

TAJIKISTAN-KYRGYZSTAN: REGIONAL COOPERATION IN ACTION

(21-23 September 2011, Khujand city and Batken-Isfara cross border area)

One of the key elements of ACTED's DIPECHO VI project is to facilitate regional cooperation between the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MoES) of Kyrgyzstan and the Committee of Emergency Situations (CoES) of Tajikistan. Under the previous DIPECHO project, ACTED established close cooperation between the ministries on the provincial level. At that time, the regional offices of MoES in Batken province and CoES in Sughd province signed a memorandum and agreed on joint rescue and rehabilitation activities in the event of disasters and emergencies in the region.

ACTED's DIPECHO VI activities have aimed to support on-going efforts between the two countries to promote regional cooperation. This is in-line with the agreement between both governments and the decision of the inter-state commission to set-up working groups to develop and suggest mechanisms for successful regional cooperation.

Therefore, on September, 21 a working group discussion was held involving representatives from the highest national and provincial CoES and MoES structures. The meeting took place in the regional office of CoES in Khujand.

The meeting had 2 main outcomes:

1. A final version of the agreement between both governments 'on cooperation on DRR and disaster response' was agreed upon
2. A scenario for the first Kyrgyz-Tajik cross border simulation exercise was endorsed



Working group discussion moments

Following this meeting, on September, 23 the first joint Tajik-Kyrgyz simulation took place in the cross border area of Batken and Sughd. The scenario for the simulation exercise was as follows: 'a breach occurs at the Tortgul water reservoir which subsequently affects the cross border area of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan where at least 2 sizeable communities are located'.

Given that Rescue teams from Batken district are closer to the affected area, they were the first to arrive at the scene of the disaster. They began their rescue activities and first aid intervention with the rescue teams from Isfara and Khujand arriving shortly after. This was the main part of the scenario for the simulation exercise and it was reflected in the protocol signed right after the simulation by the representatives of CoES and MoES.

During the simulation exercise, all the relevant local civil structures were deployed on-site including Red Crescent disaster response teams, local volunteers, and community disaster management committees. These different structures all showed good teamwork in working with the state services and, in particular, with the CoES emergency response and rescue divisions.

All the relevant local emergency services such as the fire department, the emergency medical services, the food and transportation department, the sanitary and infectious diseases control service, and the police department



Rescue teams in action

participated in the simulation exercise (also present were road inspection, communication and electricity services).

High ranking officials from the district governments of Isfara and Batken, including CoES and MoES, REACT members, and ACTED local partners participated in the event. Sughd province television and other mass media outlets from both countries were also present to provide coverage of the event.

Right after the simulation exercise, the CoES Deputy Chairman, Colonel Khushvakhtov, and the Deputy Minister of MoES General Kasimaliev signed a protocol on the results of the simulation exercise. The mechanism of interaction between the rescue teams and other services that was tested during the simulation will be reflected in the eventual Inter-state agreement which will be one of the biggest achievements of the DIPECHO VI project.



Signing of Protocol

European Commission's Disaster Preparedness Programme (DIPECHO VI)

The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) is one of the world's largest providers of funds for humanitarian aid operations. Through its disaster preparedness programme (DIPECHO) it assists vulnerable people living in the main disaster-prone regions of the world in reducing the impact of natural disasters on their lives and livelihoods.

The projects funded by the programme include simple and inexpensive preparatory measures, often implemented by the communities themselves. They have proven extremely effective in limiting damage and saving lives when hazards suddenly strike. DIPECHO projects will typically emphasize training, capacity-building, awareness-raising, establishment or improvement of local early-warning systems and contingency-planning.

The Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)

ACTED is a French NGO founded in Afghanistan in 1993 and which extended its activities to Tajikistan in 1997 and to Kyrgyzstan in 1999. ACTED's programmes have been built up with a view to serving the most vulnerable, conflict-affected/conflict-prone or marginalized areas. ACTED's strategy is to ensure maximum sustainability and impact through community-driven initiatives.

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