

## REACT Meeting Minutes

23 July 2021, 9.00 – 11.00

**Mode: On-line through Zoom platform**

**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.

Mr. Rustam Nazarzoda, CoES Chairman expressed his appreciation to all REACT partners for their support and cooperation and welcomed all the participants. He underlined that in COVID 19 pandemic realities, REACT faces dual challenges posed both by COVID 19 and natural disasters.

Mr. Nazarzoda reported that since beginning of 2021 country faced over 299 natural phenomena, out of which 38 disasters caused severe damages to population and economy of the country. Those caused the death of 22 people, damaged 337 residential houses, including 140 destroyed houses. It was highlighted that number of natural phenomena doubled compared to the same period of 2020.

In his statement, Mr. Nazarzoda provided an overview of the major disasters and emergencies, which required immediate response measures during the reporting period, including:

- Avalanches and rockfalls, which heavily interrupted the road communications in the districts of GBAO, Ayni, Varzob and Lyakhsh in early 2021;
- Torrential rains, land erosion and flash floods in Khatlon oblast in late May 2021, causing major damages to vital infrastructure, including damages to 287 houses (including 111 completely destroyed), totalling in 86 mln TJS.
- Influx of over 1500 Afghan military and security personnel from Afghanistan to Tajikistan in late June, due to instable security situation in Afghanistan (returning back to Afghanistan by end of July in line with inter-governmental agreement).
- Earthquake of 5,9 intensity on 10 July 2021, causing the death of 5 people and severe damage to the vital infrastructure of communities in Tajikobod, Rasht and Sangvor districts.
- Flash floods in Panjakent and Ayni districts, causing the death of 13 people on 19 July 2021.

It was highlighted that response operations have been undertaken in all the affected areas, ensuring availability of essential services (search and rescue, healthcare, road communication, water and electricity supply and etc), as well as provision of necessary relief assistance. It was reported that recovery operations are continued in Khatlon oblast and in Rasht Valley. Mr. Nazarzoda, expressed his gratitude to REACT partners, including AKAH, UNICEF, WFP, UN OCHA, RCST, UNDP and others for provided support to CoES, which enabled uninterrupted response operation and provided essential relief assistance to the affected population.

Mr. Nazarzoda continued with the information about on-going and planned initiatives of the CoES implemented in partnership with development partners. In completion, CoES Chairman proposed following issues to be considered by REACT partners:

- Establishment/refill of contingency stocks of relief items, including fuel, medicines, food for the second half of 2021, to enable rapid and vital response operations in case of emergencies;
- To undertake river bank reinforcement, slope stabilization and other mitigation works;
- Organization of field and table-top Simulation Exercises.

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

### REACT Response Strategy to recent disasters

Ms. Shahlo Rahimova, National Disaster Response Adviser, OCHA/REACT Secretariat briefed participants about REACT Joint Response to recent emergencies, particularly floods in Khatlon oblast and earthquake in Rasht Valley.

In response to mudflows and floods in Khatlon oblast, REACT Sectors have conducted rapid inter-sectoral assessment, which enabled immediate delivery of vital relief assistance. Further on, Sectors conducted in-depth sectoral assessment and developed Joint Response Plan (the Plan), which was endorsed by REACT partners in mid June 2021. The Plan targets to support the Government of Tajikistan in providing relief and early recovery assistance to 13,000 affected people and communities in Khatlon. The implementation timeframe of the Plan is 9 months (June 2021 – March 2022) and covers following sectors: (i) Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, (ii) Food security, Nutrition and Agriculture (iii) Shelter and Non-Food Items Health, (iv) Protection, (v) Health, (vi) Education and (vii) Early Recovery. The total budget of the plan is 14,046 251 USD out of which over 800, 000 USD has been already secured and delivered.

In response to earthquake in Rasht Valley REACT partners provided immediate relief assistance (tents, non-food items, WASH and food items), psycho social and mental health support and supported CoES to ensure uninterrupted response operations. While planning further response and recovery priorities, partners prioritized the following:

- Winterization
- Resilient housing recovery
- Restoration of education process

Above decision was taken considering the scarcity of available resources, due to series of emergencies since early 2021, geographical location and climatic conditions in affected communities, as well as needs prioritized by affected population and authorities (local and national).

It was suggested to implement a joint resource mobilization strategy, including lobbying and advocating the response plans/interventions at different forums, including DCC General Meetings, among sectoral Working Groups and etc.

### Joint Discussion

In discussion of Khatlon Response Plan, partners agreed that considering the scarcity of resources and competing priorities (consideration of possible influx of refugees), mobilization funds for response and recovery operation is very challenging. Therefore, it was agreed:

- for Khatlon response to undertake another round of prioritization, focusing on resilient recovery of social services (such as sewage system), to prevent similar disasters in future. Sector Lead organizations requested to revise the Sectoral Plans of Khatlon Joint Response Plan and identify the priority interventions, to be compiled by REACT Secretariat (OCHA) ;
- for Rasht response, to identify operational partners and develop concepts/joint concept around above agreed priorities (winterization, housing recovery and education process recovery) – Responsible Sectors (Shelter, Recovery and Education to follow up).

### Closing remarks

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