



Tajik Committee of Emergency Situations & Civil Defense and UNDP in Tajikistan  
Disaster Risk Management Programme

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**Minutes of the REACT – Kurgan-Tube Meeting**

**23rd May 2008**

**Chair:** Mr. Abdusattor Khushvakhtov, Head of CoES of Khatlon Region

**Participants:** REACT – KT partners ([Annex 1- attached](#))

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**1. Introduction:**

A welcoming speech of chair of the meeting, Mr. Abdusattor Khushvakhtov:

Dear participants of the meeting, ladies and gentlemen. I am very glad to see you all here today and welcome you in Khatlon. This is very good step that we are starting those REACT activities in Kurgan-Tyube zone of Khatlon region which is well established in Kulyab zone of the region in accordance with the memorandum of understanding between the CoES of RT and UN agencies/international and local NGOs. Regional REACT groups are established in Sughd, Rasht, Zeravshan, Kulyab and Kurgan-Tyube. One of the objectives of the regional REACT group is to establish coordination between the government stakeholders and international community in the field of disaster prevention, mitigation and response. Oxfam and Mission East have organized rescue teams in districts of Kulyab zone and we hope that this type of teams will be created in Kurgan-Tyube zone as well.

Today in our meeting we have the following agenda:

- Information on disaster occurred in Khatlon in 2008
- Overview on energy crisis and UN appeal
- REACT charter and its discussion
- Locust invasion in Khatlon
- Overview on National Disaster Risk Management Strategy
- Any other business

**Mr. Abdusattor Khushvakhtov, Head of Khatlon CoES**

For the period of Jan-May 2008 it was recorded 10 different disasters in Khatlon. They are: heavy snowfalls and rains, severe cold weather, floods, landslides and locust invasion in the districts of Jomi, Vakhsh, Dangara, Pyanj, Rumi, N. Khusrav, Qabadian, Kumsangir, Shaartuz, Muminabad, Khuroson, Jilikul, Vose, Farkhor, and Hamadoni. As the result of these disasters three people died and the financial damage was estimated as 4,687.377 TJS. About 451 officers and of soldiers of Ministry of Defense/CoES were involved in fight against locust invasion. About 90 thousands TJS was allocated from Regional budget for rehabilitation of three schools in Muminabad and Hamadoni district which have been damaged by natural disasters.

Mr. Bensaad has raised a question if the regional CoES seeks funds to respond to emergency situation from local hukumat of central government and Mr. Khushvakhtov replied that initial funding for the small scale distastes will be allocated from local budget but response to big scale disasters are funded from the central government. From the



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experience we know that response to large scale disasters is not possible without the assistance of international community and we thank UN agencies and international NGOs for their work in the field of disaster risk reduction in Tajikistan.

**Mr. Abdulmuminov Ahlidin, representative of Khatlon Hukumat** has noted that most of the natural disasters happen in Khatlon Tajikistan in spring time due to the floods. As we know there are many fleeting rivers like: Pyanj, Vaksh, Oyoksu and Kizilsu. As for the locust invasion we know that last year it was in four districts and this year already in ten districts of Khatlon. He also noted that usually in Tajikistan starting from 6<sup>th</sup> March to 6<sup>th</sup> April it is very rainy but this year was drought. Answering the question if the government is taking any steps to liquidate the circumstances of locust invasion he mentioned that the irrigated infested lands are being replanted with the agricultural seeds. Question was raised that there is information that due to the lack of electricity supply irrigation pumps were not working full time and Mr. Abdulmunimov has answered that full time electricity supply to irrigation pumps was started on April 20<sup>th</sup> and now more than 500 pump stations are working properly all over Khatlon region. He raised a question if it is possible to get funds from international organizations to make river enforcement activities in the rivers of Pyanj, Yoksu and Kizilsu as this is the major challenge for us. Charles Kelly replied that this is the national challenge and needs very large amount of funds to make this type of activities and UN agencies and INGOs are not able to do that. But he knows that ABR has few river enforcement activities in Pyanj River. Mr. Khushvakhtov has also mentioned that due to the problem of floods in Kulyab zone CoES with financial assistance of UNDP has launched an Early Warning System project for flash floods. The network of volunteers along the rivers of Yoksu, Kizilsu and Yoksu was established and provided with the mobile phones to inform in case of water level increases rapidly in these rivers. Volunteers of the project, Regional DoES and CoES in Dushanbe as well as the Hydromet are linked to provide information on river situation on any time. In April of 2008 three children were saved by volunteers in Baljuvon as they have been called immediately using the established network. It would be very efficient if with the help of UNDP the heads of district departments of emergency situations will be provided with the mobile phones so we could get information from sites any time. If the mobile phones are provided by UNDP, local hukumats will take care about monthly fees for them.

**Mr. Michael Stone, Emergency Response Coordinator on UN Appeal;**

I am very glad to come here and participate in the regional REACT meeting. First of all would like to say that these days we hear a lot about “Compound Crisis” and just want to clarify what is “Compound Crisis”. What happens is that one disaster follows the other one and the last one cause more damage than the previous one because it is affecting the same people who had not recovered from the previous disaster. In February there UN has issued a Flash Appeal for the compound crisis. Now the revision of the Flash Appeal is issued. There are two reasons why we need the revision of the appeal. First we have to report to donors what was done during this period and the second is that we have to see



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again our assumptions and to review the needs. So within the Flash Appeal we have come up with some additional projects. We had a proposal for the project of household emergency packages in case of floods and landslides. We also have two new proposals for the clean water supply to the hospitals and also very important project is to purchase insecticides for the locust invasion. This project has already been funded and the operation is started. This was briefly about the Compound Crisis and the UN Flash Appeal.

**REACT charter and its discussion;**

It was agreed by participants that since not all the REACT members are present in today's meeting it would be appropriate if we talk generally about REACT but will discuss it when larger audience is available. Chairman has proposed that REACT charter should be sent to REACT members for the comments.

**Charles Kelly, Disaster Planning Consultant**

As many of you may know the international community and the government of Tajikistan have been working for many years together to respond to emergency situations. In 2001-2002 a structure called REACT (Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team) was established. REACT has a unit in Dushanbe and regional groups are located in the regions of Tajikistan. What we have been looking at is that how we can strengthen the REACT structure in Tajikistan and one of the questions that comes up is to create a REACT charter (framework). The basic idea of the charter is that to better respond to the disaster and also to reduce the likelihood of emergency situations. One of the aspects of REACT is that it will create groups that will work together. So groups are the food security, health, water sanitation, education, shelter and non food items and what we would like to do is to create the same type of groups in the regional level once the charter is formalized. For instance if the disaster is occurred on one of the places in the region, this group get together and make joint assessment and provide required response. It is very good for CoES as it will be able to work with many different organizations and from international experience we know that it is better to organize these groups under the CoES. The other issue for the regional REACT is the structure called RRT (Rapid Response Team). These teams will be developed to give assessments as the major challenge after each disaster is to have good, accurate and quick information. On the base of REACT there will be teams that will be trained to make assessments and by this method we can make response to the disaster much more effective. This was an overview but I have a question to you. How do you what to see REACT? What should it do?

**Mr. Khushvakhtov, CoES;**

First of all we want to have united REACT Kulyan and Kurgan-Tyube. At least once in a quarter we have to organize meetings of both REACT and participate in them. Secondly there should be material assistance to REACT groups as Khatlon has 25 districts and in



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order to be mobile we need means. Also on the base of REACT there should be organized Rescue teams. We also need to involve government structures to be members of REACT. Regional REACT group has to be supplied with the communication means and transport in order to move to disaster site rapidly. Also regional REACTs have to participate in the national REACT meeting in order to report on its activities in the regional level. Another point is that all services of civil defense should provide information on the daily bases to regional CoES so CoES could submit to the regional hukumat.

### **Locust Invasion;**

As we all know for the last years there is an increase of locust in Tajikistan. The first reason is that we don't have enough pesticides and other chemicals to destroy locust. Another reason for expansion of locust in large scale is that neighboring countries are not coordination efforts in fight against locust invasion. This is very difficult to destroy locust completely for one country as they migrate again. The problem of locust invasion is available in Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan. This year 16 out of 24 districts of Khatlon is infested by locust and total quantity of land covered by locust invasion is more than 58 thousands hectares. Up to now more than 56 thousand hectares of land is treated. The remaining 2 thousand hectares are remote mountainous areas in which it is difficult to obtain treatment of lands. Locusts get wings and fly in 40 days after appearance. This is very appropriate time to fight against locust before they get wings and expand group by group. Now we can say that most of them have obtained oviposition in mountainous remote areas. Locust invasion was reported first in 10<sup>th</sup> of March. Majority of locust are Moroccan type and in four districts we also see local (asian) locust and in one district Italian (prus) type of locust. This year about 13 MT of pesticides have been used to fight locust but we have to mention that those pesticides were not meant for locust treatment. Locust can be destroyed only in case they get in contact with pesticide. We need special pesticides which are specially produced for locust. More than 3,500 people were involved in fight against locust invasion. This was on voluntarily bases and free of charge. We would request in future to start this activity as soon as the locusts appear but not that late when they are many. FAO has already started some activities in this regard.

**NGO Start:** Our Ngo is mostly development projects oriented but as we have projects in Vakhsh district. Some of our beneficiaries have approached us explaining that there is a risk that their land may be infested by locust invasion. After making quick assessment we have provided some families with the hand spray machines for locust destruction.

### **Overview on National Disaster Risk Management Strategy;**

Hocien Bensaad, Colcultant



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In today's meeting we have seen that it is very important that all parties like: government stakeholders, international organizations and civil society are concerned about disaster prevention activities and they are jointly stand and combine their efforts. Structure on Emergency Situation was established according to the President's decree in 1994. There were few strategies released in Tajikistan but still the disaster reduction strategy is not yet prepared and released. Due to the UNDP's project with the financial support of EC (dipecho 4) we are now preparing disaster risk reduction strategy for Tajikistan. This is the joint effort together with the CoES and other government stakeholders.

### Attendance sheet / Регистрационный лист

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