



DISASTER RISK REDUCTION TO IMPROVE RESILIENCE OF COMMUNITIES AND INSTITUTIONS IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

ECHO AND SIX PARTNERS IN ARMENIA WORK ON COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION

Saving lives and livelihoods by preparing for natural disasters is the core principle on which the European Union has based its Disaster Preparedness Programme "DIPECHO" since 1996.

Partners in Armenia – UNDP, UNICEF, UNISDR, Armenian Red Cross Society, Save the Children and Oxfam (with its implementing partner OxyGen) – are currently implementing the 4th phase of the “Disaster Risk Reduction to Improve Resilience of Communities and Institutions in the South Caucasus” programme funded by DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

The partners unite their efforts to increase resilience of local governments, communities and state educational institutions towards disasters and climate change and strengthen national and sub-national governmental capacities in resilient and environmental friendly social and infrastructure planning, and by supporting disaster risk reduction (DRR) related dialogue, coordination and strategies that enable them to prepare for, mitigate and respond to disasters in Armenia. They focus on applying a multi-hazard approach, developing sustainable models and advocating for their replication nationwide to increase the overall country resilience, including the awareness, preparedness and capacity to respond to shocks and stresses.



Emergency situation simulation exercise

All the programme partner organizations work in close collaboration with civil society organizations, private sector, regional emergency teams, local and national governmental authorities and decision makers, primarily with the DRR National Platform, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Ministry of Territorial Administration and Ministry of Education to ensure and contribute to strengthening coordination among the key DRR actors in Armenia.



SAVE THE CHILDREN – The organization’s action targets Syunik (Goris and Kapan), Armavir and Lori regions, as well as Yerevan, working with 5 branches of the National Institute of Education (NIE), 45 inclusive schools and 10 kindergartens. The aim of the project is to increase resilience of state educational institutions towards disasters and climate change risks. The recent project’s achievement was a 4-days TOT for 20 experts from 5 branches of the NIE followed by the trainings for 467 teachers (19 men/448 women from 45 schools and 10 kindergartens in 5 target regions). The training sessions were conducted in the period of July 29- August 9, 2016. The topic of training was “Inclusive DRR approach and its integration into school subjects curriculum”. *“I do appreciate the importance of integrating inclusive disaster risk reduction approach into different subjects”, cited Lilit Steranyan, teacher of history, N198 school.*



ARMENIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY – The ARCS project is targeting 25 communities and all 170 schools of Shirak region. The aim of the project is increased resilience of targeted vulnerable communities in Georgia and Armenia through consolidation, replication and expansion of the Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction model of Georgia, Armenia Red Cross Societies and the Danish Red Cross. The recent project’s activity was a baseline survey which was followed the Regional Baseline Training in Tbilisi, where project staff was involved. The baseline was implemented in 8 target communities involving also communities from previous phases. It is worth to mention that data collection and analysis of the household survey was implemented using electronic questionnaires based on smartphone and iPod application, which was very well welcomed by volunteers and staff, and helped to save resources avoiding paper questionnaires and allowing e-based data analysis.

OXFAM – As a part of “Supporting community resilience in the South Caucasus” programme Oxfam and its implementing partner OxyGen were invited by the Tavush region to be a member of the regional DRR sub-team in order to support the local government to prepare the DRR-related part of their Regional Development Program of 2017-2020. According to the RA Prime Minister’s order regions have to incorporate DRR into their development programs. Oxfam and OxyGen provided a full-day working session on DRR for local authorities. Making DRR an integral part of 4-year development regional plans is a success of the partners working in the Tavush region, including the project implementing partners: LORE and Bridge of Hope, as well as the result of the efforts of the DRR National Platform at the country and regional level.



UNICEF – In 2014-2014 UNICEF supported the development of the School Disaster Management (SDM) plan for Armenia, together with DIPECHO implementing partners. The plan was approved by the Ministries of Education and Science and of Emergency Situations in May 2016, signaling the need to introduce it to all schools across the country. In a meeting held by UNICEF with the heads of regional emergency and education authorities on July 24, 2016, Nikolay Grigoryan, Deputy Head of MES Rescue Service and Sendai Focal Point, emphasized that SDM guidelines are an important cornerstone for Armenia’s resilient development. Its introduction in schools should be the next key activity for UNICEF, the Ministries and other partners in the framework of the DRR National Strategy.

UNDP – “Strengthen community based resilience and environmental emergency preparedness capacities in Armenia” project is aimed to strengthen community resilience by applying a multi-hazard approach to preparedness and development targeting disaster prone area of Kapan city in Armenia. Science-based multi-risk assessment are to be carried out with the aim of modeling of GIS-based multi-risk scenarios including earthquake, landslide and environmental emergencies related to mining industry. Assessments will be undertaken as a multi-stakeholder process led by local governments and with the involvement of public and private sector. The resulting assessments will be used for developing preparedness and emergency response plan, introducing a culture of risk-informed development and strengthening partnership for investing in DRR for resilience.



UNISDR – “Support to effective implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Central Asia and the South Caucasus region Asia and South Caucasus (CASC)” programme, focuses on the establishment of regional and local coordination mechanisms, comprising national and local governments, private sector, development partners and other main stakeholders to strengthen implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. The programme aims to enhance capacities, coordination and the exchange of experiences for DRR and resilience building. The first Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Central Asia and South Caucasus was launched in Dushanbe on 12-14 July 2016 with the participation of the governments and stakeholders from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and agreed on a set of commitments for implementation of Sendai framework in the CASC region, expressed in the ‘Dushanbe Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience Building’.