on four other GBAO districts and on the Region of Republican Subordination. Its administrative capital is Murghob (also known as Murghab). The population in Murghob district is 16,100 with 21 settlements and six jamoats.

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