

**STRATEGY
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES
IN THE FIELD OF DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
FOR 2022–2030**
(hereinafter referred to as the “Strategy”)

List of Abbreviations	1
Key Terms and Definitions	1
Chapter 1. General Provisions	2
Chapter 2. Brief Characteristics of Disaster Risk in Central Asia	3
Chapter 3. Overview of Regional Cooperation of the Central Asian Countries in the Field of Disaster Risk Reduction	3
Chapter 4. Objective and Main Tasks	4
Chapter 5. Priority Areas of Action	5
Chapter 6. Measures for the Implementation of the Priority Areas of Action	5
6.1. Improvement of the Regional Organizational and Legal Framework for Disaster Risk Management	5
6.2. Improvement of Knowledge and Understanding of Disaster Risks, Particularly of Large-Scale and Transboundary Nature	6
6.3. Attraction of Investments in Disaster Risk Reduction Measures at the Regional Level	6
6.4. Strengthening Preparedness for Emergency Response	7
Chapter 7. Expected Results	7
Chapter 8. Mechanisms and Main Stages of Strategy Implementation	8

List of Abbreviations

CA	Central Asia
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
ES	Emergency Situation

Key Terms and Definitions

Disaster – A significant disruption of the normal functioning of local communities or society, characterized by loss of life and health, extensive material, economic, or environmental damage, and consequential impacts.

Preparedness – The capabilities and capacities of government structures, response and recovery organizations, communities, and individuals to anticipate, respond to, and recover from the impacts of likely, inevitable, or ongoing disasters effectively.

National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction – A broad term referring to national coordination and strategic guidance mechanisms in the field of DRR. These mechanisms are multisectoral and interdisciplinary in nature and involve the participation of all stakeholders within the country, including governmental bodies, the private sector, and civil society.

Disaster Risk Assessment – A qualitative or quantitative methodology for determining the nature and extent of disaster risk by analyzing potential hazards and assessing existing conditions of exposure and vulnerability, which collectively may harm people and cause damage to property, services, livelihoods, and the environment.

Exposure – The presence of people, property, systems, or other elements in areas that could be affected by disaster hazards.

Disaster Response Capacity – The ability of individuals, organizations, and systems to withstand adverse conditions, emergencies, or natural disasters and manage them using available skills and resources.

Disaster Management Capacity – The combination of societal, community, or organizational capacities and resources to manage and reduce disaster risks and enhance resilience to potential hazards.

Forecasting – A specific statement or statistical estimate regarding the likelihood of an event or conditions occurring in a given geographical area in the future.

Response – A set of timely actions during or immediately after a disaster aimed at saving lives, reducing harm to health, ensuring public safety, and meeting the urgent needs of affected populations.

Central Asia Region – The geographical area encompassing the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Disaster Risk – The combination of the probability of a hazardous event and its negative consequences, resulting from natural and anthropogenic hazards, vulnerability to these hazards, and the capacity to cope and respond.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) – A set of institutional actions and measures aimed at preventing the emergence of new disaster risks, reducing existing risks, and managing residual risks to enhance resilience and contribute to sustainable development. DRR is operationalized through Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies.

Transboundary Emergency – An emergency whose causative factors extend beyond the borders of a single state.

Disaster Risk Management – The application of policies and strategies to prevent the creation of new disaster risks, reduce existing risks, and manage residual risks to strengthen coping capacities and reduce disaster-induced losses.

Vulnerability – Conditions determined by physical, social, economic, and environmental factors or processes that increase the susceptibility of individuals, communities, property, or systems to the impact of hazards.

Emergency – A crisis or hazardous situation requiring immediate action to prevent potential negative consequences, which may include loss of life, injury, material, economic, or environmental damage.

Emergency Prevention – A set of proactive measures aimed at minimizing the risk of an emergency and protecting human health, reducing environmental damage, and limiting material losses should an emergency occur.

Emergency Response and Mitigation – Rescue and other urgent actions undertaken during an emergency to save lives, protect health, reduce environmental and material damage, contain the affected area, and neutralize the characteristic hazards of the situation.

Chapter 1. General Provisions

The Central Asia region covers an area of approximately 4 million square kilometers, with a total population exceeding 75 million people.

From a geographical perspective, Central Asia is highly diverse, encompassing extensive and relatively young mountain systems such as the Tien Shan and Pamir ranges, numerous permanent glaciers, large deserts and semi-deserts, vast steppe zones, thousands of small rivers and dozens of large rivers and lakes, including the Amu Darya and Syr Darya, the Caspian and Aral Seas, Lake Balkhash, and Lake Issyk-Kul. The region also contains large reservoirs, densely populated valleys such as the Fergana Valley, as well as some of the most sparsely inhabited areas in the world.

Central Asia's location is characterized by a sharply continental climate with limited and unevenly distributed precipitation. The region experiences a wide range of daily and seasonal temperatures, high solar radiation, and relatively low humidity. Significant variations in geographic position and elevation—from 0 to 7,500 meters above sea level—explain the diversity of microclimates.

Average summer temperatures at low elevations, in valleys and deserts, range from 26°C in the north to 40°C in the south, with maximum temperatures reaching 45–50°C. Average winter temperatures range from 0°C in the south to -20°C in the north, with absolute minimums reaching -40°C.

Annual precipitation in lowlands and valleys ranges from 80 to 200 mm, mostly occurring in winter and spring. In contrast, the foothills receive 300–400 mm of precipitation, while the southern and southwestern slopes of mountain ranges receive 600–800 mm. Climate variations across the region depend on geographic and geomorphological conditions, which in turn influence water demand.

Rapid population growth and the expansion of irrigation, particularly over the past 40 years, have significantly increased demand for land and water in the region. At the same time, more than 48% of the population resides in urban areas, including seven cities with populations exceeding one million. Central Asia is also among the youngest regions in the world in terms of demographic composition.

Chapter 2. Brief Characteristics of Disaster Risk in Central Asia

The Central Asia region is exposed to nearly all types of disaster risks, with few exceptions (tsunamis, tornadoes, volcanic eruptions, and some others), including natural (geological, geophysical, meteorological, agrometeorological, hydrological), technological, environmental, and socio-biological hazards.

The region is particularly characterized by extensive areas with high seismic activity (strong earthquakes 7–8–9 or higher on the MSK-64 and Richter scales), mudflows, floods, flash floods, landslides, snow avalanches, waterlogging, rising groundwater levels, strong winds, hurricanes, tornadoes, desertification, dust and sand storms, prolonged and heavy rainfall, hail, heavy snowfalls, blizzards, droughts, frost, rockfalls and landslides, steppe, forest, and mountain fires, extreme temperatures, environmental, industrial, and transport accidents, explosions, large fires, epidemics, mass infectious diseases of humans and animals, crop diseases, weeds and pests, as well as the presence of artificial reservoirs, potentially dam-break-prone water bodies, nuclear and chemical waste storage facilities, and enterprises handling highly toxic substances, hazardous wastes, and complex technological processes.

Research findings and statistical data confirm significant economic and human losses, environmental damage, and disruption of long-term development plans resulting from disasters and emergencies caused by these hazards.

Throughout history, Central Asian countries have repeatedly experienced destructive disasters, accompanied by substantial human and economic losses (Kazakhstan – Almaty, mudflows, 1887, 1889, 1911; Kyrgyzstan – earthquakes, Susamy, 1992; Nura-Alay, 2008; Tajikistan – earthquakes, Khait, 1949; Gissar, 1989; floods, 1993; Turkmenistan – Ashgabat, earthquake, 1948; Uzbekistan – Tashkent, earthquake, 1966; Central Asia region – drought, 2000; floods in the Amu Darya and Syr Darya basins, 2005).

Chapter 3. Overview of Regional Cooperation of the Central Asian Countries in the Field of Disaster Risk Reduction

The governments of Central Asian countries play a key role in implementing measures for disaster prevention, response, and recovery.

Given the presence of real risks of large-scale and transboundary emergencies, whose negative consequences cannot always be addressed solely by the resources of a single country, and the need for coordinated and joint action in their prevention and mitigation, the governments of Central Asian states seek to pool efforts in the areas of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and emergency management through strengthening bilateral, multilateral, regional cooperation, and global partnerships.

Central Asian countries have actively enhanced coordination for establishing sustainable mechanisms to implement bilateral and multilateral intergovernmental and/or inter-agency agreements, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to 2030, the priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Climate Agreement, and other international programmatic documents.

At present, regional-level dialogue between governments on DRR and emergency management has intensified through the implementation of frameworks for strengthening regional cooperation in DRR and the establishment of a permanent Regional Consultative Platform in the format of the Regional Forum – Meeting of Heads of Emergency Services of Central Asian Countries.

Based on the decisions of Regional Forums – Meetings of Heads of Emergency Services of Central Asian countries, intergovernmental (inter-agency) emergency councils, and joint bilateral and multilateral emergency committees, technical

working groups and expert specialists have been established and are operational. Within the framework of the Regional Scientific and Technical Council, measures are being implemented to strengthen regional scientific and technical cooperation.

Regional programs, projects, and action plans are designed to implement practical measures aimed at creating and further developing regional early warning systems, alert mechanisms, mutual disaster risk information sharing, monitoring, forecasting, and emergency risk assessment, leveraging the capacities of existing national crisis management centers and early warning systems.

At the regional level, joint actions have also been strengthened to enhance the capacities of emergency services in Central Asian countries, including experience sharing, adoption of innovative information and communication technologies, and improvement of coordination, interaction, and response mechanisms.

Currently, in order to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks, the emergency services of Central Asian countries are undertaking coordinated measures for disaster risk identification, assessment, mapping, and modeling; improving monitoring, forecasting, early warning, alert, and response systems; and strengthening regional and national capacities to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

Strategic documents of Central Asian countries in the field of DRR demonstrate that the development and enhancement of regional cooperation for implementing joint coordinated actions to reduce disaster risk remains a priority.

This Strategy has been developed based on and in consideration of the outcomes of high-level regional events:

◆ Regional Ministerial Conference of Central Asian Countries on Disaster Prevention and Response, 24–25 November 2015, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan (Ashgabat Declaration)

◆ Regional Meeting of Heads of Emergency Services of Central Asian Countries on Disaster Risk Reduction, 31 March 2017, Dushanbe, Tajikistan (Dushanbe Declaration)

◆ Regional Forum – Meeting of Heads of Emergency Services of Central Asian Countries, 26–27 April 2018, Almaty, Kazakhstan (Regional Forum Protocol)

◆ Regional Conference on DRR and Implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015–2030 in Central Asia, 21 August 2019, Dushanbe, Tajikistan (Dushanbe Resolution)

◆ Regional Forum – Meeting of Heads of Emergency Services of Central Asian Countries, 11–12 July 2019, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (Regional Forum Protocol)

◆ Regional Consultative Meeting on Strengthening Regional Cooperation in DRR and Implementation of the Sendai Framework in Central Asia, 10–11 December 2020, via videoconference (Regional Consultative Meeting Protocol, including the decision to develop and adopt the Central Asia DRR Strategy 2022–2030)

Chapter 4. Objective and Main Tasks

Objective of the Strategy

The objective of the Strategy is to enhance the effectiveness of cooperation among Central Asian countries in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and emergency management, in order to prevent human, economic, and environmental losses and to create conditions for sustainable development across the region.

Key Tasks of the Strategy

1. Strengthen institutional frameworks for regional and transboundary cooperation among countries in the field of DRR.
2. Develop a shared information space for disaster risk assessment and forecasting of emergencies.
3. Support the development of human resource capacities in the region in the field of DRR.
4. Support the development of National Platforms for DRR in Central Asian countries to design and implement disaster risk reduction strategies at national and local levels.

5. Promote and attract investment in the field of DRR, engaging the private sector, as well as international and regional organizations and partners.

Chapter 5. Priority Areas of Action

Priority Areas of Action to Achieve the Strategy's Objective and Tasks

1. Enhance regional organizational and legal frameworks for disaster risk management.
2. Improve knowledge and understanding of disaster risks, with particular attention to transboundary risks.
3. Mobilize investment in disaster risk reduction measures at the regional level.
4. Strengthen preparedness for emergency response.

Chapter 6. Measures for the Implementation of the Priority Areas of Action

6.1. Improvement of the Regional Organizational and Legal Framework for Disaster Risk Management

6.1.1. Enhance regional coordination mechanisms and close cooperation among Central Asian countries in the fields of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), and emergency management, based on the implementation of bilateral and multilateral intergovernmental agreements on emergency prevention and response.

6.1.2. Establish and strengthen coordination mechanisms and close collaboration with donor agencies, international and non-governmental organizations, Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations, as well as educational, academic, scientific, and research institutions working in DRR, CCA, and emergency management, with the aim of pooling efforts and implementing joint actions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, the priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Climate Agreement, and other international programmatic documents.

6.1.3. Implement joint measures to harmonize legal and regulatory frameworks to enhance effectiveness in fulfilling international obligations, as well as bilateral and multilateral intergovernmental and inter-agency agreements among Central Asian countries, ensuring alignment with international law and addressing gaps in mechanisms and procedures for practical implementation.

6.1.4. Improve national and regional emergency risk management systems through the introduction of modern innovative information and communication technologies, modernization and digitalization of automated management systems, and enhancement of communication and alert systems.

6.1.5. Strengthen the legal framework for institutional mechanisms in disaster risk management, including joint disaster risk assessments, particularly for earthquakes, glacial lake outburst floods, tailings dams, large reservoir dams, and other structures posing a risk of transboundary disasters.

6.1.6. Support the strengthening of national DRR platforms in implementing inter-agency and cross-sectoral coordination through organizational and technical assistance provided by emergency services and international organizations.

6.1.7. Support the improvement of mechanisms, procedures, and methodologies for assessing the socio-economic impacts of emergencies used by government authorities, aligning them with best international practices for damage, loss, and needs assessment in reconstruction and recovery, in accordance with the "Build Back Better" principle.

6.2. Improvement of Knowledge and Understanding of Disaster Risks, Particularly of Large-Scale and Transboundary Nature

6.2.1. Develop and enhance intergovernmental standardized rules and procedures, tools, and methodologies for the collection, reception, processing, systematization, accumulation, storage, and centralization of databases and internet resources, as well as automated systems for the distribution, transmission, and timely dissemination of information on DRR and emergency management to all stakeholders, taking into account the needs of different user groups and contextual circumstances.

6.2.2. Strengthen regional capacity for monitoring and forecasting hazardous natural processes and phenomena, including the identification, assessment, mapping, analysis, and modeling of disaster risks, with particular focus on transboundary risks.

6.2.3. Update forecasts of regional risks and threats, including those associated with climate change, urban development, population growth, and economic infrastructure expansion, in close collaboration with and leveraging the expertise of specialized national, regional, and international scientific institutions working in DRR, CCA, and emergency management.

6.2.4. Improve awareness and information sharing among all stakeholders regarding regional disaster risks, including operational information on threats and the occurrence of emergencies, their progression, potential consequences, and measures undertaken for their mitigation.

6.2.5. Implement measures to integrate automated early warning and alert systems for emergency threats, particularly for earthquakes, glacial lake outburst floods, tailings dams, large reservoir dams, and other structures posing transboundary disaster risks.

6.2.6. Conduct joint planning, development, and implementation of regional research projects, including the exchange of scientific-methodological and methodological tools, publications, video and photographic materials, analytical reports, scientific and technical literature, research results, and innovative information and communication technologies.

6.2.7. Implement measures to enhance the knowledge and professional training of civil protection and emergency management authorities, as well as the qualifications of specialists and experts in Central Asian countries in the field of DRR and emergency management, through training sessions, courses, workshops, demonstration exercises, specialized drills, and other relevant activities.

6.3. Attraction of Investments in Disaster Risk Reduction Measures at the Regional Level

6.3.1. Consolidate the efforts of all stakeholders in planning and implementing disaster risk reduction (DRR) and emergency prevention measures through initiating, developing, mobilizing investments, promoting, and participating in the implementation of national, intergovernmental, and international programs and projects in the fields of DRR and emergency management.

6.3.2. Strengthen cooperation at national and regional levels with donor agencies, international financial institutions, and international organizations to secure investments that facilitate the transition from reactive practices to proactive disaster risk reduction, prevention, and capacity strengthening, while ensuring the rights of citizens to a safe and healthy environment and protection from emergencies, with particular attention to the most vulnerable populations, including women, children, and the elderly.

6.3.3. Support the mobilization of public and private investments, donor agency funds, financial institution resources, and contributions from international and non-governmental organizations at the regional level to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, inter-agency, international, and global programmatic DRR and emergency prevention initiatives, as well as programs for sustainable development, climate change adaptation, and environmental safety.

6.3.4. Promote the attraction of public and external investments to support scientific and technical programs and projects aimed at introducing innovative information and communication technologies, strengthening disaster risk prevention, assessment, and analysis measures, and investigating causes and consequences of emergencies, particularly transboundary events, with a focus on the most vulnerable populations.

6.3.5. Enhance stakeholder engagement and provide full organizational support to regional and national programs and projects implemented in Central Asian countries with technical and financial support from donor agencies, international, and non-governmental organizations.

6.3.6. Develop mutually beneficial partnerships between the private sector, government authorities, and other stakeholders to enhance disaster risk reduction capacity.

6.3.7. Strengthen activities to attract investment to promote legal, economic, and organizational foundations for mandatory and voluntary disaster and emergency risk insurance.

6.4. Strengthening Preparedness for Emergency Response

6.4.1. Strengthen activities for the creation and operationalization of a Regional Coordination Mechanism for emergency response, reconstruction, and recovery in accordance with the “Build Back Better” principle, for emergencies whose consequences cannot be addressed solely by the resources of a single country. This mechanism is intended to support and enhance interaction, cooperation, and coordination among the emergency services of Central Asian countries, UN agencies, Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations, and other key stakeholders in emergency response and international humanitarian assistance.

6.4.2. Provide organizational support to international and non-governmental organizations, Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations, and other stakeholders working in DRR, climate change adaptation (CCA), and emergency management at the regional level, to strengthen preparedness for emergency humanitarian response.

6.4.3. Establish an effective system for intergovernmental and international information exchange in cases of threats or occurrence of emergencies.

6.4.4. Conduct organizational and technical activities at the regional level to enhance the preparedness of emergency rescue units of Central Asian countries (training, drills, exercises, etc.) included in the established Regional Registry of Forces and Resources of Central Asian countries, for carrying out emergency rescue operations in situations that cannot be managed by the resources of a single state and require joint coordinated actions.

6.4.5. Support the creation and strengthening of national and regional emergency reserves of material and financial resources to enhance preparedness for effective response, conduct rescue and humanitarian operations during emergencies, including during reconstruction and recovery phases.

6.4.6. Implement measures to develop and disseminate to stakeholders methodological and procedural guidelines for operational leadership, coordination of actions by management authorities, forces, and resources of states and the international community in emergency response, rescue and humanitarian operations, recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, based on international standards, global experience, and best practices.

Chapter 7. Expected Results

1. Significant reduction of human losses in the region from disasters, including those of a transboundary nature.
2. Substantial decrease in economic losses from disasters, enabling the development of resilient infrastructure and uninterrupted functioning of transboundary economic links.
3. Marked improvement of the investment climate in the countries and across the region.
4. Reduction of environmental risks and potential losses, with effective responses to climate change.
5. Fulfillment by countries of their international obligations in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, the Paris Climate Agreement, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030).

Specific target indicators and performance measures for the implementation of this Strategy, as well as timelines for their achievement, shall be determined and approved by the Regional Forum in accordance with the Action Plan for each phase, taking into account the capacities for implementation at the national and regional levels.

The adoption of this Strategy will ensure further development and a transition to a new, higher-quality level of regional cooperation among Central Asian countries in DRR and emergency management, aligned with the vital interests of the countries of the region and supporting continued sustainable development.

Chapter 8. Mechanisms and Main Stages of Strategy Implementation

The implementation of the Strategy is carried out by the emergency services of the Central Asian countries and the Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction — Secretariat of the Regional Forum: Meeting of Heads of Emergency Services of Central Asian Countries — based on Action Plans (Roadmaps).

The Strategy is implemented through the initiation, development, promotion, and execution of joint intergovernmental and international programs and projects in the fields of disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation (CCA), and emergency prevention and response, with technical and financial support from the participating countries of the Regional Forum, donor agencies, international and non-governmental organizations, scientific and research institutions, and the private sector.

Implementation will be carried out according to Action Plans (Roadmaps) for the Strategy, approved by decisions of the Regional Forum: Meeting of Heads of Emergency Services of Central Asian Countries, in three phases:

Phase 1: 2022–2023

Phase 2: 2024–2026

Phase 3: 2027–2030

Amendments and additions to the Strategy shall be made as necessary, based on the decisions of the Regional Forum: Meeting of Heads of Emergency Services of Central Asian Countries.