

RAPID EMERGENCY ASSESSMENT AND COORDINATION TEAM (REACT)

Murghob, Gorno-Badakhshan, Tajikistan: 7.2 Magnitude Earthquake

Situation Update No. 4 (as of 12 December 2015)



This report is produced by REACT in collaboration with Government and humanitarian partners. It covers the period of 10-12 December 2015. The next report will be issued on or around 14 December 2015.

Highlights

- The number of damaged and destroyed houses continues to rise and stands at more than 1,327 as of 11 December.
- Life-saving assistance has been provided by national and international partners to some affected communities in Gorno-Badakhshan. It does not cover all the needs.
- Government and humanitarian partners agreed on priority sectors for joint response.
- A Government-led assessment of damages to houses and infrastructure is ongoing. An inter-sector needs assessment is required to confirm the priority humanitarian needs.
- Lack of access and unfavorable weather conditions hinder the identification of humanitarian caseloads, needs assessment and response interventions.
- As of 11 December, the level of water in Sarez lake has increased with 46 cm compared to the level before the earthquake.



Source: OCHA, UNCS, USGS
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.



124,500

Population living in the five affected districts



2

People died



14

People injured



7,962

People displaced

Situation Overview

A 7.2 Magnitude earthquake occurred in Murghob district of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBO) at around 12.50 local time on 7 December 2015. At least 17 aftershocks of more than 4 Magnitude have been recorded near the epicenter in Murghob district as of 12 December. Two people have been trapped under rock-falls and consequently died, according to reports from the Committee of Emergency Situations. Another 14 have sustained injuries with two considered as severely injured.

According to figures from the Committee of Emergency Situations, the number of damaged and destroyed houses stands at 1,327 as of 11 December. In addition to displaced families whose houses were fully damaged, the Government noted that all families who sustained partial damage to their house are displaced due to fear of aftershocks. Estimates indicate that more than 7,962 people have been displaced. The Government is relocating displaced people to educational and social facilities in safer areas.

The level of water in Sarez lake has increased with 46 cm compared to the level before the earthquake according to the Committee of Emergency Situations. This is 4 centimeters lower than initial rise after the earthquake, which was caused by land slides and rock fall into the lake. Due to unfavorable weather conditions, aerial observation of the stability of Usoi dam has not yet been possible. However, as of 12 December, the weather has cleared up and the working group, consisting of relevant national agencies and FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance, is on its way from

Dushanbe to assess the dam. The Usoi dam monitoring system, which is managed by the Committee of Emergency Situations, reported as of 11 December that the dam is stable. However, further rise in the water level and aftershocks increase the risk of a potential outburst of the dam and subsequent flooding of Sarez lake.

The number of damaged houses and infrastructure continues to rise as damage assessments, led by a Government Commission, is underway. Shelter, heating, food, health and non-food items remain some of the priority needs of the displaced population in mountainous GBAO, where temperatures below -10°C will last up to mid-spring.

On 11 December, the Committee of Emergency Situations reported that 95 kilometers of the Rushan-Bartang road (between Jadud and Yapshorv villages) has been cleared from debris, which is approximately half of its full length. Many communities in the Bartang Valley still remain isolated and can only be reached by foot and helicopter - depending on weather conditions. Heavy machinery has been deployed by the Government and debris removal is ongoing. However, narrow roads impede the use of sophisticated machinery for this purpose, which further delays the debris removal process.

FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance, an Aga Khan Development Network affiliated NGO, has been identified by the UN and international actors as the primary agency, together with operational UN, represented by UN World Food Programme and NGO partners present in GBAO, to coordinate local response with the Government. In a coordination meeting between international relief partners and the Government, an agreement was reached and UN and other operational partners in GBAO have joined the Government damage assessment process to assess the humanitarian needs and identify humanitarian caseloads.

As of 11 December late evening, at least 1,327 houses have been fully destroyed or partially damaged throughout Gorno-Badakhshan. In addition, other critical infrastructure, including roads, medical points and hydro-power stations and schools have been damaged. Below is a breakdown of information on damages at district and Jamoat levels made available by the Committee of Emergency Situations.

District	Jamoat	Houses		Schools		Medical points		Hydro-power station		Other social infrastructure	
		Destroyed	Damaged	Destroyed	Damaged	Destroyed	Damaged	Destroyed	Damaged	Destroyed	Damaged
Rushon	Savnob	214	205								
	Basid	4	126								
	Bartang	5	146				1		1		2
	M. Abdulvosiev		28								
	Rushon	11	80								
	Dodihudoev	6	59				1				
	Pasthuf		10		2		2				1
Sub-total		240	654	1	5¹		4		1		3
Shugnon	Vankala	8	47								
	Ver	4	54	1	3		1				2
	Suchon	8	49		4		2				1
	Shahbozov		21		7		1				4
Sub-total		30	369²	1	14		4				7
Darvoz	TBC		3								1
Sub-total			3								1
Vanj	Rovand	1	5								
	Abdulloev	1	12								
	Yazgulom		3								
	Vodhud		1								
Sub-total		2	21								0
Khorug town			11		3						28
Sub-total			11		3						28
Total		272	1055	2	22		8		1		38

¹ Districts of additional damaged/destroyed schools indicated in sub-total to be identified.

² Districts of additional damaged/destroyed houses indicated in sub-total to be identified.

Humanitarian Response

Sector-specific information on needs, damages, gaps and constraints will be updated in due time as more information is available. The REACT Secretariat is in close contact with the Government to obtain this information. As of 11 December, below information on needs has been made available by the Government of Tajikistan with an additional analysis of potential needs, gaps and constraints. It is expected that the number of needs and sectors of concern will rise as the results of the ongoing Government-led assessment unfold.



Early Recovery and Livelihoods

Needs:

- Construction materials to restore shelter and infrastructure.
- Fuel for heavy machinery to support the ongoing debris removal process.
- Potential interventions to restore livelihoods of affected communities.

Response:

- The Government is undertaking debris removal of the main roads blocked by rock-fall.
- The Government is ready to deploy five helicopters to support response and recovery operations.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Lack of information on number and exact location of blocked junctures of roads connecting to isolated villages.



Education

Needs:

- School space and education kits are expected to be a need.

Response:

- To be confirmed.



Food Security

Needs:

- Food support to affected families, including hot meals, has been voiced by the Government as one of the priority needs.
- As per initial analysis conducted by UN World Food Programme (WFP), total food assistance requirements amount to 207 Metric tons to cover the needs of vulnerable 5,000 people for up to three months.

Response:

- Local authorities and neighboring communities are reportedly providing hot food to the displaced population.
- The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society (IFRC) is applying to the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the affected population with food assistance.
- WFP will provide lifesaving food assistance to 5,000 affected people. Beneficiaries will receive standard emergency food basket for three months (December – March). Government Helicopters will be used to reach communities in the isolated areas, however, trucks will be used to access population in Murgab and Shugnon districts. Total of 124 MT of food commodities are required to reach targeted beneficiaries and value of assistance is estimated USD 340 000.
- In coordination with local Government and FOCUS, WFP pre-positioned 12 MT of food commodities in Rushan warehouse for immediate further delivery with the helicopters in the isolated mountainous villages of Suvnob Jamoat.
- Commodities to serve for the immediate response will be advanced/borrowed from WFP's available stocks in-country and will be replenished through local, regional, and/or international procurement as soon as contributions are confirmed.



Health

Needs:

- It is expected that psychosocial support is required as well as medical assistance to the injured persons.

Response:

- First aid has reportedly reached affected communities in several jamoats.
- UNICEF has released basic health kits from Dushanbe for prepositioning in FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance's warehouse in Rushan district.



Shelter and NFI

Needs:

- Urgent need to support the Government with provision of winterized tents and/or yurts in all affected districts.
- Heating, including coal, fuel, wood and stoves, blankets, mattresses and clothes and other basic household supplies are of a priority need.

Response:

- Displaced families have been moved to their relatives and neighboring communities or have been relocated to school buildings.
- The Swiss Cooperation Office in Tajikistan (SCO) released 50,000 Swiss Francs for winterization and provision of non-food items.
- The UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) released more than 72,000 US Dollars to provide coal to the most vulnerable 1,500 people, which will help them to cope with severe weather conditions during the winter months.
- FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance distributed its existing limited stock of non-food items to cover basic needs.
- UNICEF has released non-food items for prepositioning in FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance's warehouse in Rushan district.
- The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society (IFRC) is applying to Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the affected population with non-food items.
- WFP is planning to distribute NFI, including fuel efficient stoves. 45 stoves are already available in Khorog warehouse and another 105 are on the way and will reach WFP Khorog warehouse on 16 December.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Limited information on warehouse capacity in GBAO for preposition of relief items from other regions.
- Lack of market capacity for yurts in the country create additional challenges to address urgent temporary shelter as international procurement may delay assistance.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Needs:

- Water tanks and hygiene kits/facilities are expected to be a need.

Response:

- UNICEF has released basic water and sanitation supplies (water tanks, containers, hygiene kits, water purification tablets and others) for prepositioning in FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance's warehouse in Rushan district.

Profile of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO)

Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast borders China in the East and Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in the North and West. The province is almost entirely mountainous and virtually has no arable land. The largest mountains in the Pamir and Tien Shan ranges are located in this region, up to 7,495m – Ismoil Somoni Peak (24,590ft). Although the province makes up 45% of the land area of Tajikistan, it represents only a bit more than 3% of the population (approximately 214,300). The largest city in GBAO is Khorugh, population of approximately 32,000 and the second largest is Murghab, with more than 4,000 residents.

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