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AGREED
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Penjikent district
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1. Background

Tajikistan is a landlocked Central Asian country with an area of 143,000 km. Almost 93% of its territory is mountainous and only about 10% is suitable for cultivation. The mountains complicate internal transport and communication. The population of Tajikistan is approximately 6.5 million and about 73% of whom live in rural areas.

Zeravshan Valley is one of the mountainous regions of Tajikistan which is a very disaster prone region with every year different natural disasters occurring in the region. Zeravshan Valley is currently at high risk to a range of natural disasters of which the main threats are:

- floods;
- land/mud-slides;
- rock falls;
- avalanches

In June 2005 alone 713 houses are affected, out of which 448 are totally destroyed in Penjikent District of Sugd Oblast as a result of flooding.

Penjikent district:

This remote area of the Sugd region is located along the Zeravshan river banks and borders on Samarkand region of Uzbekistan. Road transport through the Anzob and Shahrstan passes is the main means of communication between the district and the capital, as well as the region centre. In winter, relative regular air travel is the only alternative. The district population numbers 214,000 people, with about 35,000 living in urban areas. The rest of the population lives in 14 rural Jamoats with 156 villages.

Ayni district:

Ayni district is located along the Zerafshan river banks in the gorge between two mountain ranges, is a rather large area. It is a hard-to-reach mountainous district of Sugd Oblast. Road travel is the main communication with the capital and the region centre. In winter, when the Anzob and Shakhristan passes are closed, air travel is the only alternative. The population of the district is 72,000 people. Practically all of them, including the residents of the district centre live in rural areas. The territory is divided into 8 Jamoats, including 7 rural and 1 settlement (in the district centre).

Mastchohi Kuhi district:

Mastchohi Kuhi district is situated in south-eastern part of Sughd region along Zeravshan river between two mountain ranges. This mountainous district of Sughd region obtained official status as district in 1996. The road via mountain passes Anzob and Shakhristan are the main communication with capital of the Republic and centre of Sughd region. There is another mountain pass "Oburdon" connecting Mastchohi Kuhi district with Sughd region center, which is opened only during summer time. Driving via Oburdon pass will shorten the distance by 80 km. between Mastchohi Kuhi and Khujand in comparison driving via Shakhristan pass. Almost all roads connecting villages of the district are disaster prone. Total length of the roads in the district 165 km. Population of Mastchohi Kuhi is 19,758 and the whole population reside in rural area. Territory of the district is divided into 2 jamoats - Ivan Tojik and Langar.

In 2000, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in collaboration with MoES established a disaster management coordination team known as the Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team (REACT), bringing together Government, donors, UN agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross. The MoES/UN led REACT group has expanded considerably over the past year, with a broadened mandate to include coordination efforts in all disaster risk management areas, including community-based mitigation and hazard mapping.

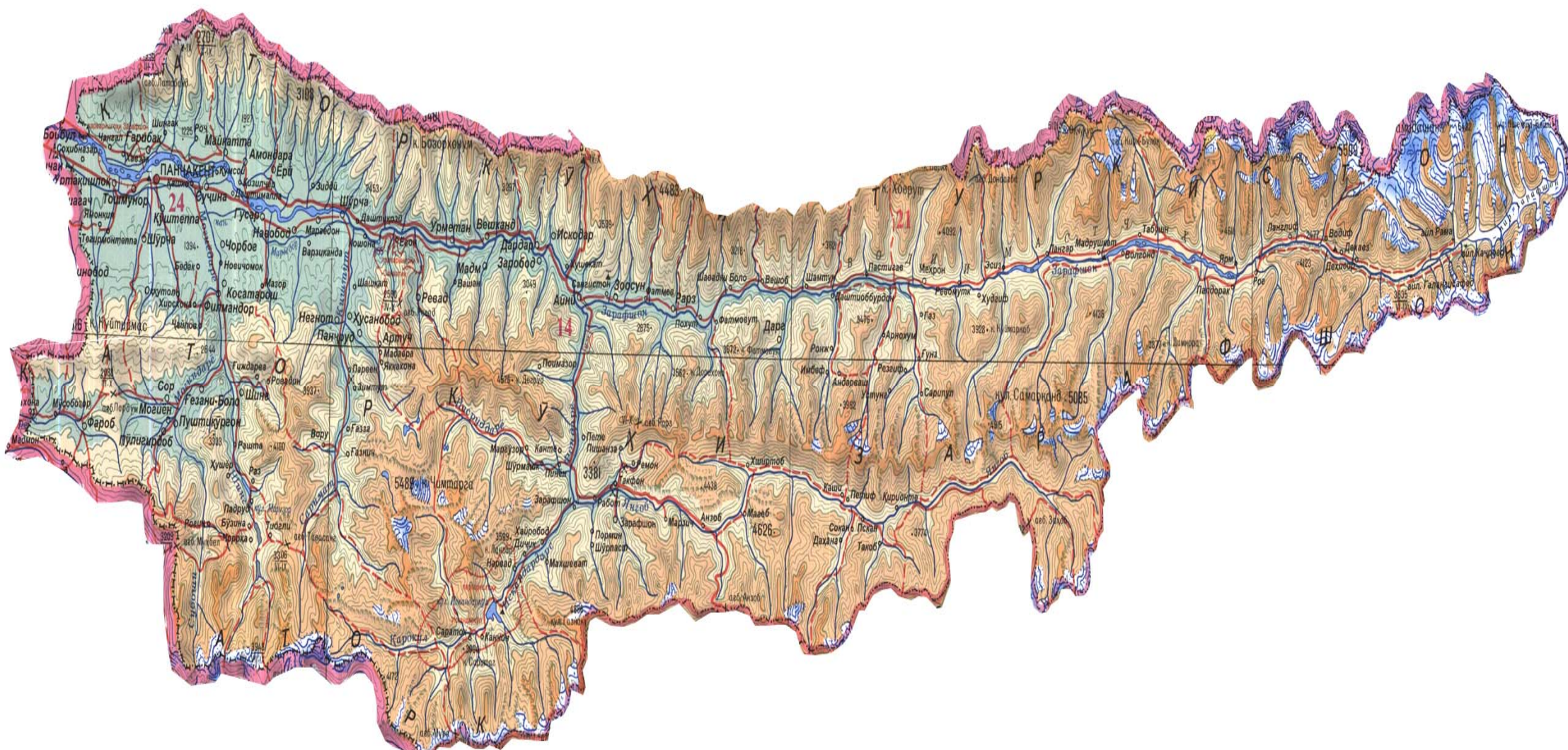
Meetings in Dushanbe regularly attract the participation of 50 agency representatives, including donors.

REACT came successfully to work in 2003, during major flooding in the Penjikent district, which affected a large number of urban and rural communities. This event highlighted how effective coordination can be, with information sharing, joint logistics and pre-positioning of emergency stocks by Government, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, UNHCR and the Red Cross family. An increasing number of UN agencies, NGOs and International Organizations have entered the disaster risk management sector in Tajikistan over recent years. Much initial focus had been around building a response capacity to support Government efforts, which have routinely been overwhelmed. Over the last two years more organizations are becoming involved in prevention and mitigation. It is important to note the establishment of REACT group in Gharm, Rast Valley in 2004 and REACT group in Kulyab established in 14 December 2005.

A regional REACT was established in Zeravshan Valley in October 2005. It consists of regional MoES, local authorities, international NGOs – Shelter for Life, Save the Children Federation USA, German Agro Action, Mercy Corps and UN agencies – United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Disaster Risk Management Project (UNDRMP) and World Food Programme (WFP) working in Zeravshan Valley. Regional REACT includes MoES and local authorities from all mountainous districts of Zeravshan Valley namely Penjikent, Ayni and Mastchohi Kuhi districts.

2. Objectives

The government as a whole and MoES do not currently have a consolidated National Disaster Preparedness Plan (NDPP). Development of regional disaster preparedness plan will contribute to the improvement of the response to the effects of a disaster by organizing the delivery of timely and effective rescue, relief and assistance. The main beneficiaries will be the Departments of the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MoES) in Zeravshan Valley namely Penjikent, Ayni and Mastchohi Kuhi MoES, local REACT partners as well as population affected by disasters in the region.



3. Challenges

The government is familiar with many of the high-risk sites, but has been unable to conduct detailed assessments and mapping due to a lack of human and financial resources. There is only one staff member working for each department of MoES in Ayni, Penjikent and Mastchohi Kuhi districts. Apart from lacking basic IT, transportation and communication equipment, the staff in MoES, due to lack of specialist knowledge, must hire professionals with not necessarily relevant backgrounds. Considering this, it becomes obvious that, due to lack of capacities and resources to prevent and respond to disasters districts of Zeravshan Valley Ayni, Penjikent and Mastchohi Kuhi fall under even higher risk of occurrence causing more severe consequences of natural disasters. The current lack of national capital investment in disaster risk management is unlikely to change quickly. The general lack of resources and capacity means that the economic impact of natural disasters is felt even harder, especially by the poor.

4. Working definitions

Hazard: A rare or extreme event in the natural or human-made environment that adversely affects human life, property or activity to the extent of causing a disaster.

DISASTER: A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.

PREPAREDNESS: Activities and measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of hazards, including the issuance of timely and effective early warnings and the temporary removal of people and property from a threatened location.

RISK: The probability of harmful consequences, or expected losses (deaths, injuries, property, livelihoods, economic activity disrupted or environment damaged) resulting from interactions between natural or human induced hazards and vulnerable conditions. Expressed by the notation $\text{Risk} = \text{Hazards} \times \text{Vulnerability}$

VULNERABILITY: A set of conditions and processes resulting from physical, social, economic, and environmental factors, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards.

5. Achievements towards better disaster preparedness in Zeravshan Valley

Anzob and Shakhristan mountain passes are of vital importance for the whole Zeravshan Valley. Zeravshan REACT partners have agreed to allocate a winter tent with all necessary items such as kitchen set, heater, fuel and some foodstuff and keep it in the warehouse of Ayni road department. During emergency situations on mountain passes the road department workers of Ayni can load the tent with necessary items on the truck and drive up to the emergency point where they can most effectively respond to disaster.

AVALANCHES:

In the mountain passes Shakhristan and Anzob during winter avalanches occur regularly which result in cut off communities of Zeravshan Valley from region centre, often human loss or at least injury. Sometimes as a result of avalanches drivers get stuck on the mountain passes and they warm up in the car which results in intoxication from carbon monoxide of vehicle heater.

Provision of a tent with heater, some foodstuff, kitchen set and fuel items on behalf of Zeravshan REACT partners will help Zeravshan MoES and Road Departments to respond to avalanches on the mountain passes effectively, avoid human loss and isolation of Zeravshan Valley from region centre.

FLOODS:

In Zeravshan Valley floods occur often causing disruption of communities or the whole Valley functioning, partial or complete damage of houses leaving people homeless, human and material loss or injury. In order to be better prepared for the consequences of floods and effectively respond Zeravshan REACT partners stockpiled tents in the warehouses of Ayni and Mastchohi Kuhi MoES. In case of severe flooding which leave people homeless tents can be provided by MoES and used as a temporary shelter.

LAND/MUD SLIDES:

Every year several land/mud slides occur in Zeravshan Valley communities resulting in cut off communities or the whole Valley from capital and region centre, damage of individual and public infrastructure, human and material loss or injury. Occurrence of land/mud-slides in mountain passes cause isolation of all Zeravshan districts namely Penjikent, Ayni and Mastchohi Kuhi districts. In order to respond to the consequences of land/mud-slides effectively Zeravshan REACT partners will stockpile spare parts for heavy machinery (bulldozers), MoES vehicles and fuel. Having stocks will help Road Departments to clean the roads fast from mud to open the isolation of the Valley and MoES will effectively transport injured people.

ROCK FALLS:

Rock falls occur very often in rain season causing damage or complete destruction of infrastructure, material and human loss or injury. In order to respond to the consequences of rock falls effectively Zeravshan REACT partners will stockpile spare parts for heavy machinery (bulldozers), MoES vehicles and fuel. Having stocks will help Road Departments jointly with MoES to clean the roads and irrigation sites from stones.

5.1 Improvement of disaster preparedness in Zeravshan Valley

On 27 February 2006 a drill on responding to disasters on the mountain passes was conducted jointly by all REACT partners. Before the drill REACT partners allocated some emergency items and equipment to be kept in stock for emergency situations. The emergency stocks provided by REACT partners include fuel, tents, fire wood heaters, some food items and coal. The drill helped to realize the importance emergency stocks and having stocks ready during emergency situations will assist more rapidly respond to disasters, avoid human loss or injury and contribute to economic development of Zeravshan Valley. By conducting the drill and allocating emergency stocks REACT partners determined some specific needs on identifying vulnerability of each jamoat and community to different disasters and allocating emergency stocks for each of them.

Local MoES (Penjikent, Ayni and Mastchohi Kuhi) are responsible for close cooperation with local, regional and head office of Tajikglavgeologiya for identification of each community's vulnerability to certain disasters and level of vulnerability. Local district Hukumats and International Organizations working Zeravshan Valley being REACT partners will be responsible to support MoES for receiving data on communities vulnerability to different disasters, GAA Khujand office will support as a liaison between Sughd regional MoES with INGOs located in Zeravshan, Ayni, Penjikent, Mastchohi Kuhi Hukumats and MoES. Save the Children office in Penjikent will serve as a liaison between Penjikent Hukumat, MoES, RCST

with INGOs located in Zeravshan Valley, Ayni, Mastchohi Kuhi MoES and Hukumats. All of the liaising issues are agreed with REACT partners during monthly meeting which contributes to better communication between REACT partners in Zeravshan Valley, rapid information receiving, improve rapid response to disasters and better disaster preparedness in Zeravshan Valley.

6. Information about districts of Zeravshan Valley

See annexes 01, 02, 03 and 04 in Tajik, Russian and English languages attached for the information on population, households, communities vulnerability to certain disasters, their vulnerability level in Ayni, Penjikent and Kuhiston Mastchoh districts, legends and color indicating vulnerability level in Zeravshan Valley.

7. Contact details of Zeravshan REACT partners

See annex 05 in English and Russian languages for the information about Hukumats, MoES departments and REACT partners in Zeravshan Valley.

8. Main tasks of Hukumats, MoES departments and REACT partners on the daily basis and during emergency situations in Zeravshan Valley

The main tasks of the present plan executors on the daily basis and during emergency situations should be directed to mitigating consequences of disasters and protection of population:

- local authorities, MoES need to have proper order of notification and communication;
- have information about existing transportation, machinery and lubricants;
- have information about safe locations where population can be evacuated and relocated from locations hit by disaster;
- have information about stocks of food, medicines and tents for needs of disaster victims;
- have information about quantity of non-military units and rescue teams and their preparedness to respond to disasters.

9. Actions of local Hukumats, MoES departments and REACT partners during emergency situations in Zeravshan Valley

The main tasks of the present plan executors on the daily basis and during emergency situations should be directed to conducting search and rescue activities, evacuation of population and provision of vital functions.

- when disaster occurred it is necessary to notify local authorities, MoES departments, REACT partners and population;
- create temporary point for elimination of disaster consequences;
- it is necessary to assess situation and arranging survey of disaster epicenter for making expedient decisions;
- it is necessary to carry out rescue activities and provide first aid to the victims;
- if necessary to evacuate population to the safe location of the district;
- create tent campus and provide vital function means;
- calculation of economic loss on behalf of DP commission and send data to higher echelon.