

## Highlights and Recent Developments

### Kyrgyzstan: Only 12 % of the US\$21 million flash appeal funded



Source: UN multimedia

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) together with other United Nations Agencies appealed to donors to make up an enormous shortfall in emergency funding for Kyrgyzstan, where thousands of vulnerable people and critical social infrastructure are still suffering from continued power cuts during the cold season and a precarious food security situation seems to be deteriorating.

In response to significant energy shortages during the usually tough winter season in Kyrgyzstan, OCHA with other United Nations Agencies and humanitarian partners, issued on December 01, 2008 a Humanitarian Flash Appeal to ensure backup power systems for critical facilities and to meet the basic needs of the 800,000 most vulnerable people in the country. Only 12 per cent of the US\$21 million flash appeal has so far been funded, two months after it was launched.

With extremely limited funds the United Nations and its partners have begun a food distribution programme and are providing assistance to a number of social institutions and vulnerable individuals. WFP is initiating distribution of food to 40,000 households in the poorest districts of the country. This is only 35% of the total target as identified in the Flash Appeal. FAO will provide 7,500 vulnerable households with forage seeds, fodder and veterinary medicine, or only 30% of the total target beneficiaries. UNICEF will support six shelters with total of 420 street children and two institutions for 365 severely disabled children. This amounts to 35% of the children to be supported in two UNICEF Flash Appeal projects. In addition, UNHCR will provide emergency food aid for all 1000 refugee and asylum seeking families registered in the country. However, the vast majority of needs outlined in the Appeal remain unmet. In order to ensure that all projects in the appeal reflect the results of latest needs assessment by the United Nations and its partners, it will be revised during the first week of February 2009.

### Saudi Arabia provides humanitarian assistance to Tajikistan

The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has rendered humanitarian aid to Tajikistan through the provision of food aid, relief material and medicine. Humanitarian assistance delivered to crisis-affected families includes 4450 kg of rice, 1479 kg of pasta, 1479 cans of beans and green peas, 1479 boxes of milk, medicines and other basic necessities amounting to US\$ 12,054,640 in total.

The United Nations launched on 23 September 2008 a Humanitarian Food Security Appeal for US\$ 34 million to assist 800,000 most vulnerable people. So far, only 26,1 per cent - or just over \$9 million has been covered.

## Central Asia and Caucasus Disaster Risk Management Initiative

Within the context of the Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction (GFDRR), the World Bank and the UN/ISDR secretariat in collaboration with international partners have initiated a Central Asia and Caucasus Disaster Risk Management Initiative (CAC DRMI), which is consistent with the Hyogo Framework for Action. The objective of the programme is to reduce vulnerability of the countries of Central Asia and Caucasus to the risks of disasters. The CAC DRMI surrounds three focus areas, with the possibility to include new activities: (i) coordination of disaster mitigation, preparedness, and response; (ii) financing of disaster losses, reconstruction and recovery, and disaster risk transfer instruments such as catastrophe insurance and weather derivatives, and (iii) hydro-meteorological forecasting, data sharing and early warning.

This Initiative aims to build the foundation for regional and country specific investment priorities (projects) in the area of early warning, disaster risk reduction and financing. While the initiative would initially focus on non-structural measures, it could in a subsequent phase support structural investments targeting protecting assets, lives and livelihood of communities in disaster-prone areas. Funds could also be provided for adaptation to climate change and streamlining adaptation activities into countries' development programs. It is expected that disaster risk management activities might provide new perspectives for constructive dialogue between the Region's countries, by placing emphasis on shared concerns and interests.

The initiative would be coordinated by World Bank, the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) secretariat, and (for hydromet) the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), under the CAREC umbrella. It would be financed by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and other interested donors. The Initiative will build on the existing cooperation that already exists in the region, and will complement and consolidate activities of the International Finance Institutions (IFIs), the EU, the Council of Europe, the UN (notably UNDP, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and UNICEF), regional cooperation institutions such as the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), bilateral donors such as the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and others to promote more effective disaster mitigation, preparedness and response.

## Elite division to be created in Emergency Ministry of Kazakhstan

The Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, Karim Masimov, gave the assignment to create an elite division in the Ministry of Emergency of Kazakhstan according to the Kazakhstan Today agency. The new structures should have about 40 or 50 experts. "We need to have the best people, provide them with the latest equipment so that in case of an emergency situation we could send this division," K. Masimov explained.

## Tajikistan: The Committee for Emergency Situations may be upgraded into the Ministry of Emergency Situations

According to the Asia Plus News Agency the Committee for Emergency Situations (CES) of Tajikistan may be reorganized to include a number of services currently not under the responsibility of the Ministry. The program, designed for 2009-2014, provides for transferring a number of services, such as hydrometeorology, firefighting service, dangerous geological process control, mudslide-prevention and others, to the CES. The program was endorsed by the government at the end of last year.

## **“Fire and Rescue” journal published by the Emergency Ministry of Kazakhstan**

A new journal “Fire and Rescue” devoted to disaster prevention and preparedness has been published by the Ministry of Emergency Situations in Kazakhstan. The journal contains reports, analysis, information and news dedicated to increasing the ability of societies to understand, respond and reduce the risk, impact and cost of natural, human-induced and technological disasters. The journal treats national and international issues on natural disasters, relief procedures, and roles and limitations of international relief agencies. It reviews publications and articles in the field of preparedness, mitigation and relief management.

For more information please visit the website of the Ministry of the Emergency Situations of the Republic of Kazakhstan at: <http://www.emer.kz>



## **Good conditions for winter crops in general for Central Asia but concerns over water scarcity for irrigation remain high**

According to the “Crop Monitoring in Central Asia”, November-December 2008 report produced by the European Commission, meteorological conditions have generally been favorable for wheat growth in the most part of the Central Asia, with favorable air temperatures for the first stage of winter wheat development. Low amount of rain, insufficient for non-irrigated wheat, were only observed in some regions of Turkmenistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan.

Remote sensing data and Dry Matter modeling show that the vegetation status at the end of December 2008 was worse than long-term average in Uzbekistan, northern Afghanistan, eastern Iran, and some regions of Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.

For more information please visit [http://ec.europa.eu/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm)

## **Food Security Monitoring System: Review on Tajikistan**

According to the Food Security Bulletin, covering the period August to October 2008 on the food security status of 665 rural households in Tajikistan, the food security situation in country is at a similar level as during emergency assessment in April 2008. Data from the round one of the food security monitoring confirmed that the main issue is access to food as most of the households are still finding it hard to purchase food and for many the only way is to rely on remittances or borrowing. Fears that the global financial crisis will negatively affect remittances and see a massive return of immigrants are worrisome. The food security monitoring in October and November identified almost 650,000 people as severely food

insecure and 1.5 million as food insecure, of whom 225, 000 people were found at a risk of food insecurity. Skyrocketing food prices is still the most mentioned difficulty all over the country. But other structural problems related to water and agriculture are still affecting many households and their food security status, forcing some households to adopt negative coping strategies. These include reducing the portion size of meals, selling productive assets (especially animals) or relying on cheaper food of a lesser quality. Most of the households have entered the season in a weaker economic situation than last year and half of interviewed households reported their economic situation to be worse than a year ago.

The April 2008 joint assessment recommended improving the mechanisms to regularly monitor the food security. The Food Security Monitoring System (FSMS) gathers data every quarter from 665 households and 475 key informants in all rural areas of Tajikistan. The next round of data collection is planned to cover the period from November 2008 to January 2009 and will include nutrition indicators. The Bulletin will be jointly prepared by WFP, WHO and National Statistic Committee and distributed at the end of February. *More details on the data used for the bulletin can be found on [www.untj.org](http://www.untj.org).*

### **A new project to “Increase Communities’ Capacity for Child - Focused Disaster Preparedness and Response”**

In January 2009, the International Humanitarian Organization “Save the Children” is starting to implement a new project “Increasing Communities’ Capacity for Child-Focused Disaster Preparation and Response”, funded by DIPECHO (Disaster Preparedness Programme of the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid Department). According to a Press Release by “Save the Children” the project aims to improve capacity of the population in responding to and managing of the risks of natural disasters.



*Source: “Save the children” Kyrgyzstan*

The project will be implemented in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The target groups of the project will be 29 schools, 27 communities, 8160 schoolchildren and 16780 community members. Community Emergency Response Team will be established and involve 216 members. Furthermore, 60 teachers, 20 representatives of local authorities and 15 national trainers will be engaged into the project activities. The total number of direct beneficiaries amounts to 25 251 residents of the target areas.

The overall goal of the project is to train community members on capacity-building, awareness-raising, early-warning, planning and forecasting measures. Local authorities, school teachers and the population as a whole will enhance their knowledge and skills on responding to natural disasters. School Students capacity will be built and strengthened through training and awareness raising events conducted by teachers.

Recognising the importance of pre-emptive measures, the DIPECHO project’s strategy is to support relatively small but effective mitigation projects (initiatives) proposed and selected by each community and approved by the Ministry of Emergency Situations in the respective countries.

*For further information please visit <http://www.savethechildren.net/>*

## January 2009 Events and Observances

- ✓ International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)
- ✓ International Decade for Action: Water for Life (2005-2015)
- ✓ Decade of Recovery and Sustainable Development of the Affected Regions (relating to the Chernobyl disaster) (2006-2016)
- ✓ Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017)
- ✓ United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010-2020)

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### Useful links

<http://www.savethechildren.net>

<http://www.emer.kz>

[http://ec.europa.eu/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm)

<http://www.untj.org>