

Establishment of Volunteer Rural Rescue Teams in Vulnerable Communities

Kyrgyz Republic II

– Main Story:

The Kyrgyz Republic is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters, predicated on the development of various types of potential natural disasters country-wide and on the poverty of the rural population. For instance, the Kyrgyz Republic has a seismicity of magnitude 8-9 on the MSK-64 scale. Seismic activity is constant, with more than 3000 earthquakes registered annually, and 10-15 of which produce damage.

Mudflows and floods are widespread across the country; 3103 rivers carry the threat of mudflows in Kyrgyzstan. More than 1000 populated areas to differing degrees are prone to mudflows and flooding. The vulnerability to landslides covers 7.5% of the total territory of the country with 509 populated areas prone to landslides of varying degree.

Avalanches occur in all mountainous regions of the country, and there are 772 avalanche hazardous sites just along the main roads. More than 180 populated areas of the country are prone to flooding due to rise in the level of groundwater.

According to MES KR information, approximately 200 emergency situations occur annually, and there is the threat of an increase in these numbers. The annual damage costs from emergency situations is approximately US\$35 million and the number of casualties approximately attains 2000 families.

Projects which have been carried out by the UNDP in Kyrgyzstan since 2005 have been directed at the capacity building of local communities in disaster risk management, including the establishment, training and equipping of rural rescue teams in pilot communities most vulnerable to natural disasters.



At present, forty-five rural rescue teams have been established. During the carrying out of this project, communities implemented hazard assessment and disaster risk mapping, developed disaster preparedness and response plans, installed simple alarm systems for warning the population in case of hazard threat and carried

out mitigation projects.

In connection with the establishment of rural rescue teams, communities raised their disaster preparedness skills and have carried out informational activities on proper disaster preparedness and response.

In some communities rural rescue teams acted as a good example of tool in rendering prompt aid to casualties and the elimination of emergency aftermath situations.

– **Background**

Kyrgyzstan is characterized by a high threat of natural disasters and the vulnerability of the rural population conditioned by poverty. There are no regulations in national legislation that provide for financing the prevention and elimination of emergency situations from local budget resources.

– **Objective**

To build the disaster risk management capacity of the most vulnerable communities.

– **Term/Time frame**

From 2005 to the present.

– **Activities undertaken**

The following activities were implemented in pilot communities: improvements in the qualifications and skills for disaster risk management; establishment and equipping of volunteer rural rescue teams; hazard assessment and disaster risk mapping; and mitigation projects aimed at the protection of communities from disasters.

– **Major achievements**

More than 30,000 people were trained for action in disaster preparedness and response, and 29 mitigation projects were implemented. As a result protection was provided for 784 houses, 4 schools, 1, 178 hectares of arable land.

– **Total budget**

N/A

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