



The committee of Emergency Situations and Civil  
Defense under the Government of the Republic of  
Tajikistan



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid – ECHO

DIPECHO Central Asia  
ECHO Office, Dushanbe

# **1<sup>st</sup> Regional Consultative Meeting for Disaster Risk Reduction in Central Asia**

**November 14-16, 2007**

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**FINAL REPORT (Draft version)**

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## **Abbreviation**

<b>CoES</b>	<b>Committee of Emergency Situation</b>
<b>DG ECHO</b>	<b>Directorate General European Commission Humanitarian Office</b>
<b>DIPECHO</b>	<b>Disaster Preparedness Commission Humanitarian Office</b>
<b>DP</b>	<b>Disaster Preparedness</b>
<b>DRR</b>	<b>Disaster Risk Reduction</b>
<b>ICG</b>	<b>International Coordination Group</b>
<b>MoES</b>	<b>Ministry of Emergency Situation</b>
<b>NGO</b>	<b>Non Government Organisation</b>
<b>NLRC</b>	<b>Netherland Red Cross</b>
<b>UNDP</b>	<b>United Nation Development Programme</b>
<b>UN ISDR</b>	<b>United Nations Children’s Fund</b>
<b>PPP Public</b>	<b>Private Partnership</b>
<b>SCD</b>	<b>Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation</b>
<b>RCM</b>	<b>Regional Consultative Meeting</b>
<b>REACT</b>	<b>Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team</b>

# **FOREWARD**

## **Zakirov**

It is with great pleasure on the occasion of the 1st Regional Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Central Asia that we present this report summarizing the discussions, recommendations and conclusions agreed upon by all attending stakeholders to address the thematic areas of disaster risk management.

Disasters globally are increasing both in frequency and magnitude and Central Asia is one of the most hazard-prone regions in the world. Disasters threaten both the lives and livelihoods of communities and institutions as well as deterring the progress of poverty reduction. Almost 70% of the population Tajikistan currently lives at or below the poverty line, and the risk from natural disasters further exacerbates their vulnerability. Therefore it is crucial that combined efforts of communities, governments, donors, local and international organizations work in collaboration to achieve sustainable results.

Much work has already been done in Central Asia in the realm of disaster risk management. These include projects and programs focusing on community-based disaster risk management, building national disaster management systems and multi-level institutional capacity building and training. And this conference provides a stepping-stone for us to realize a true multi-stakeholder coordinated regional effort in Central Asia.

On behalf of the Government of Tajikistan, I would like to express my thanks and gratitude particularly to the European Commission Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid as well as to all the agencies involved in disaster risk management in Central Asia.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Regional Consultative Meeting was the work of many persons and agencies.

The European Commission would like to thank all the participants who attended and contributed to the success of this first DIPECHO Regional Consultative Meeting for Central Asia. Our thanks go in particular to government representatives – the Minister of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Deputy Minister of Defense from Turkmenistan and the Chief of the Department of Emergency Situations from Uzbekistan, for their presence and the importance they attached to attend this meeting.

Special recognition and thanks go to the Chairman of the Committee for Emergency Situations (CoES) of Tajikistan for his commitment and his endeavors to mobilize his peers in Central Asia to attend the Regional Conference Meeting.

DG ECHO extends its appreciation to all speakers for their contribution during the working group as well as during the plenary sessions.

Furthermore, I express my gratitude and I have a very special acknowledgement for the work and commitment of the DIPECHO partners Task Force for their assistance during the all process of preparation, implementation and reporting out of this first Regional Consultative Meeting.

My thanks go also to the organizers of the simulation activities during the field visits – CentroSpas, Hilswerk, Mission East and NGO Munis.

Jean Claude Heyraud  
Head of Unit, A2  
DG ECHO

## SUMMARY

The first Regional Consultative Meeting for Disaster Risk Reduction in Central Asia, November 14-16, 2007 brought together more than 120 stakeholders from five countries representing a range of government, NGO and international agencies. All five countries sent officials from their respective Ministry or State Committee on Emergency Situations. DIPECHO partners implementing over 25 projects were in attendance, as well as representatives from international agencies with interests in Disaster Risk Reduction. The European Commission was represented by the head of its regional Delegation and by the Head of Unit A2 in DG ECHO, in charge of Central and Eastern Europe countries, New Independent States, Mediterranean countries and Middle East. The purpose of the meeting was:

- *To review current national and regional platforms in Central Asia,*
- *to review the past four interventions under DIPECHO Action Plans*
- *to identify sectoral and geographical needs and gaps in Disaster Preparedness (DP) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), which will allow the formulation of an appropriate DIPECHO strategy for Central Asia for 2008 and beyond the fifth DIPECHO Action Plan”.*

The scope of the meeting was intended to go beyond the mandate of the DIPECHO instrument, establishing a broad platform on which to build cross-border alliances and to integrate cross-cutting issues.

As a way to orient the discussions and outputs, the Hyogo Framework for Action, “Building Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disaster,” (2005-2015) was presented. 168 countries adopted the Framework at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, in January of 2005. Four Central Asian countries have already signed on, and the Hyogo Framework is part of DIPECHO 4.

In an unprecedented display of transparency, government representatives from Ministries of Defense and Emergency Situations presented overviews of their country national plans. This was followed by joint presentations by country of the DIPECHO portfolio in Central Asia.

The essential work of the conference took place in Working Groups, which covered a range of topics including national platforms, scientific knowledge and tools, climate change, public/private partnerships, education & training, and overall cross-cutting issues that focused on vulnerable groups. A format for developing the discussions was provided, to guide the groups and provide continuity across groups. Groups began with a rapid assessment of the state of the art as related to their theme, followed by identification of key findings, then needs and finally recommendations. The recommendations were meant to be action-oriented, reflecting critical choices. The groups were advised to make the recommendations specific, measurable and achievable.

Highlights of recommendations from the meeting include:

- Fundamental priority for development of national/regional platforms is to acknowledge the advantages of, and the need to work together cross-borders;

- It is essential to harmonize the different conceptual understandings of ‘national/regional platform’;
- Evidence-based (scientific) knowledge must be the foundation for operations;
- Invest in systems, structures, people [capacity building, resource use];
- Mainstream theory into practice for real leverage of scientific knowledge;
- Concerning climate change, it is expedient to acknowledge the links between climate change and disasters via monitoring, application, of scientifically valid methods;
- Improve the technical capacity of relevant agencies to define, assess and monitor – plan, prevent;
- Build political will to address climate change through advocacy and lobbying;
- Mainstreaming DRR into ‘classic’ development planning should be a requirement in project development;
- Public/private partnerships contain great potential for leveraging resources and expertise and plans should be developed that provide for meeting both agendas – public and private.
- Disseminate examples and success stories of Private Public Partnership to encourage replication and social engagement;
- Education and training programs need to be comprehensive at the country level;
- At a country level, overarching strategy on Education and Training should be formulated that includes standardized key educational messages and practice transmitted through adapted training approaches, depending on the target group profile.
- Plan training based on the demographic, cultural and physical characteristics of the target group involved.
- Coordination should be established between key government stakeholders (Committee of emergency situations, Ministries of Health, Ministries of Education and others);
- Must integrate cross-cutting issues into national strategies based on indicators that reflect special needs.
- Inclusion and empowerment are key words in planning for vulnerable groups.

*Special Recommendations from the Chairman of the CoES Tajikistan*

- All stakeholders are encouraged to support the CoES in the building of the Crisis management center.
- Support the CoES through the provision of equipment and machinery for use in prevention, preparedness and response to Disaster Situations.

The conference concluded with very encouraging declarations by all stakeholders to continue the dialogue, and to take action in measured and systematic steps. All acknowledged the necessity to maintain momentum. The challenge remains to measure the outputs of the meeting and build a coherent model that is applicable across borders and sectors.

## INTRODUCTION

Natural disasters cost lives, destroy communities, their livelihoods and have significant negative impact on the country's economic development. Practice demonstrates that whenever disasters happen countries of lower economic development take more time for reconstruction and rehabilitation compared to industrialized countries. It is also now well accepted that the artificial division between development money and emergency funding exposes a gap in investment for disaster risk reduction. Thus in their strategy planning governments have often neglected to include mechanisms for disaster risk reduction as part of overall development planning. However, it is now widely recognized that failure to address this aspect of the problem will doom any development activity. Therefore momentum is building to include initiatives that support disaster risk reduction activities. The recent Tsunami catastrophe, which claimed 170,000 deaths and economic damages upwards of 3 billion US dollars, certainly paved the way for such recognition. From that devastation, one lesson learned is that countries, people, and experts must work together before a disaster strikes.

In 1996 the European Commission, Humanitarian Aid Department- ECHO launched DIPECHO with the clear goal to work on the preparedness aspects of disaster risk reduction in order to improve the capacities of communities at risk to protect themselves against catastrophic events. The program was initially aimed at three regions - Central America, South East Asia (with Bangladesh) and the Caribbean. In 1998, the programme was extended to South Asia and the Andean community due to their geographical locations and high likelihood for an occurrence of natural disasters. In 2003, Central Asia joined the group of regions targeted by DIPECHO programme. The five Central Asian countries share the same types of natural small scale natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, mudflow, landslides, avalanches, rock slides, etc. The unpredictable nature of these types of disasters undermines on nearly a daily basis the livelihoods of the majority of the population. The five countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) of Central Asia emerged from the former Soviet Union in 1990-1992, still operating under heavy centralised political and administrative systems. The interventions in disaster risk reduction by the respective Ministries of Emergency in Central Asia continue to be heavily centralised and focused on the response side. The key aspects of preparedness and prevention are not sufficiently taken into account.

After three Dipecho action plans in Central Asia (the fourth one was still ongoing during the conference), the time was ripe to bring all key stakeholders together. The intention was to create a conducive environment encouraging the integration of essential strategic approaches for disaster risk reduction by governments into their planning, promotion of national and regional cooperation, and information exchange and networking among internationals and local actors involved in disaster risk reduction. Apart from this broader approach, the Regional Consultative Meeting on DRR was originally conceived as a means to generate the orientations and priorities for the next Dipecho action plan. As discussions on the possible themes and participants evolved, it became clear that here was an opportunity to embrace a larger agenda than just that of setting out guidelines for future project instruments. It was an opportunity to endow the subject with authoritative voices and ownership, to provide neutral

ground for discussion and networking. Indeed, this was the first time that all players were gathered together in one venue. As events took place, it became more and more apparent that the stakeholders all had significant moral, political and social investment in the topics at hand.

In order to obtain input and secure buy-in from the field and national levels, a number of lower level consultative meetings were organized prior to the regional conference. On October 22 and 23 2007, DIPECHO implementing partners hosted working sessions with their district level government counterparts to identify burning issues and areas of interest. The results of these sessions fed into a national level meeting on October 25, whereby each oblast-level representative presented the key points. Subsequently, the outputs of the national level meetings were incorporated into the regional agenda.

The RCM was attended by more than 120 participants including Ministries of Emergency Situations and experts of governments, representatives of donor organizations, United Nations and International Organizations, representatives of NGOs and civil society.

Hosted by the Government of Tajikistan and jointly organized with DG ECHO, the RCM was officially opened by the Deputy Prime Minister of Tajikistan.

The challenges in the sector are, among others, to get the national and regional platforms set up, and reinforce national capacity to deal with and coordinate issues related to disaster risk reduction. The integration of disaster risk reduction activities in national and regional strategic planning must become a reality in Central Asia. To give everybody the sense that things are moving in the right direction, the various actors working in disaster risk reduction should define a common set of priorities for action, which would serve as the basis for developing targets and indicators, and not least, a monitoring strategy.

The immediate next step will be to establish a working group to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations formulated during the RCM.

DG ECHO is committed to following this process through within the framework of its mandate, and will continue to encourage dialogue and cooperation across all sectors.

Adam Vianman Yao  
Head of the DG ECHO Office in Central Asia  
November 2007

# PROCEEDINGS

*Day 1: November 14, 2007*

## **Opening and Welcoming Remarks**

- Speech by the Government of Tajikistan
- Speech by the Head of the European Commission Delegation in the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Ambassador Adrian Van der Meer
- Speech by the Head of Unit A2, DG ECHO Mr. Jean Claude Heyraud
- Speech by the Chairman of the Committee of Emergency Situations of Tajikistan, Mr. Zokirov Mahmadoir
- Speech by the Chairman of the Ministry of Emergency Situation in Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Junushaliev Turatbek
- Speech by the Deputy Minister of Defense of Turkmenistan, Mr. Atabayev Muhammedguly
- Speech by the representative from the Russian Federation
- Speech by the Head of the Department of Emergency Situations of Uzbekistan, Mr. Gulyamov Fahritdin.

Transcripts of all speeches are available in the Annexes.

## **Explanation of the purpose of the RCM**

Mr. Adam Yao, head of the Central Asia DG ECHO office, explained that the conference was organized in order for participants to share their experiences in disaster preparedness and response. The goal is to come up with recommendations to improve DRR in Central Asia.

## **Presentation of ECHO Interventions in Disaster Risk Reduction**

*Remarks by Mr. Thierry Bertouille, Desk Officer DG ECHO for Central Asia.*

Mr. Bertouille provided an overview of DG ECHO activities with a particular focus on the Dipecho programme. DG ECHO was created in 1992 to provide support to victims of crises outside the EU. In 1996, the DIPECHO programme (Disaster Preparedness ECHO) was launched. Mr. Bertouille went on to say that DG ECHO has been working in Central Asia for about 15 years now and the 4<sup>th</sup> Dipecho action plan is, for the time being, implemented. The 3 previous ones are already terminated and the 5<sup>th</sup> one is in development. He stated that DIPECHO's projects cover all 5 Central Asian countries through 2009 and there are currently 20 projects underway. Mr. Bertouille described how disaster risk is assessed and that disaster risk reduction involves three aspects: preparedness, mitigation and prevention. Only preparedness and mitigation are within DG ECHO's mandate.

### **Presentation of DIPECHO Projects in Central Asia**

DIPECHO implementing partners provided an overview of DIPECHO projects in each of the 5 Central Asian countries.

- Presentation of DIPECHO projects in Tajikistan by Ms. Elmira Ablekeeva of the NLRC
- Presentation of DIPECHO projects in Kyrgyzstan by Mr. Murat Koshoev of UNDP Kyrgyzstan
- Presentation of DIPECHO projects in Uzbekistan by Mr. Andro Shilakadse of UNICEF Uzbekistan
- Presentation of DIPECHO projects in Turkmenistan by Ms. Elmira Ablejeeva of the NLRC
- Presentation of DIPECHO projects in Kazakhstan by Mr. Parviz Mahmudov of UN ISDR.

*Day 2: November 15, 2007*

**The all day was cochaired by Mr Zokirov MAHMADTOIR and Mr Jean-claude HEYRAUD who also played the role of moderator**

### **Update on the Hyogo Framework for Action and National Platforms by ISDR**

The ISDR representative from Tajikistan provided an overview of the Hyogo Framework for Action, “Building Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disaster,” (2005-2015), adopted by 168 countries at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, in January of 2005. The representative noted that four of these countries were from Central Asia and that the Hyogo Framework is incorporated into the 4<sup>th</sup> DIPECHO action plan.

The representative outlined the 5 Principles of the Hyogo Framework.

1. *Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.*

This involves the development of legal, institutional and policy frameworks for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in every country.

2. *Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.*

In many cases, there is a need to “revise and reconsider the list of potential hazard sites, especially in the Ferghana Valley.” The representative highlighted that governments have expressed interest in working together to address this risk.

3. *Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.*

During the former Soviet Union, the civil defense system was very developed. Now civil defense does not hold a position of priority in the countries of the former Soviet Union. A component within DIPECHO 4 concerns the introduction of programs on DRR into secondary schools and universities, and to include DRR education in informal education programs and to train local decision makers and communities. Another component of DIPECHO 4 is advocacy

and campaigns. Currently, a campaign on safety in hospitals is being planned for 2008-2009. ISDR notes that “It is important that these events cover all strata of society.”

4. *Reduce the underlying risk factors.*

The representative explained that there is a definite need for integration into DRR programming aspects about the consequences of climate change. Some DIPECHO 4 projects promote safer construction practices for seismic and flood resilience. The representative also highlighted the importance of mainstreaming DRR into development project planning – e.g., economic, water and sanitation and land management projects.

5. *Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.*

The representative described the keys to this component as development and regular testing of contingency plans at the community levels; integration of DRR concepts into disaster response and recovery activities and programs; and development of coordinated regional approaches for effective disaster response. The representative also stated that problems can only be mitigated with joint action. This is why each country must develop risk reduction plans simultaneously and share these plans with each other.

Questions and Comments:

The delegate from *Swiss Development Cooperation* commented that “good coordination between donors is of great importance.” He stressed the need to link remote hazard control to climate change; and to underline the importance of the fifth Hyogo priority in densely populated urban areas. The Swiss Development Cooperation would like to work more on this issue with ISDR in the future.

ISDR noted that regional organizations exist in the area to promote exchange programs though there is no list of their specific activities. At the government level a number of consultative meetings are being held, which underscores the importance of political will for state actors to prioritize the issue.

The representative from *UNICEF Uzbekistan* asked what mechanisms for cooperation between countries currently exist. He also pointed out the relationship between poverty reduction and DRR and asked for the ISDR’s opinions on the connections and whether they have any experience linking poverty reduction strategies and DRR. ISDR gave two examples which illustrated that under current conditions and experience, when DRR actions are ‘integrated’ into development, most funding gets channeled into rehabilitation and development actions are delayed.

**Presentation of the national Disaster Preparedness plan in Kyrgyzstan**

The representative of the Ministry of Emergency Situation in Kyrgyzstan provided an overview of disaster risk in Kyrgyzstan then went on to describe the government’s methods for handling these risks. In Kyrgyzstan, the MoES is composed of 13 departments that are further delineated into four geographical regional divisions. Under these inter-regional departments are territorial departments. This structure ensures coordination at all levels.

Presidential Decree #156 on March 13, 2006 established the MoES's budget and defined protection, prevention and elimination of emergency situations as its main goals. In the context of the State Development Strategy, the government has developed an action plan for the MoES for 2007-2010. Other DRR strategies and structures operating in Kyrgyzstan include an International Coordination Group (ICG) created to implement all the state's efforts and activities to solve the pollution problem caused by the uranium tailings in MinKush region. The government has also established an Emergency Response Center which the World Bank is helping finance. Finally, there is an Emergency Reduction Group consisting of UN organizations, SDC, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, UNDP and others operating in Kyrgyzstan. The representative concluded by stating problems with DRR in Kyrgyzstan include a lack of memorandums of understanding, insufficient information on progress of implementation and a lack of professional and NGO representation on the local level.

#### Questions and Comments:

The representative from *Mission East* asked if Kyrgyzstan will invite observers to the International Coordination Group (ICG) meeting in April 2008. The representative from Kyrgyzstan responded by reminding the group that his minister suggested the 2<sup>nd</sup> regional meeting be held in Kyrgyzstan the previous day. He also said they will welcome observers at the meeting. The conference moderator pointed out the limits of the DIPECHO programme and said he is happy to see that countries can do it on their own while again emphasizing that they cannot rely too much on DIPECHO for such planning.

#### **Presentation of the national Disaster Preparedness plan in Turkmenistan**

A representative from the Ministry of Defense in Turkmenistan provided an overview of disaster risk in the country and the steps being taken to mitigate these risks. The two main disaster risks in Turkmenistan are earthquakes and floods, with 56% of the country prone to earthquakes of 9 degrees or higher. In addition to the risks of earthquakes and floods, there are over 10 hazardous chemical plants in the country that are prone to both fire and explosions. The following actions taken for DRR in Turkmenistan include: revised university and institution departments linked to DRR and the development of training courses for civil defense, medical relief workers, etc. The country is also working to train the population on what to do in case of an emergency, etc. A law on Civil Defense and Prevention of Disaster was passed. As a result, the Ministry of Health has stocks of medications; the Ministry of Construction has guidelines, etc., in case of a disaster. The Department of Civil Defense was created within the Ministry of Defense. Its President is the President of Turkmenistan. In the future they want to create a Ministry of Emergency Situations. The country has staffed the Department of Civil Defense but now need heavy machinery for disaster relief. In addition, the country has also renovated buildings to allow for emergency escape. They plan to use cell phone networks to warn people, a practice already in use in Uzbekistan.

#### Questions and Comments:

The representative from ISDR expressed his desire to begin working in Turkmenistan.

The representative from Mission East pointed out that the private sector in Turkmenistan is young and growing and suggested engaging them in DRR. Is there any movement toward engaging public-private partnerships in Turkmenistan?

The representative from Turkmenistan responded by saying that the private sector is developing mainly in light industry while big enterprises (natural gas/oil) remain under the control of state. He believes this will last forever. He pointed out that the private sector is not particularly strong but they will work with them in projects such as the cell phone warning system. He believes construction companies can also help and says that agreements have been made with other companies that have equipment.

### **Presentation of the national Disaster Preparedness plan in Uzbekistan**

A representative from the Ministry of Emergency Situations in Uzbekistan gave an overview of disaster risk in the country and DRR strategies being implemented. In 2006, there were six sensitive earthquakes and there have already been 19 this year. The 40 reservoirs located across the country are at risk for flooding. In addition, there are areas in the country prone to snowslides and landslides. The Uzbekistan Ministry of Emergency Situations was created in May 1996. It is responsible for compiling special reports to the government that include practical measures to be taken for disaster prevention and mitigation, among other tasks. The structure of the MoES consists of functional and territorial subsystems. The functional systems include ministries of government agencies and are in charge of some duties including prevention. The territorial systems include local authorities, supreme councils, representatives at the level of the ministries and the object level. Each level has its own means/organs/financial resources. In addition to creating the MoES, the government has developed a vocational training institution to train personnel of the ministries. The curriculum is compulsory for all levels of authority and was developed by the Prime Minister. In recent years two laws related to DRR were passed in Uzbekistan – the law on Civil Defense and a law related to people who are not members of the workforce. With regard to international cooperation, Uzbekistan is cooperating on many levels with many governments. Specifically, Uzbekistan is sending officers to pass civil defense training in Russia. The country also has intergovernmental agreements with Tajikistan regarding the lake Sarez that the countries share; with France for civil defense and joint training; and with the US for nonproliferation of technology that presents a risk of biohazard. In addition to the above activities, Uzbekistan has a program for forecasting disasters adopted by the government in 2006. The government has designed a risk reduction program that defines the activities of government agencies to prevent disasters and mitigate risks and envisions 11 targeted programs. An environmental management commission was formed to monitor rivers and reservoirs. This commission meets regularly and the Prime Minister is its chairman. Programs have been developed to control medical and biological hazards and the country is happy to work with other international organizations on this. Despite the progress that has been made, Uzbekistan still needs to develop criteria for early warning and would like to exchange information on this topic. The country also needs to convert the current analog systems for collection and treatment of data into digital systems.

### Questions and Comments:

The moderator commented that he is happy to see the country is doing well. The representative from the Swiss Development Cooperation pointed out the responsibility civilians have to help themselves, stating that more attention must be paid to teaching the individual civilian what he or she can do in the case of disasters.

### **Presentation of the national Disaster Preparedness plan of Tajikistan**

Tajikistan's Committee of Emergency Situations provided an overview of the state of DRR programming in Tajikistan. He broke the national plan down into seven components: 1) monitoring, natural hazards, vulnerability and disaster risk assessments, 2) early-warning and communications, 3) engineering, 4) education, training and simulation exercises, 5) strategic planning, 6) coordination, and 7) DRR legislation.

*Monitoring* actions include the revival of the Hazardous Processes Monitoring Service under the Main Geological Department, the restoration and equipping of main hydrometeorological point of the Hydrometeorology Agency; and streamlining the activities of relevant agencies.

*Early-warning and communications* propose to establish early warning systems in the most vulnerable regions, some since installed. The country also wants to ensure coordination of these systems with other countries. In most areas, cell phones are very important for early warning, which means cell phone providers must be involved in programming. Use of local radio centers in every jamoat as well as central radio and Television to warn the population when there is the threat of a natural disaster is being studied. *Engineering actions* primarily involve mitigation activities that include identification of risk areas; development and implementation projects; and the construction of dams. *Education, training and simulation exercises* address the need for capacity-building of state institutions, including rapid response systems and the provision of special equipment. Personnel must also be trained and many buildings must be renovated, especially in large cities. *Strategic planning* involves the development of a National Risk Management Strategy for Tajikistan within the DIPECHO Framework. A National Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan is also being created. Both plans must be integrated into all sectors. *Coordination* takes the form of REACT, which has been re-formed in all regions of Tajikistan and activities are currently being implemented. *DRR Legislation* needs to be strengthened, enhancing the legal status of the Committee of Emergency Situations and establishing a State Reserve for emergency consequences liquidation at all levels and that community groups must be integrated at every point.

## **Thematic Working Groups**

The Conference organizers had identified 6 themes that encompassed the range of DRR trends and directions. The program intended for participants to assess the 'state of the art' by thematic topic, identify obstacles and motivating factors, and provide a concise set of conclusions and recommendations for development in the particular thematic arena. The six thematic areas included, 1) national and regional platforms, 2) scientific knowledge applied in disaster risk reduction, 3) environment and climate change, 4) public-private partnerships, 5) education and training, and 6) cross-cutting topics (gender, children, vulnerable groups).

A format for developing the discussions was provided, to guide the groups and provide continuity across groups. Groups began with a rapid assessment of the state of the art as related to their theme, followed by identification of key findings, then needs and finally recommendations. The recommendations were meant to be action-oriented, reflecting critical choices. The groups were advised to make the recommendations specific, measurable and achievable.

Following the group work, members presented an overview of their discussion and their conclusions. A PowerPoint presentation summarized the conclusions and recommendations of each group. In addition, the Conference host, Chairman of the Committee for Emergency Situations in Tajikistan provided two recommendations specific to Tajikistan and their agenda.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations by Thematic Sector**

### 1. National and Regional Platforms for Action in Central Asia

#### *Conclusions*

- Not all countries have the same concept /understanding of 'national platform'
- Move the understanding of platform from 'structure' to foundation for planning/policy/actions.
- National legislation in each country both helps/hinders
- Need to leverage commonalities.

#### *Recommendations*

- Fundamental priority for development of national/regional platforms is to acknowledge the advantages of, and the need to work together cross-borders.
- Harmonize the different conceptual understandings of 'National/regional platform'.

### 2. Scientific knowledge applied in disaster risk reduction

#### *Conclusions*

- The state of the art is developing rapidly, however application is lagging due poor training and lack of partnerships
- Countries are all at different levels
- Need to create opportunities for collaboration across countries
- Knowledge enhancement is urgently needed via trainings/courses.

#### *Recommendations*

- Evidence-based (scientific) knowledge must be the foundation for operations

- Invest in systems, structures, people [capacity building, resource use]
- Mainstream theory into practice.

### 3. Environment and climate change

#### *Conclusions*

- There are numerous official treaties, agreements, protocols on climate change which underline the links to disasters and natural hazards
- Awareness of the relationship between Climate Change and disasters is low in part due to inadequate monitoring of environmental degradation [ex. Greenhouse gases]
- Political will is a key element, but is currently limited. [for instance Treaties signed are not always observed]
- The problem of climate change threatens to exacerbate tension between countries as manifested in water management across borders.

#### *Recommendations*

- Acknowledge the links between Climate Change and disasters via monitoring, application, of scientifically valid methods.
- Improve the technical capacity of relevant agencies to define, assess and monitor – plan, prevent.
- Build political will through advocacy and lobbying.
- Mainstreaming DRR into ‘classic’ development planning. Should be a requirement in project development.

### 4. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

#### *Conclusions*

- State of the private sector is developing rapidly, but needs to be directed and encouraged to participate in DRR actions. [via legislation, via incentives]
- Low awareness both in private sector and DRR sector about the mutual benefits of partnering
- Need to articulate the parameters clearly and in conceptually feasible terms, for all stakeholders.

#### *Recommendations*

- Public/private partnerships contain great potential for leveraging resources and expertise and plans should be developed that provide for meeting both agendas – public and private.
- Disseminate examples and success stories of Public Private Partnership to encourage replication and social engagement.

### 5. Education and training

#### *Conclusions*

- Gaps exist between knowledge and practice among target groups that have been “trained” in DRR.
- Education and training approaches very diversified in their key messages, methodologies and expectations.
- Institutions (schools, medical facilities, etc.) provide a channel for systematizing and streamlining educational and training programs.

#### *Recommendations*

- At the country level there is a need for comprehensive training programs.
- At a country level, overarching strategy on Education and Training should be formulated that includes – standardized key educational messages and practice transmitted through adapted training approaches, depending on the target group profile.
- Plan training based on the demographic, cultural and physical characteristics of the target group involved.
- Coordination should be established between key government stakeholders (Committee of Emergency situation, Ministries of Health Ministries of Education and others);
- Standardized training package approved by the top governmental authorities;
- Training should cover all population, making sure that vulnerable groups have access.

#### 6. Cross-cutting topics (gender, children, vulnerable groups)

##### *Conclusions*

- International and national NGO's do not practice mainstreaming into regular development programs.
- Disaggregated data collection at baseline stage is lacking, which inhibits effective program design and targeting.
- Understanding of ‘vulnerability’ needs better definition – it is fluid depending on affecting factors.
- Government institutions lack guidelines and mechanisms for addressing issues surrounding vulnerable groups and also lack decentralized decision-making.
- Governments do not have a mechanism for decentralized decision making in order to improve access to support.

##### *Recommendations*

- Must integrate cross-cutting issues into national strategies based on indicators that reflect special needs.
- Inclusion and empowerment are key words.

##### *Special Recommendations from the Chairman of the CoES Tajikistan*

- All stakeholders are encouraged to support the CoES in the building of the Crisis management center.
- Support the CoES through the provision of equipment and machinery for use in prevention, preparedness and response to Disaster Situations.

### **Closing Remarks and Next Steps**

The Conference concluded following the presentation of the thematic recommendations. DG ECHO representatives observed that the process and outputs of the two-day event had been “extremely useful.” It was suggested that a task force meet in the future to verify how recommendations were being implemented. The Conference organizing task force was thanked, as well as the government of Tajikistan for hosting the meeting.

Following this, the representative from the *Government of Tajikistan* thanked everyone for the conference.

A reception hosted by the European Commission DG-ECHO followed the Conference.

## Annexes

- I. List of Participants
- II. Agenda
- III. Copies of Speeches
- IV. Power Point Presentations
  - Country presentations
  - ECHO presentations
  - working group notes
- V. Maps of the Dipecho programmes interventions
- VI. Presentation of the 20 Dipecho 4 projects