

## REACT Meeting Minutes

19 April 2021, 14.00 – 16.00

Telecommuting: Zoom meeting

In-person: Training Center of the CoES

**Co-Chairs:** Mr. Rustam Nazarzoda, 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

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### Summary of discussion:

#### Welcome remarks:

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

Ms. Sezin Sinanoglu, UN Resident Coordinator in Tajikistan welcomed participants and expressed gratitude to the Chairman of CoES for hosting the meeting and active leadership in REACT partnership. Ms. Sinanoglu reminded Tajikistan's proneness to seasonal hydrometeorological hazards, such as flash floods, mudflows and etc. Taking into account that currently we are amid peak season, she pointed the utmost importance of appropriate preparedness of REACT to ensure timely and effective delivery of life-saving assistance, in time of need and invited partners for active participation in inter-agency response preparedness efforts. Ms. Sinanoglu also mentioned that although Tajikistan has not reported any new cases of COVID-19 since beginning of 2021, the pandemic continues to rage around the world and reiterated that observance of strong precautions should be continued.

Mr. Rustam Nazarzoda, CoES Chairman expressed his appreciation to all REACT partners for their support and cooperation and welcomed all the participants. He reported that from the beginning of 2021, country has faced 223 hazardous events, out of which 12 disasters caused economical damage. Disasters also caused the death of 8 people. He mentioned joint efforts of partners in establishment and implementation of the CoES/REACT COVID-19 Humanitarian Emergency Response Strategy (Strategy), which enabled coordinated and effective response to COVID 19. He highlighted that today's meeting will review major results achieved in frames of the Strategy and will agree on further priorities. Mr. Nazarzoda pointed that preparedness to seasonal disasters continues to be the priority area for the Government. CoES has been delegated by the Government to control and coordinate the riverbank reinforcement works in around 30 districts of the country. So far, availability of necessary machinery and technical capacity within CoES and availability of fuel stock, enabled timely mitigation and prevention works avoiding major disasters and damages to economy. He invited partners to support CoES in ensuring sufficient reserves of fuel for emergency mitigation works during the flooding season.

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

#### Overview of precipitation accumulation in Tajikistan river basins (Oct 20- Mar 21) and forecast of water consumption during vegetation period

Ms. Jamilya Bayduloeva, the Head of the Meteorological Center of the Agency on Hydrometeorology of Republic of Tajikistan (Hydromet) introduced to participants the overview of the accumulation of precipitation in the river basins of Tajikistan for the period of October 2020 to March 2021. According to the monitoring data of the Hydromet, accumulation of precipitation in general was around or higher of the norm (90 – 160%). Nonetheless, she highlighted that the main source of water in Tajik river basins is the snowpack at high altitudes. The route and decade snow surveys at the altitudes of 1250 – 1500 m, conducted in late March 2021 indicate that snowpack of

most of the river basins is below the norm. The hydrometeorological situation analysis forecast low or around the norm water content in the main river basins of the country.

Forecasts of the weather temperature and precipitation for May 2021 in general is favorable and within norms. Nonetheless, precipitations in many locations will have stormy character accompanied by thunderstorm and hail. Historical events show that sometimes expected norm of rainfall can go in few hours causing flash floods and mudflows. Hail on its turn can cause damage to agricultural crops. Hydromet forecasts mudflows in foothill areas of Khatlon and Sughd districts, resulted by heavy rainfalls.

It was discussed that forecasted water content is not accurate enough to foresee drought and/or its implication on electricity production. Accurate forecasting of the water content in the river basins apart from data on precipitation, the area of snow coverage, requires data on density of snowpack. Such data can be collected only through snow survey at high altitudes, which can be reached by helicopters. Hence, Hydromet supported by CoES invites partners to sponsor high altitude snow surveys by helicopter.

### CoES/REACT COVID-19 Humanitarian Emergency Response Strategy

Mr. Hadi Husani, CEO of Aga Khan Agency for Habitat briefed the participants about the major results achieved by REACT partners in implementation of the CoES/REACT COVID-19 Humanitarian Emergency Response Strategy (Strategy), developed and endorsed by REACT back in May 2020. The Strategy was established around four key objectives, which include: support to the Ministry of Health medical response, support disease surveillance and economic emergency reporting, provision of humanitarian assistance and support to ensure social distancing.

The direct impact of the Strategy includes:

- Over 120,000 Responders equipped with PPE, tools and training to be able to provide support during the pandemic
- Over 450,000 Direct beneficiaries from humanitarian assistance, food for work, quarantine facilities and other humanitarian support
- Over 1,250,000 recipients of awareness raising over social media, trainings, banners, radio and tv.

The estimations indicate that a total of \$15,430,000 (vs initially planned \$13,000,000) have been mobilized by partners for implementation of the Strategy from different sources, including: COESCD, Govts of Khatlon, RRS, Sughd, GBAO, SDC, SECO, EU, JICA, USAID, Embassies of Japan, France, Germany, UN and AKDN.

Meeting discussed and agreed to support next steps proposed by Mr. Husani, which include:

- Delivery of remaining funding of \$500,000 and to extent possible support additional resource mobilization;
- Conduct Lessons Learned exercise;
- Future pandemic planning exercise.

### Inter-Agency Contingency Planning

Ms. Shahlo Rahimova, National Disaster Response Adviser, OCHA/REACT Secretariat informed the participants that in line with the decision of the last REACT meeting (Dec 2020), partners were tasked to revise Inter-Agency Contingency Plan on the scenario of flooding in Zarafshon valley (endorsed back in 2018) and finalize Inter-Agency Contingency Plan on the scenario of earthquake.

Ms. Rahimova mentioned that revision of the IACP on flooding was undertaken through Sectoral Coordination Groups and key features of the IACP remained unchanged. Introduced changes mainly related to operational arrangements.

Further on, Ms. Rahimova continued presenting the key features of the draft IACP on earthquake scenario, including overview of the scenario and assumed humanitarian consequences, agreed strategic objectives, planning horizons and others.

It was reported that operational delivery of REACT response is based on the Sectoral Response Plans, which mainstreams cross-sectoral aspects, such as: gender equality and protection, community engagement and introduction of cash transfer programming. IACP also outlines the coordination arrangements between Government of Tajikistan and REACT partnership during emergencies.

Among others, partners agreed on set of inter-agency preparedness actions, which include but not limited to: operationalization of the Rapid Response Team and Analysis and Information Management Working Group, establishment of Community Engagement WG, organization of Table-Top Simulation Exercise and etc.

Meeting discussed provided information and agreed on the following:

- Secretariat to finalize and disseminate the IACP's by early May 2021;
- REACT members to review and endorse the IACPs by mid- May 2021;
- Organize and conduct table-top Simulation Exercise sometimes in October- November 2021.

### REACT Website

Ms. Umeda Yusufi, the Head of Press Center of CoES, presented to participants the official website of CoES: khf.tj. She highlighted the key features of the website, its links to the social media platforms, traffic statistics and major partners.

To ensure effective and sustainable information and knowledge sharing among REACT partners, CoES offered to host and maintain a special sub-section on CoES official website dedicated to REACT operations. Ms. Yusufi introduced to participants newly created "REACT" tab/page: <https://khf.tj/react-new> and briefly described each section displayed at the page. It was highlighted that at this stage, presented structure of the page covers only key aspects of REACT operations and to ensure that engagement of each partners is appropriately displayed at the page, it can be further expanded.

REACT page is currently online and publicly accessible, and partners are requested to provide their feedbacks and comments to the current structure and interface of the page. Furthermore, partners are requested to provide relevant materials, to be uploaded on the website.

### Global Logistics Cluster Field-Based Preparedness Project

Mr. Radislav Cicic, Preparedness Expert, representing Global Logistics Cluster informed participants about the launch of "Field-Based Preparedness Project" by Global Logistics Cluster, which aims at strengthening national humanitarian logistics capacity.

Mr. Cicic informed that project plans to establish a National Working Group, which will include all the relevant stakeholders, and will work on gaps and needs analysis. Currently CoES and WFP have established a core group and other state and non-state partners will be invited to join the group. Gaps and needs analysis work will include stakeholders mapping (mapping of the existing capacities). Analysis will identify priority areas in need of capacity strengthening and potential solutions to those needs, resulting in a collaboratively drafted Action Plan.

REACT partners, particularly those involved in Logistics Sector are requested to provide necessary support and ensure active participation in presented project.

### Any Other Business

- Mr. Mulugeta Zewdie, Representative of UNHCR in Tajikistan made a short intervention, informing the participants that security situation in Afghanistan remains volatile, posing a potential risk of emergency refugee influx into Tajikistan. Hence, it is paramount to ensure preparedness and contingencies for at least first three months response. UNHCR leads Inter-Agency Contingency Planning process for Refugee Issues in Tajikistan and has started update of the current IACP for refugee influx and invites partners to participate in the process.  
Mr. Nazarzoda stated that CoES support the contingency planning process and suggested to organize a Simulation Exercise (referring to the experience of previous years) to refresh the knowledge and experience of relevant authorities.

Meeting agreed to include a dedicated session on “Possible refugee influx” during next REACT meeting, to have enable comprehensive discussion.

- Mr. Abdulahad Safarov, National Professional Officer of WHO briefed participants about establishment of the Public Health Emergency Operation Center (PHEOC) within the Ministry of Health and Social Protection. Functions of the PHEOC will not be limited to COVID-29 only, but will manage all other public health emergencies. Establishment of the PHEOC is supported by the WHO and CDC.

#### Closing remarks

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