

Strengthening Financial Resilience and Accelerating Risk Reduction in Central Asia

Virtual Meetings on the “Quantification of Regional Disaster Risk and Capacity Building on Risk Identification”

Date: December 9, 2020 and January 11, 2021

1. Background

The region of Central Asia faces both frequent and low impact as well as rare and high impact disasters, with disaster impacts expected to increase as countries urbanize, populations grow, and climate change impacts are felt. Earthquakes pose a severe threat to all the major cities in Central Asia and overwhelming majority of the population, with historical earthquakes destroying Almaty in 1911, Ashgabat in 1948 and Tashkent in 1966. Today, these cities, along with Bishkek and Dushanbe, are the main concentration of not only people, but also trade and industries in the region. Floods bring another set of challenges to the region, as they happen often and usually affect rural areas, devastating people’s livelihoods and often taking lives.

Disasters in Central Asia often have transboundary nature. This is the case for extreme weather events, such as floods (the region shares a number of transboundary rivers). Similar situation is with medium to large scale earthquakes. Transboundary seismic source zones are especially concentrated in the Pamir - Tien Shan region.

Financial impact of disasters is huge and expected to increase. Exposure of population to adverse natural hazards in Central Asia is growing. The population growth concentrates in areas subjected to adverse natural events. For instance, all the major cities in the region are located in areas of high to very high seismicity. Although mountainous areas of the region, such as Pamir, are less populated, exposure to high seismic activity together with extreme poverty and lack of resources for prevention from the governments exacerbate the seismic threat in such areas. Further, semi-arid climate of the region naturally concentrates settlements and economic activities in more fertile, but riskier areas, such as flood plains along the rivers of Central Asia.

In order to address these challenges, the **“Strengthening Financial Resilience and Accelerating Risk Reduction in Central Asia (SFRARR)” Program** – managed by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), implemented by the World Bank and financed by the European Union – will support Central Asian countries in building disaster resilience and strengthening capacities for financial protection of Central Asian countries. The SFRARR Program, which was initiated in 2019 with a four-year implementation period, will work in collaboration with the Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction (CESDRR) based in Almaty, Kazakhstan. There are three components under the SFRARR program:

- Component 1: Quantify Regional Disaster Risks and Capacity Building on Risk Identification
- Component 2: Establishing fundamental awareness and capacities for financial resilience at national and regional levels
- Component 3: Exposure mapping for improved disaster risk management and awareness

A regional approach to disaster risk management and financing can significantly benefit countries in Central Asia by providing common analytics and metrics, training and sharing of knowledge and technology, development of



solutions for national and regional/transboundary issues. To address this, a consultancy was called to carry out the key tasks under Component 1 and 3. The main objectives of the assignment are to:

1. Conduct probabilistic disaster risk assessment for earthquake, fluvial and pluvial flood, and selective landslide; and
2. Build capacity of local experts, institutions, and research groups with a role in DRM and emergency planning on exposure mapping and development/use of disaster risk information and its components

The outcome of the assignment is expected to inform possible disaster risk financing interventions at the regional level for medium to large scale, cross-border disaster risks. In parallel, data and information produced under the disaster risk assessment are expected to contribute to national-level decision making on risk reduction and disaster and climate sensitive urban and development planning as a co-benefit of the assessment. In addition, the component includes capacity building on disaster risk assessment and its application in various aspects of disaster risk management and development sectors. This component strongly contributes to Priority 1 of Sendai Framework, with a contribution to Priority 2 and Priority 4.

2. Objectives of the Meetings and Setup

The objectives of the proposed Meetings on Regional Disaster Risk Assessment are as below:

- (i) To introduce the consortium carrying out the assignment to the relevant stakeholders including but not limited to the members of the Regional Scientific-Technical Council (RSTC), development partners, the donor, etc. The consortium is led by RED - Risk Engineering + Development.
- (ii) To present proposed outline of the assignment's Inception Report chapters; and
- (iii) To discuss and address the provided feedback on the draft Inception Report.

After the first meeting on December 9, 2020, the consortium will share the draft Inception Report of the Regional Disaster Risk Assessment for RSTC's review. The review period is two weeks (from December 14 to December 25), during which the RSTC members will provide their feedback/comments/edits. Major comments and proposals will be discussed at the second meeting on January 11, 2021. Thereafter, the Inception Report will be finalized and consortium will continue with the next steps in the assignment.

3. Participants

Around 50 participants are expected. The invited participants of the meetings include:

- Members of the RSTC (3 representatives from each Central Asian country),
- National Coordinators for Sendai Framework Program (1 from each Central Asian country),
- Representatives of the UNDRR in the Central Asian Region,
- Representatives of the European Union Delegations in the Central Asian Region,
- Members of the consortium led by RED - Risk Engineering + Development,
- Organizers and experts from the World Bank and CESDRR.

