

REACT Meeting Minutes

17 February 2022, 10.00 – 12.00

Mode: On-line through Zoom platform

Co-Chairs: Mr. Hotamsho Latifzoda, First Deputy Chairman of the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense under the Government of Tajikistan (CoES)
Ms. Sezin Sinanoglu, UN Resident Coordinator in Tajikistan

Participants: Annex I

Summary of discussion:

Welcome remarks:

The co-chairs opened the meeting by welcoming the participants.

Mr. Hotamsho Latifzoda, CoES First Deputy Chair expressed his appreciation to all REACT partners for their support, while responding to emergency situations in 2021. He underlined that joint efforts enabled timely and efficient response to the emergencies and assistance to the affected population.

Mr. Latifzoda mentioned that preparedness to forthcoming spring thaw season is the highest priority for CoES at this point. Further, he briefed participants about CoES targets for 2022, which include:

- Enhancement of National DRR Strategy implementation, through adoption and implementation of the of the Mid-Term State Program for the Protection of the Population and Territories from Emergencies for 2022-2024.
- Expansion and improvement of cooperation with international partners to enhance implementation of the CoES Development Programme for 2018- 2022.
- Strengthening technical capacities of the CoES, in line with the requirements and standards of INSARAG network.
- Establishment of the Training Center for rescuers, divers and canine center.
- Establishment of a modern and technologically sophisticated Incident Crisis Management Center and construction of new buildings for establishment of regional Crisis Management Centers in the oblasts.
- Construction of Refugee Hosting Facilities in districts of Balkhi, Vaksh, Shahrinav and Hamadoni.

In conclusion, Mr. Latifzoda, presented following proposals for consideration of REACT partners:

- Establishment of contingency stock of 80 MT of fuel and 20,000 sq m of gabion nets to ensure riverbank reinforcement work;
- Establishment of contingency stocks of relief items, medicines and food aid, to enable immediate and timely response in case of emergencies.
- Assistance in conducting aero visual survey, to identify the snowpack in upper catchments of the river basins;

The co-chairs proceeded with introducing the agenda and participants.

2021 in review

Ms. Shahlo Rahimova, National Disaster Response Adviser, OCHA/REACT Secretariat briefed participants about REACT's response to 2021 emergencies.

While country faced number of crisis situations related to natural disasters, cross-border conflict and crisis in Afghanistan, REACT as partnership was activated and engaged in response to two major events: series of floods and mudflows in Khatlon in May 2021 and Earthquake in Rasht Valley in July 2021. Responding to the mentioned emergencies, REACT activated and applied its tools and proceedings to ensure regular information sharing, inter-agency rapid assessments, needs based response planning and etc.

REACT partners provided immediate life-saving food and non-food relief assistance to disaster affected households. Partners supported the CoES in ensuring provision of timely response measures including evacuation of population, assessment of needs, installation of the temporary shelters, etc and provided fuel, machinery, and construction materials to enable debris removal, canal cleaning and restoration of other vital services to population.

In total, REACT partners were able to cover the needs of over 2,000 households, mobilizing over 1,6 mln USD in total.

In continuation, Mr. Azam Rahimzoda provided a detailed breakdown of support and relief assistance provided by partners and channeled through CoES.

Discussing the provide information partners mentioned some challenges faced and lessons learned from the response. Questions were raised concerning the safety of public buildings, particularly schools, completion of UNERT and opportunities for replenishment of the stocks and other relevant issues.

Decisions:

- REACT Secretariat/RCO to invite a meeting of interested partners to discuss possibility and feasibility of establishment of REACT Contingency Stock. UNDP and CoES to share the experience of UNERT.
- To present the "Safe School Model" project, implemented by UNDP in partnership with Ministry of Education and CoES to DCC and REACT partners.

Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index

Mr. Adham Musallam, WFP Representative and Country Director in Tajikistan briefed participants about the The Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index (EPCI) process, which is developed to assess the Emergency Preparedness and Response capacity of the Governments and partners. The EPCI used an exploratory approach through consultation and discussion, culminating in a final workshop. The final EPCI workshop was held in November 2021 and results reflected in the EPCI report shared with partners.

Mr. Musallam briefly mentioned that EPCI focused on the Hazard Analysis and Early Warning Systems and National Preparedness and Response. Discussing the key recommendations, it was noted that those include revision of the Standard Operating Procedures and standardization of the response actions. WFP supported by OCHA will continue working with partners and to ensure that there is a concrete work-plan to implement provided recommendations. It was highlighted that partners involvement and commitment is a precondition for successful implementation of the recommendations.

Partners mentioned and discussed number of existing tools and on-going processes, which greatly contribute to implementation of the EPCI recommendations. Those included, IOM assessment tools (to be presented in early March), Countrywide Multi-Hazard Risk Assessment Platform, Logistics Capacity Needs Mapping and others.

Decisions:

- To establish a small Task Force, consisting of WFP, CoES, OCHA and other interested partners to operationalize the findings of the EPCI action.

REACT Workplan – 2022

Ms. Shahlo Rahimova, National Disaster Response Adviser, OCHA/REACT Secretariat briefed participants about the process of REACT Work-Plan development. It was mentioned, that in November 2021 partners were invited for a light and informal After-Action Review (AAR) exercise to review the key events of 2021 (Khatlon

floods, Rasht valley earthquake, end of UNERT and etc) and for open and frank learning-focused discussions about achievements and challenges, to identify joint lessons learned and provide actionable recommendations on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of future response efforts. The key outcomes of the AAR provided a base for development of the draft Work-Plan. Provided Workplan has been discussed among REACT Sector Leads and shared with partners ahead of the meeting for their inputs and feedbacks.

While, discussing the proposed work-plan it was mentioned that work-plan should consider the recommendations of the EPCI action. Moreover, it was highlighted that proposed outcomes and outputs might not be achieved in one year period and therefore the plan should be re-considered as a longer-term Programme, which would have annual work-plans.

Decisions:

- DRAFT REACT Work-Plan to be discussed by partners internally. Feedbacks to be collected by REACT Secretariat. Document to be revised in line with the feedbacks, EPCI recommendations and REACT meeting discussion outcomes. Revised Work-Plan (Programme) to be presented for discussion in mid-March 2022.

Draft Mid-Term State Program for the Protection of the Population and Territories from Emergencies for 2022-2024

Mr. Jamshed Kamolov, the Head of Main Department on Protection of Population and Territories of CoES presented to participants the draft Mid-Term State Programme for the Protection of the Population and Territories from Emergencies for 2022-2024 (Programme).

The Programme was drafted in line with the priorities and objectives of the National DRR Strategy approved by the Government back in 2018 and aims at shifting the focus from disaster response to disaster risk management, gender mainstreaming, integration of gender perspective into DRR policy, and private sector involvement.

The Program defines goals, objectives and areas of activities, as well as mechanisms for its implementation for the medium term until 2024. The Action Plan for 2022-2024 is aimed at improving the regulatory legal framework and institutional mechanisms, developing new methodological approaches to disaster risk management, creating a monitoring and evaluation model that can lay a solid foundation for achieving the goals and objectives of the National DRR Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2019-2030, starting from 2020 up until 2030.

It was highlighted that Programme has been drafted in the course of 2019 and had a first round of consultations with partners, however due to competing priorities imposed by COVID pandemic and emergencies in the country it was not submitted for final approval to the Government in 2020.

Programme is provided for validation and review by 28 Ministries and State Agencies and currently REACT partners are requested to review the updated draft and provide their feedbacks for consideration.

Decision:

- Partners to review draft Programme (Russian and English versions have been shared) and provide feedback by 3 March 2022 to CoES (jjk@list.ru).

Closing remarks

The co-chairs adjourned the meeting by thanking the participants and organizers and inviting partners for closer collaboration.