TAJIKISTAN

EARTHQUAKE 7 DECEMBER 2015

REACT

Murgab Earthquake Rapid Assessment

17 - 21 December 2015
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What is REACT?

Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team (REACT) is established in 2001 to coordinate disaster response in Tajikistan. Around 40 partner organizations co-chaired by the Committee of Emergency Situations, Civil Defense and United Nations Resident Coordinator, coordinate disaster response activities, disaster prevention, preparedness as well as activities related to disasters risk reduction. REACT is a strong and effective technical coordination mechanism between the government and the international community dealing with disaster management in Tajikistan.

Cover photo credit: FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance
1. OVERVIEW

The Murghab Earthquake occurred on 7 December 2015 at 12:50 local time with an intensity of 7.2 Magnitude on the Richter scale. The epicenter was 95 km west of Murgab and an estimated 10 km north of Lake Sarez in the Gorno-Badakhsan Autonomous Oblast, Tajikistan.

The Earthquakes main impact was limited to Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) of Tajikistan, affecting five out of six districts; Rushan, Shughnan, Vanj, Roshtqala and Murghab.

There are 132,600 people living in the five affected districts, however the population potentially affected is estimated to be 33,479\(^1\) with 10 people injured and 2 fatalities due to the sudden disaster. The Committee of Emergency Situations (CoES) of Tajikistan reported 660 houses directly affected by the earthquake.

In addition to the houses, also critical infrastructure including roads, medical points and hydro-power station and schools have been affected.

Current reports suggest that there are 4,000 people in need of assistance, out of which 652 people were displaced from Bartang Valley to Rushan district immediately after the earthquake. This group is largely composed of most vulnerable individuals and families, including elementary level school children.

The assessment identifies the unmet needs of affected population in three time frames, immediate humanitarian needs required within 2-3 weeks, mid term sustainable needs required within 6 months allowing the population to pass the harsh winter months and requirement of recovery beyond six months to reconstruct houses and infrastructure affected by the disaster.

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\(^1\) The figure of 33,479 people potentially affected is estimated using the spatial analysis of earthquake shake data of United States Geological Survey (USGS). The figure is generated from population living in strong to severe earthquake shake using modified mercalli intensity (MMI).

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**AFFECTED POPULATION**

- 132,600 people living in five affected districts
- 4,000 people in need of assistance
- 652 people displaced
- 10 people injured
- 2 people died

**AFFECTED DISTRICTS**

**DAMAGES & LOSSES**

- 660 houses affected
  - 516 damaged (78% of total)
  - 144 destroyed (21% of total)
- 15 schools affected
  - 12 damaged
  - 3 destroyed
- 4 health points affected
  - 3 damaged
  - 1 destroyed
- 1 hydro plant damaged
- 212 livestock died

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**IMMEDIATE NEEDS**

- winter clothing & shoes
- bedding & duvet
- Infant formula
- washing facilities
- personal hygiene materials
- fire extinguishers (for communal buildings)
- stoves & fuel for cooking
- cooking items & facilities (for communal buildings)

**MID TERM NEEDS**

- food
- cooking fuel
- upgrade communal buildings
- cash assistance
- recovery/reconstruction & debris/road clearance
- school supplies
- heating support (for communal buildings)
- waste management (for communal buildings)
2. SCOPE AND SCALE OF DISASTER

2.1 PRIMARY EFFECTS

The 7.2 Magnitude Murghab earthquake on 7 December triggered a series of aftershocks that continued till 13 December 2015. In total 24 aftershocks were recorded after the main earthquake, with 17 aftershocks recorded on 7 December, 3 aftershocks on 8 December and between 9 and 13 December one aftershock every day. Highest magnitude aftershock recorded is 5.4 on 7 December 2015.

In total 22 earthquake events were recorded in Murghab district and 3 earthquakes in Rushan district.

The location of the main earthquake and at least 8 aftershocks were close to Sarez Lake, which was formed in February 1911 when a nearby Magnitude 7.3 earthquake triggered a landslide that dammed the Murghab River into Usoi dam. As of 18 December, the Committee of Emergency Services (CoES) ongoing monitoring reported that the Usoi dam on the Sarez Lake is stable and does not pose any immediate threat of outburst.
2.1.1 DAMAGE AND LOSSES

The Committee of Emergency Situations (CoES) reported 660 houses directly affected from the earthquake, which includes 78% (516) houses damaged and 12% (144) houses destroyed.

In addition to housing 15 schools, 4 health points, 1 hydro plant damaged and 212 livestock died. Rushan is reported to be the most affected district with 83% (553) of the total affected houses, 5 schools and 3 medical points, 1 hydro-plant affected and 212 livestock killed.

The assessment team visited Upper Bartang Valley during the period of 17-21 December 2015, where most families having either suffered housing damage or hosting families at their houses to support the disaster survivors.

The area also suffered significant damage to public infrastructure including schools and other public buildings, bridges, irrigation canals and hydro-electric power generation plant.

It is important to note that upper Bartang Valley is often inaccessible by road from the month of January to March due to severe winter conditions, and also in the months of May and June due to spring floods.

A challenging access situation, remoteness of the area and severe weather conditions are major impediment in providing aid and initiating recovery projects.

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### TOTAL DAMAGES

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<th>District/Town</th>
<th>Destroyed</th>
<th>Damaged</th>
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<th>Damaged</th>
<th>Destroyed</th>
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<tr>
<td>RUSHAN</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>212</td>
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<td>KHLUGH TOWN</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CoES 18 December 2015
2.2 SECONDARY EFFECTS

2.2.1 DISPLACEMENT

The assessment team visited 11 sites in Rushan district where the population has been displaced from Bartang Valley, Murghab district in GBAO.

The Government supported the relocation of people from the upper Bartang Valley, to reduce the number of persons who would need support in isolated hard to reach areas and to consolidate the aid delivery. While some family members moved after the earthquake, others remained in area of residence to protect assets and livestock. The assessment indicates that 652 persons, out of which 343 (53%) are female and 309 (47%) are male, have been relocated from Bartang valley to Rushan district. Moreover, among the IDPs are 198 (30%) number of children under 12 years old. A detailed breakdown of the IDPs, is listed in the table below. The displaced are temporarily lodged in schools, a kindergartens, a music school, a summer camp, and private houses.

This group is largely composed of vulnerable individuals and families, including elementary school children. The school children are housed in the state boarding school in Rushan while the remainder of the displaced are located in a variety of public buildings such as schools and community buildings and in private homes.

The displaced were provided with clothing, bedding and food by the residents of Rushan, with stoves and fuel being provided to some of the displaced.

Some of the communal buildings have broken windows and doors making it difficult to provide sufficient heating for occupants. Current conditions in the communal facilities are cramped with very basic washing and toilet facilities and not adapted for the disabled or elderly.

Generally, the displaced population has no more than one set of clothes. While they received donated clothes from the community, these are not sufficient for expected winter conditions. Some displaced have basic wood/coal burning stoves, but there is generally lack of resources to buy fuel or coal.

In terms of infrastructure, Rushan district center (also known as Vomar town) has a hospital, post office and a bank. Also it has a small airport without a paved runway that has the capacity to service small aircraft like AN-28. The district also has one hydro-power station in the village of Shujand (10 km from the district center) with the capacity of 600 Kw/h, which is reported to be damaged due to the earthquake.

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<th>Location</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Host families</th>
<th>Public Building (School)</th>
<th>Public Building (Hospital)</th>
<th>Public Building (Other)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>130</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Location</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Date of creation: 22 December 2015 | Source: OCHA | Feedback: cass@un.org
2.2.2 CHALLENGING ACCESS TO AFFECTED AREAS

Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) is located in the east of Tajikistan. It has one of the longest borders with Afghanistan. Pamir mountain range connects the capital of the country through two roads, one of which is closed in the winter. It is nearly impossible to get to many remote villages in the mountainous region in the winter. Many villagers use horses and donkeys to get to the district center.

Heavy snowfall and frost has complicated the work of aid responders. Reaching the affected area through airplanes and helicopters is dependent on weather conditions and is often not possible because of the cloud cover.

Only two easily navigable roads connect GBAO to the outside world, Khorugh-Osh and Khorugh-Dushanbe, both of which are segments of the Pamir Highway.

A third road from Khorough to Tashkurgan in China through the Kulma Pass is very rough. Gorno-Badakhshan is separated from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit Baltistan in Pakistan by the narrow, but nearly impassable, Wakhan Corridor. Another road leads from Khorog into the Wakhan and across the Afghan border. Khorog Airport is serviced by Tajik Air and as of 2014 had regularly scheduled flights to Dushanbe.

One of the main challenges continue to be the lack of access to the most affected villages in Bartang Valley. The authorities of Rushan district noted significant improvements in clearing the roads in the Valley, which is expected to complete in the coming days in case of no heavy snowfall happen. As of 15 December, road to the most isolated villages of Bartang Valley has been cleared up to 125 kilometers, which makes two thirds of the total distance.

In the Pamirs and the Bartang Valley the weather conditions are extremely challenging as the current forecast around the Rushan area suggest that temperature can drop as low as -26°C Celcius at night. Local population are usually prepared for the winter but due to earthquake, loss of houses and temporary accommodation arrangements, the cold weather can effect the health of affected population in form of respiratory tract infections or pneumonia. Access in the area is generally challenging in winter months and with snow and landslides incurred by the earthquake weather is key factor for the well being of affected population and relief response.

Fresh snowfall is expected on Thursday 7 January, Friday 8 January and Tuesday 12 January. Cold weather is expected to continue till April 2016.

Relief and recovery requirements and planning needs take in count the weather effects on the affected population.
3. CONDITION OF THE AFFECTED POPULATION

3.1 PEOPLE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE

There are 132,600 people living in five affected districts. It is estimated that 33,479 people are directly and indirectly affected. In absence of detailed affected population registration, this figure is calculated by UNOCHA using spatial analysis of earthquake shake data of United States Geological Survey (USGS) and overlaying population data. It represents the count of population living in areas that witnessed strong to severe earthquake shakings using the Modified Mercalli Intensity (MMI).

These 33,479 persons may be directly affected in form of housing damage, loss of assets, loss of livelihood and displacement, or indirectly affected due to disruption in services, access constraints and market disruptions. The figure includes people living in affected areas and in need of assistance, people that have been displaced due to the disaster and community that are currently hosting the displaced population either close to affected area or in towns where displaced population have moved.

According to the Government of Tajikistan, there are a total of 4,000 people in need of assistance. This number is based on Government-conducted damage assessments. Based on the severity of the earthquake in the different districts, as calculated through the above-mentioned spatial analysis, a geographical breakdown of the number of people in need is estimated in the overview below. The people in need figure should be used for planning purposes until more detailed assessments or household level registration data of the affected population is available.

### DISTRICTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICTS</th>
<th>TOTAL POPULATION</th>
<th>PEOPLE POTENTIALLY AFFECTED</th>
<th>PEOPLE IN NEED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MURGHAB</td>
<td>14,400</td>
<td>4,251</td>
<td>508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROSHTQALA</td>
<td>25,700</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>87</td>
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<tr>
<td>RUSHAN</td>
<td>24,800</td>
<td>11,039</td>
<td>1,319</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHUGNAN</td>
<td>35,800</td>
<td>12,181</td>
<td>1,455</td>
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<tr>
<td>VANJ</td>
<td>31,900</td>
<td>5,285</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>132,600</td>
<td>33,479</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 DISASTER OUTCOMES AND NEEDS

Relief efforts will need to continue till the end of winter. During winter displaced population may not choose to return to their area of residence and it is unlikely that affected communities will start rebuilding their houses before mid-April 2016.

As the earthquakes have exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities, relief efforts need to identify and respond to distinct structural and situational factors that increase vulnerabilities at both local and community levels, including for women, children, the elderly, minorities and people with disabilities. Many people affected by the disaster are highly vulnerable on the basis of socio-economic and geographic factors.

Normally, the summer season brings heavy rains to the affected region. The capacity of affected communities to prepare for the rains will be stretched due to the earthquake impacts.

Access to the valleys in the affected area is also hampered by landslides and flooding in the spring season and avalanches during winter.

Parts of the earthquake-affected population, particularly in Bartang Valley, were affected by flooding and mudflows earlier in 2015.

The assessment team has identified the needs of two different population groups with immediate, mid-term and long term needs, which are listed in the next section of this report.

The assessment team visited 16 sites in total. 5 Sites were visited in upper Bartang Valley in Rushan district to identify the needs of population living in affected areas in either in damaged houses or living close to the area of residence hosted by the community. 11 Locations were visited in Rushan district to assess the needs of displaced population who are mostly living in public buildings such as schools or hospitals.

Assessment Sites

- Darvoz
- Tavildara
- Vanj
- Basid Jamoat
- Rushan town (11 IDP sites)

Type of Assessment Sites

- Displaced population living with family, friends or public buildings
- Affected population living in their at or near area of residence
3.2.1 NEEDS OF DISPLACED POPULATION

IMMEDIATE NEEDS (within 2-3 weeks)

Winter clothes and underwear: Most displaced have little more than one full set of winter clothes. While they received clothes from the community, these are not sufficient for expected winter conditions. Clothes and underwear should be age and gender appropriate.

Winter shoes: Most displaced do not have winter shoes and limited cash to purchase.

Bedding: Some displaced have received bedding (including carpets for living space) these supplies are not adequate for the number or conditions under which the displaced are generally living.

Infant formula: There is lack of baby food and infant formula amongst the displaced.

Washing facilities: For human hygiene and to clean clothes and other items there is a need for washing facilities. Public bathing facilities could be used for some of these needs but these facilities are not adequate. There is an urgent need for hygiene items for men and women seperately.

Psychosocial support: Structured interventions are needed for the displaced students in the boarding school, as well as non-school age children and adults to cope with the trauma of the earthquake and displacement.

Fire extinguishers: Many of the communal centers are using wood or coal to cook and for the purpose of heating. There is a significant fire risk at these buildings.

Stoves and Fuel: Some displaced have basic wood/coal burning stoves. There is lack of heating stoves and fuel for the purpose of heating. Some assistance in this area is underway by FOCUS and WFP, which may meet immediate needs.

Personal hygiene materials: There is lack of hygiene material, specifically for female, children and elderly. Some supplies have been provided but these items are expendable and need regular replacement since the displaced lack cash to purchase from the market. The supply of these materials should continue until the displaced return to their homes or have sufficient income to meet these needs.

Cooking facilities and equipment: Donated cooked meals is not sustainable. Cooking facilities need to be established in each communal center, including stoves, cooking and cleaning equipment, cleaning supplies, water storage and two sets of eating utensils for each family.
3.2.1 NEEDS OF DISPLACED POPULATION

MID-TERM RELIEF NEEDS (for next six months)

Food: Current stocks of food will be consumed within the next two months. Supplies need to be sufficient until May for the displaced population to be comfortable. A monthly requirements plan should also be developed.

Fuel: Current stocks are sufficient for more than a week, and additional supplies are under procurement by UNDP and others.

Upgrading Communal facilities: Current conditions in the communal facilities are cramped. Washing and toilet facilities are very basic and not adapted for the disabled or elderly. Facilities should be upgraded (winterization, repairs to doors/windows, draft reduction barriers, etc.) to improve living standards and in line with local expectations where appropriate. Living space should be increased by reducing number of families per rooms. There is a need to arrange additional buildings including the provision of rental support.

School supplies: Displaced students at the boarding school need school supplies as these were not brought when they were evacuated.

Cash: Most of the displaced have little cash to cover basic costs (e.g., health care, transport, food supplements, etc.). Direct cash transfers or issuing vouchers for basic commodities would increase resilience, deduce logistics and cost of providing relief and promote greater self-reliance.

Employment: The displaced have increased the labor supply in Rushan but there are few employment opportunities for the displaced or hosting residents. The displaced need employment to improve resilience and reduce reliance on humanitarian assistance. Increasing employment for hosting communities will reduce social tensions and can increase social assistance from hosts to displaced.

Heating support: Accommodating displaced children in the boarding school has increased heating requirements. This disaster-related gap can be addressed by providing additional coal to the communal buildings and host communities.

Improved local waste management: The crowded communal facilities can lead to health and sanitation issues if waste is not managed properly. Waste management systems should be established which integrate community into the activities.

The sustained relief phase also need to include the planning for returns of the displaced. This planning needs to consider, logistics (including when upper Bartang Valley is accessible), availability of shelter, food supplies and (where needed) fuel for heating on return, school year (for students at the boarding school), local labor demand and migration opportunities. The return plans need to be coordinated at the household level during the winter and early spring. The FOCUS Codan radio network which has a reach in all Bartang Valley and can be used for communicating with the affected communities.
3.2.2 NEEDS OF POPULATION LIVING IN AREA OF RESIDENCE

IMMEDIATE NEEDS (within 2-3 weeks)

Road and Bridge Repair: Road access to the affected communities is needed to enable delivery of relief supplies. Work is ongoing but may need additional support in terms of fuel.

Winter clothes, underwear and shoes: The loss of houses places additional demand to live and work in cold winter conditions. Additional winter clothes and shoes should be supplied to address this need. Clothes and underwear should be age and gender appropriate.

Bedding: While bedding has been recovered from destroyed or damage houses, these supplies are not adequate for cold weather conditions.

Shelter and stoves: While those with destroyed or damaged houses are being hosted by others (or living in schools near by) this is generally unsustainable over the next three to four months. There is a need for winterized tents which are designed for hard winter conditions or winterized transitional shelter with appropriate heating solutions. These shelter needs to withstand snow load of 20 cm and should have baffles to reduce heat loss at doors and through the structure walls and roofs.

Kerosene Lamps: Kerosene lamps or candles is required to provide lighting when local hydro-electric facilities are not operational.

Psychosocial support: Structured interventions are needed for the displaced students in the boarding school, as well as non-school age children and adults to cope with the trauma of the earthquake and displacement. Classes in undamaged schools can be used as a child friendly space (CFS) to support the resilience and well-being of children after school hours.

Personal hygiene materials: There is a lack of hygiene material, specifically for female, children and elderly. Some supplies have been provided but these items are expendable and need regular replacement since the displaced lack cash to purchase from the market. The supply of these materials should continue until the displaced return to their homes or have sufficient income to meet these needs.

Repair hydro-electric facilities: These repairs will improve the quality of life, access to external information (e.g., television), expand income-generating activities and improve internal environmental conditions by reducing the need for kerosene lamps. Solar panels have also been requested, although reports suggest the outstanding issue is batteries for storing solar-generated electricity.
3.2.2 NEEDS OF POPULATION LIVING IN AREA OF RESIDENCE

MID-TERM RELIEF NEEDS (for next 6 months)

**Winter road access:** Fuel and additional operating costs needs to be covered to keep the main road in Bartang open for as much of the winter as possible. This would allow increased commercial activities, well stocked markets and access to sustained relief assistance.

**Fuel (coal):** Coal is required in damaged schools (also in use as communal shelters) and to assure heating needs are met through the winter. Providing coal will also reduce pressure on local forests and other wood sources and will also reduce labor demands for collecting wood, freeing up time for other tasks.

**Extending loan repayment:** Earthquake affected population need to use available funds to recovery. Repayment periods needs be extended and payment amounts reduced to free up capital for rebuilding.

**Repairs of Public Buildings:** Where possible, temporary repairs should be made to public buildings allowing service delivery during the winter and spring, until full repairs can take place. Where possible, this should be done using local labor.

**Vouchers:** Assess the potential for using vouchers for supplying basic relief supplies (e.g., hygiene articles etc.) from local markets in the affected area to support the economy, reduce relief operational costs and use existing commercial logistics networks to deliver assistance.

**Rubble clearance support:** House holds which have impacted by significant housing damage would require rubble clearance support to start reconstruction.
4. TRANSITION TO RECOVERY

4.1 PLANNING RECOVERY

Local community level planning has already started for recovery from the earthquake. These efforts need to be linked to official Government recovery planning and include external agencies who are stakeholders in the recovery process.

Accessing the upper Bartang Valley in winter is difficult. A variety of means including the use of the Codan radio network, satellite television and planning meetings in Rushan should be used to define recovery needs and plans which are developed in consultation with local community representatives. These plans are also critical in assuring funding is available to cover the cost of recovery, as external funding can require a minimum of four to six months to mobilize.

4.2 RECOVERY FUNDING

There is a need for clarity on the extent to which the national and local governments will fund the recovery. Past recovery activities have seen government assistance range from assuring the full construction and furnishing of new houses to providing construction materials for self-rebuilding, as well as rebuilding some public buildings.

The Government plans for supporting rebuilding of public buildings is required by early January to assure that the international and non-government stakeholders have time to mobilize resources to participate in the recovery process. Clarity on the scope of Government funding will also help disaster survivors in planning and mobilizing resources for their own recovery.

4.3 PLANNING RELOCATION

Proposals have been made to relocate households from affected areas to new locations. However, these plans will require considerable time and effort to implement. There is a challenge of short access periods when the new sites can be assessed, land allocation, building supplies delivered and services (electricity, water, etc.) established.

It is unlikely that this can be completed in 2016, making the relocation part of the recovery from the earthquake a multi-year process. However, the 2015-2016 winter should be used to complete relocation plans and, where possible begin moving construction supplies to local depots to ensure that the relocation process can move forward as quickly as possible in 2016.

4.4 BUILDING ASSETS

Recovery is expensive. Upper Bartang Valley is not a wealthy area. Extra efforts are needed to build assets with the immediate objective of improving the level of inputs which can be provided by the disaster survivors into their own recovery and to further build resilience to future disasters.

Efforts to build assets can range from providing animals to replace those lost in the disaster to training and providing cash or food for work on communal assets. While many asset building activities may be hard during the winter (although training is an exception) a range of viable options should be identified early and developed for implementation as early in 2016 as weather allows.
4.5 RISK REDUCTION

The typical house in Bartang Valley appears to be relatively resistant to seismic events. However, the walls of these buildings appear to be easily detachable from the roofs. In addition, part of the roof structure has proved to be vulnerable to seismic events in earthquakes, leading to roof collapse. Vertical and horizontal cracks in walls cannot be easily repaired in a way which assures structural integrity.

A seismic engineering risk assessment of the typical Bartang Valley house is needed to identify improvements in the design which can reduce seismic risk as well as improve resilience to wet weather and to identify practical repair modalities which can reduce seismic risk to damaged houses.

The knowledge gained from this assessment should be transformed into training for local building craftsman and publicized to those who need repairs or rebuilding. In addition, the rock slide/rock fall potential for Bartang Valley should be reassessed and community-level risk management plans adjusted accordingly. This assessment can build up on the work done on risk assessments by FOCUS.
5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

5.1 COORDINATION ARRANGEMENTS

1. REACT mechanism should jointly agree on establishing a field based coordination mechanism for the current response with the help of organizations based in the affected area.

2. Currently FOCUS has been nominated by the humanitarian community to coordinate the field response and this arrangement should be further expanded with official communication to the Government for this and future potential emergencies in the region.

3. REACT and the Government should nominate focal points for sectoral coordination for the sectors missing (Health, Shelter) for a more effective response.

4. Due to the challenging access situation in the affected area, specialised agencies should look into supporting the existing logistics common services for the humanitarian community such as warehouses and updates on different road access and providing access to local logistics networks.

5.2 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

5. To effectively manage the response it is paramount to maintain and enhance the existing information management and data collection component that supports the decision making. There is an urgent need to establish key information management products such as:

i. who is doing what and where (3W) database of current response,

ii. detailed household level data on damage and losses with geographical breakdown,

iii. detailed data on school, hospital and other key infrastructure damage with geographical breakdown,

iv. household or individual level registration of displaced population across the effected areas including sex and age disaggregated data.

6. REACT mechanism should also conduct periodic monitoring of situation in form of joint assessment every two months to assess the situation till peak winter season subsides.

5.2 PLANNING AND FUNDING

7. To help the coordination of the response it is advisable to develop a response plan. The plan should document different activities undertaken or planned by humanitarian actors and Government in coming months, describe response strategy and coordination arrangements agreed between the responders and the Government and finally highlight funding requirements. Response plan could also link with CERF rapid response applications or the plan itself can be presented to donors to mobilise funding for a humanitarian response.
6. ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT

REACT partners FOCUS, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP and UNOCHA conducted rapid needs assessment from 17 to 21 December 2015 in earthquake affected areas of Tajikistan. This report contains analysis of information from both secondary sources and primary data collected from the affected areas.

This report covers an assessment of immediate, and medium term relief needs, including the transition to recovery requirements of the population affected by the 2015 Murgab Earthquakes. Primary data was collected by the REACT team by interviewing Government officials, affected population, visit to affected sites and synthesized and analyzed through working group meetings.

Given the limited time and resources available, the assessment focused on Bartang Valley in Rushan district, the area with highest earthquake impact. The assessment conducted interviewed displaced families in Rushan town and affected people in villages close to the earthquake epicenter. The unmet needs and gaps identified are generalized for overall disaster impact and response requirements.

A combination of interviews, site visits and field observations were used to collect data, using the REACT Tajikistan MIRA Affected Population Assessment forms. Forms were modified to include data on gender breakdown as well as damage to infrastructure, livelihoods and displacement. One form was completed for displaced populations in Rushan, one for Savnob Jamoat and one for Basid Jamoat. The data for the first two forms was collected during field visit and the 3rd form was used by FOCUS staff who conducted a field reconnaissance of the affected communities.

In addition, UNICEF school and WASH assessment forms were used as guides to collect data. Data collected by FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance, serving as the REACT coordinator for the earthquake response, was also used in the assessment process.

The synthesis of the assessment data focused on:
1. The number affected with gender and age breakdown where possible.
2. Current conditions of the affected population,
3. Unmet immediate needs based on interviews and review of assistance provided.
4. Longer term relief-to-recovery expectations based on interviews with disaster survivors and ;
5. Information available on Government relief-to-recovery plans.

Note that the assessment could not access complete Government data on planned or delivered relief assistance commodities or quantities. The identification of unmet needs is based on what assistance has been delivered to date and expected needs for the periods indicated. Some, but clearly not all, of this assistance may be available from Government stocks and would require assistance from humanitarian community.

UNOCHA’s Coordinated Assessment Support Section (CASS) has provided analysis, mapping, inforgaphic and secondary data analysis support to complete this assessment report.

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