

Minutes
REACT Meeting
31 August 2016, 10.00-12.00

Co-Chairs:

Chairman, Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense (CoES)

Resident Coordinator a.i., United Nations in Tajikistan (UNCR)

Participants:

Aga Khan Agency for Habitat/AKDN, CESVI, CoES, DFID, Mercy Corps, Mission East, IFRC, Red Crescent Society, OCHA, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP

Key Decisions Taken:

Concepts on “Improved Damage and Needs Assessment Processes in Tajikistan” and “Triggers for International Humanitarian Response”

- Establish a Working Group by 12 September 2016 among interested REACT partners to identify options on implementation of “Enhanced Damage and Needs Assessment processes” concept, taking into account specific comments made online and during the meeting.
- Elaborate within the same Working Group on a REACT protocol on how to apply the agreed “triggers for international response” in support of the Government of Tajikistan, particularly linking the triggers to the damage and needs assessment processes.
- Provide final recommendations to REACT Co-Chairs and Heads of Agencies on agreed implementation modality of the damage and needs assessment processes as well as proposed REACT protocol on application of triggers for international response by 15 October 2016 through email.
- Steer online discussion and decision-making on the proposed ways forward by late November 2016.

Any Other Business:

- REACT Secretariat to collect inputs from REACT partners on the activities planned for International Disaster Risk Reduction Day on 13 October 2016. Compile such inputs and share with Co-Chairs and REACT Heads of Agencies by 12 September 2016.
- REACT Secretariat to facilitate draft REACT Work Plan for 2017 and present pre-final version during next REACT Heads of Agencies Meeting – date to be confirmed.

Key Discussion Points:

REACT

- REACT needs to function at both operational and strategic levels, to improve overall REACT operability. CoES will soon assign two officers to support the work of REACT Secretariat. However, there is a need to upgrade the existing meeting room facilities in CoES

premises, for hosting the REACT meetings. REACT members need to identify issues of concern for such strategic-level REACT meetings ahead of time for discussion and decision making.

- Information Management and Analytical Center of CoES will soon formulate a mechanism to share regular disaster-updates with REACT for wider circulation, and will develop standards for disseminating information in emergencies.
- OCHA and UNDP have made practical arrangements on shared roles and responsibilities within the REACT Secretariat in support of CoES. Two separate mailing lists and an additional email account have been created, with newly created email account focusing on emergency preparedness and response coordination while the existing account focusing on DRR and recovery coordination.

Disaster Overview

- For the period of January – August 2016, at least 45 natural disaster occurred, resulting in 18 human losses and total economic damages of around 135 million Tajik Somonis. The Government, supported by REACT partners undertook immediate relief and recovery operations in a timely manner.
- Natural disasters related to climate change are shaking up. There is a need for a more holistic approach, mainstreaming DRR and development to response and recovery efforts.

Cooperation

- CoES, Russian Trust Fund and UNDP signed an agreement on capacity building for emergency response in Tajikistan. A similar agreement is expected to be signed with the Japanese Government, as well as another bi-lateral agreement with the King Salman Center of Saudi Arabia.
- The National Platform for DRR is establishing a working group to draft a National Disaster Risk Management Strategy for 2017-2030. Call for partners to join this effort.

Damage/needs assessment and triggers for international response

- Proposed concept on improving the damage and needs assessment is important. The Government will soon form a Working Group to review the existing legislation related to damage assessment and learn about similar approaches in the region. Both the REACT and Government Working Group would need to work closely in the overall process.
- There is a need to identify timeframes and step-by-step actions on the way forward provided in the concept note on damage and needs assessment. There is a need to consider specific assessment questions for different types of emergency. The process also needs to ensure integration of cross-cutting issues, such as vulnerable groups, disaster risk reduction and development elements, as well as focus on both physical and psychological assistance.
- Establishing triggers for international response is an important step forward in guaranteeing an effective and predictable REACT response in support of the Government.

International DRR Day

- Activities proposed so far:
 - A table-top simulation exercise on coordination of response to large-scale emergency with the involvement of both Government structures and REACT partners.
 - Potential implementation of awareness raising events at education facilities.