

**NOR
CAP**

PART OF NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL

SCOPING THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND OTHER CASH ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

An initiative within the UNICEF-IFRC partnership on cash preparedness and social protection readiness for disaster response in hazard prone areas of Central Asia.



Photo: Flood Cash Distribution Kyrgyzstan



unicef 
for every child

DISCLAIMER AND ATTRIBUTION STATEMENT

This document has been produced with technical support from NORCAP, UNICEF ECARO and IFRC Country Cluster for Central Asia under the UNICEF-IFRC partnership “Strengthening Local and National capacities for Emergency Preparedness and Response in High Earthquake Risk and Natural Hazard Prone Countries of Central Asia”).

The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views of NORCAP, UNICEF or IFRC.

This paper was co-authored by **Stephen Abaka** - CashCap Expert Central Asia, **Vlad Cozma** - CashCap Regional Expert – Asia & Pacific, Diana Rose King, UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Social Policy Specialist, **Tigran Tovmasyan**, UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Emergency Specialist, **Olessya Zhuravleva** – CVA Officer for Central Asia, IFRC, and **Marcin Podlesny** – Regional CVA Preparedness Delegate for Europe and Central Asia, IFRC

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CONTACTS:

Stephen Abaka, sshehu@unicef.org

Diana Rose King, drking@unicef.org

Olessya Zhuravleva Olessya.Zhuravleva@ifrc.org

Tigran Tovmasyan, ttovmasyan@unicef.org

Cover photograph: @ Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan (RCSK).

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
CASHCAP	Cash Capacity
WFP	World Food Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugee
IOM	International Organization for Migration
RCS RK	Red Crescent Society of Kazakhstan
RCST	Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan
RCSK	Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan
NRCST	National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan
RCSU	Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan
MIS	Management Information System
SRSP	Shock Responsive Social Protection
SP	Social Protection
MHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
TSA	targeted Social Protection
CCRI	Child Climate Risk Index
CWG	Cash Working Group
FSP	Financial Service Provider
CoES	Committee of Emergency Situation
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
NDRM	National Disaster Risk Management
SASP	State Agency for Social Protection
REACT	Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team
CESDRR	Center for Emergency Situation and Disaster Risk Reduction
RCO	Resident Coordinators Office
IACP	Inter Agency Contingency Plan
DCC	Development Coordination Council
MEB	Minimum Expenditure Basket
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
TOR	Terms of Reference
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UN	United Nations

About NORCAP

NORCAP works to improve aid to better protect and empower people affected by crisis and climate change. We do this by providing expertise and solutions to humanitarian, development and peace-building partners.

NORCAP works in two complementary ways to improve aid:

- We provide targeted expertise to strengthen our partners' response.
- We collaborate with partners to develop solutions to un-met gaps and challenges.

NORCAP is a part of the Norwegian Refugee Council.

CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY	6
2. PART 1: BACKGROUND	8
3. PART 2: OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH OF THE SCOPING EXERCISE	9
4. PART 3: REGIONAL OVERVIEW	12
4.1. REGIONAL RISK PROFILES	12
5. PART 4: TAJIKISTAN	14
5.1. OVERVIEW OF RISKS	14
5.2. NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT	15
5.3. NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION	16
5.4. SCOPING FINDINGS	17
6. PART 5: KYRGYZSTAN	26
6.1. OVERVIEW OF RISKS	26
6.2. NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT	27
6.3 .NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION	28
6.4.SCOPING FINDINGS	29
7. PART 6: KAZAKHSTAN	34
7.1.OVERVIEW OF RISKS	34
7.2.NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT	35
7.3.NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION	35
7.4.SCOPING FINDINGS	37

8. PART 7: UZBEKISTAN	42
8.1.OVERVIEW OF RISKS	42
8.2.NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT	43
8.3.NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION	44
8.4.SCOPING FINDINGS	46
9. PART 8: TURKMENISTAN	49
9.1.OVERVIEW OF RISKS	49
9.2.NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT	50
9.3.NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION	50
9.4.SCOPING FINDINGS	50
10. KEY FINDINGS ACROSS ALL FIVE COUNTRIES	53
11. BIBLIOGRAPHY	54

1. SUMMARY

The partnership between UNICEF and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Central Asia includes a focus on strengthening shock-responsive social protection (SRSP) systems and cash preparedness. This requires the careful planning and coordination, both within the partnership and with governments and other humanitarian groups at local and national levels. This is to promote the use and coordination of shock-responsive social protection and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies, to promote sustainable, localised approaches, to avoid duplication in assistance, and to ensure help reaches those affected by shocks.

NORCAP/CashCap, as a neutral partner, helps bring different organizations together, ensuring complementarity between mandates and planned interventions. NORCAP/CashCap's contribution overall, via its neutral inter-agency mandate, aims to support this partnership and others involved in social protection and cash assistance during emergencies, ensuring smoother, more effective interventions.

In 2024, a Cashcap standby partner was deployed to Central Asia; the first task was to conduct a scoping exercise to identify priority actions per country and regional level, related to the use and coordination of cash assistance in emergencies in Central Asia. Whilst there are differences at the country level outlined in the following report, key findings of this scoping that cut across the five countries are:

- **The need for a common understanding of SRSP and cash assistance.** Stakeholders –whether individual, country, and organization/agency - had different types of understanding about Social Protection, SRSP and cash assistance in emergencies. This lack of consistency makes it hard to promote and coordinate these approaches effectively and could lead to malpractice (i.e. attempts to align transfer values which have different objectives¹).

- **Institutionalising Social Protection and Cash Assistance in emergency planning.** Although efforts have been made to strengthen social protection systems and incorporate cash-based interventions during emergencies, gaps remain. There is still a need to institutionalize these approaches within core emergency planning documents (e.g., inter-agency humanitarian contingency plans, or Governmental contingency plans). This is further hindered by often limited coordination between emergency ministries and social protection agencies.

- **Opportunities to advance SRSP and cash assistance in a non-IASC context:** Despite being prone to numerous shocks, Central Asia it is not typically considered an Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) setting. This presents an opportunity to focus on strengthening national and localized approaches to emergency response. However, international actors often revert to assumptions and practice typical of more fragile contexts, for example developing parallel humanitarian cash systems before evaluating the readiness of na-

¹ Social protection programmes have different objectives to the use of social protection or cash transfers in emergencies, and do not necessarily need to be the same.

SUMMARY

tional social protection systems, or before exploring opportunities to work with localized approaches. This potential to align efforts with local systems is underutilized.

- **Tailoring SRSP and the coordination of cash in emergencies to each context:** The scoping exercise identified that different ways of coordinating the use of SRSP and cash in emergencies are emerging – from more traditional development forum and CWGs in Tajikistan, to a government-led taskforce to coordinate SRSP and emergency cash activities in Turkmenistan.

- **The need for better documentation in the different countries for enhanced cross-subregional engagement and exchanges.** Different countries

have advanced different topics, which are unique to the Central Asia context. There is an opportunity for better documentation of these different topics, to cross-fertilise best practices, noting that there is no-one-size-fits-all approach to coordination in the different countries.

- **Lack of Capacity for Cash Coordination in Non-IASC Settings:** There is a capacity gap when it comes to enabling effective cash coordination in non-IASC settings, where traditional humanitarian capacities may be less prevalent. Strengthening local capacity and coordination mechanisms for national response systems is essential to ensure sustainable approaches in this context.



Photo: The Scoping team at the Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction (CES-DRR), Almaty- Kazakhstan
@IFRC Central Asia

2. PART 1: BACKGROUND

Since 2019, UNICEF and IFRC have established a strategic partnership, with the financial support from the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) within the framework of its Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance-funded programme, on “Strengthening Local and National Capacities for Emergency Preparedness and Response in High Earthquake Risk and Natural Hazard Prone Countries of Central Asia” *

* BHA/USAID supported the partnership until January 2025

• Since 2021, this has included a key component on strengthening shock-responsive social protection systems and cash preparedness. This includes working together to improve the preparedness of national governments (Ministries of Emergency Situations and Social Welfare/Protection are the key government counterparts) and institutions by supporting the coordination, governance, financing and/or programme design for social protection in emergencies.

• UNICEF and IFRC are also working to improve the preparedness of national Red Crescent Societies and other partners in disaster-prone areas so cash assistance can be quickly scaled up in a complementary manner, where government capacities are exceeded.

In addition, United Nations (UN) agencies and humanitarian and development partners in Tajikistan have been exploring opportunities for cash assistance during emergencies and observed the need for alignment among all actors to increase effectiveness and efficiency.

• As a result, the UN Country Team in Tajikistan initiated the establishment of an Interagency Cash Working Group (CWG) in 2020, and in late 2021 a joint request was put to NORCAP/Cashcap for an interagency technical advisor to support the CWG in Tajikistan.

• The CashCap deployment included a sub-regional role extending support to other cash focal points and coordination forums in Central Asia. An inter-agency CWG is now functional in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Since May 2024, at the request of UNICEF and IFRC, the CashCap expert has transitioned to a sub-regional role, covering all five of the Central Asian countries Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

• The anchor of this request is to support the UNICEF and IFRC partnership, which includes a focus on supporting governments in the five countries with cash preparedness actions related to social protection and disaster risk management.

• Beyond this, the CashCap expert is also deployed to support with the coordination of other cash activities in the sub-region.

As part of this new Cashcap support, in May-July 2024, a scoping exercise was conducted to identify priority actions per country and regional level, related to the use and coordination of cash assistance in emergencies in Central Asia.

This report provides a summary of the scoping exercise.

What is CashCap?

CashCap is a part of NORCAP, the Norwegian Refugee Council's global provider of expertise to the humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding sectors.

CashCap consists of a diverse range of experienced cash and markets experts, supported by a full-time global response team and broad Steering Committee. This specialized project offers inter-agency support, independent of agency-specific agendas. This ensures our experts are trusted as neutral by all parties involved. CashCap's long-term goal is for quality Cash Assistance to be available and accessible to all who need it. CashCap works with partners to improve the quality of support provided to people in need by enabling stronger accountability, choice and inclusion within their cash and voucher programs.

For more information about CashCap and the services provided, please visit the website.

<https://www.nrc.no/norcap>

3. PART 2: OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH OF THE SCOPING EXERCISE

Scoping rationale: This exercise is looking at how to increase the use and coordination of shock-responsive social protection and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies, including the linkages between Disaster Risk Management and Social Protection systems. Therefore, the scope is focusing on identifying and mapping the status quo, the challenges, and the entry points to improve the use and coordination of shock-responsive social protection (SRSP) and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies in Central Asia.

Scoping objectives:

- 1) To map the stakeholders involved in the design and/or delivery of SRSP and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies.
- 2) To understand the coordination structures and landscape per country for the delivery of SRSP and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies, and how to strengthen these structures.
- 3) To identify the interest by development and humanitarian agencies and government entities in improving the use and coordination of SRSP and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies, and types of inter-agency activities that can be potentially offered or supported by CashCap,
- 4) To identify the capacity needs of actors engaged in the design and/or delivery of SRSP and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies, and areas requiring support.

5) To identify priority areas of work for strengthening the use and coordination of shock-responsive social protection and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies and discuss the added value and challenges of for CashCap in supporting areas of work.

Methodology

The methodology for this scoping mission considered the following:

- Qualitative consultations using a standard interview format (27 interviews)
- Online survey (26 responses)
- Relevant bibliographic review

Organisations who participated in the scoping exercise by country:

- Tajikistan: UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, IOM, Acted, Mission East, RCST, IFRC
- Kazakhstan: UNICEF, WFP, RCO, RCS RK
- Kyrgyzstan: WFP, UNICEF, Acted, RCSK
- Uzbekistan: UNICEF, IFRC, RCSU, WB, RCO
- Turkmenistan: UNICEF, IFRC, NRCST
- Central Asia Sub-Regional: UNICEF, IFRC, CESDRR

Scoping Limitations:

- The number of stakeholders consulted may not fully represent the diverse perspectives and experiences per country, potentially limiting the comprehensiveness of the findings.
- In some instances, data and information were limited or not readily available, affecting the depth of analysis.
- The scoping exercise was conducted within a limited timeframe, which may have restricted the ability to capture all relevant insights and detailed feedback from stakeholders.
- Language differences and the need for translation may have influenced the clarity and interpretation of responses.
- Certain political and cultural factors may have affected the openness and willingness of stakeholders to share information and perspectives.
- Not all four thematic areas listed below could be analysed to the same degree, due to available data and interview answers

Structuring the scoping findings: Four priority thematic areas were identified to structure the findings of the report:

PART 2: OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH OF THE SCOPING EXERCISE

THEMATIC AREA	KEY COMPONENTS
<p>COORDINATION</p> <p>Interministerial coordination and decision-making to enable the scale up of shock-responsive social protection and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies, and inter-agency coordination related to harmonising cash assistance between humanitarian and development actors in emergencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination between national entities and international partners • Operational coordination at national and sub-national levels • Reference material to guide coordination among agencies (inter-ministerial, government + international partners, among national and international partners and national & sub-national level coordination) • Protocols for the activation of assistance to affected people (including social protection)
<p>PREPAREDNESS</p> <p>The readiness of national social protection systems to respond to shocks or crises and the readiness of humanitarian / development actors to implement cash transfers to affected people in emergencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative / policy frameworks (Social Protection and Disaster Risk Management) • Contingency planning or pre-determined protocols for responding to hazard events or crises using shock-responsive social protection and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies • Links between risk analysis and social protection • Links between early warning systems and social protection • Information Management Systems • Pre-registering of beneficiaries • Data sharing • Delivery mechanisms • Activation protocols
<p>TARGETING AND MODALITY SELECTION</p> <p>How are beneficiaries reached in times of emergency and the type of assistance provided</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting models (including risk-informed targeting and targeting based on rapid assessment findings) • Benefit transfer values • Modality selection • Complementarity between modalities per population groups • Complementary between responding entities
<p>CAPACITY BUILDING</p> <p>Skills, knowledge, and systems to implement shock-responsive social protection and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross learning opportunities • Best Practices • Communities of Practice • Research and evidence need

4. PART 3: REGIONAL OVERVIEW

4.1. REGIONAL RISK PROFILES.

The risk of hazards is growing for children and their families in the five countries of Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Whilst hazards are not new to the sub-region, the impacts of these hazards are increasing, as environmental degradation, the impacts of conflict, and growing inequality makes communities more vulnerable.

- According to the Subnational INFORM (Index for Risk Management) model², the main risk factors are natural hazards, particularly in mountainous areas, as well as conflict and displacement in some border regions, (e.g. Fergana Valley area), socio-economic vulnerabilities, and reduced coping capacities in the remote or less developed regions across all countries. Tajikistan is the country with the highest overall risk in Central Asia, with

all its regions categorized as high risk, followed by Kyrgyzstan which has most of its regions in the medium to high-risk categories – see Figure 1.

- According to the Child Climate Risk Index (CCRI)³, the 5 countries of Central Asia are at medium child climate risk index ranging from 4.1- 54. And the climate environmental shock is high and extremely high ranging from 6.2 high - 7.5 extremely high.

For cash-based interventions, there may need to be a sub-national level approach at aimed at improving coping capacities. This is because according to these models, Central Asia has a varied risk landscape, which implies a need for tailored approach and priorities per each of the five countries and even for different regions within countries. The priority should be the high-risk areas of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

² The Subnational INFORM model presents a risk analysis at subnational levels within Central Asian countries covering the first administrative level subdivisions. The model looks at three dimensions of risk: hazard and exposure, vulnerability, and lack of coping capacity, and uses 61 indicators to measure these dimensions and come up with value (0 to 10) per each category. Source: <https://cesdrr.org/en/inform-subnational-risk-model>.

³ The CCRI is uses data to generate new global evidence on how many children are currently exposed to climate and environmental hazards, shocks and stresses. A composite index, the CCRI brings together geographical data by analyzing 1.) exposure to climate and environmental hazards, shocks and stresses; and 2.) child vulnerability. The CCRI helps to understand and measure the likelihood of climate and environmental shocks or stresses leading to the erosion of development progress, the deepening of deprivation and/or humanitarian situations affecting children or vulnerable households and groups. Source: <https://data.unicef.org/resources/childrens-climate-risk-index-report/>

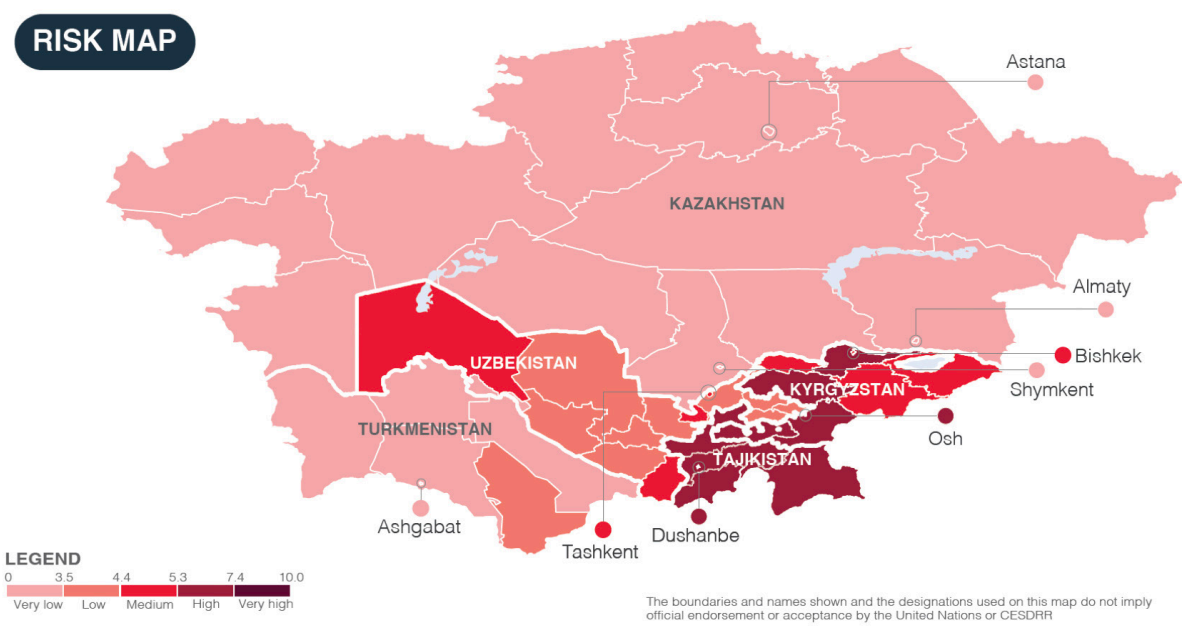


Figure 1: Subnational INFORM risk 2022



@Red Crescent Society of Kazakhstan (RCS RK).

5. PART 4: TAJIKISTAN

5.1. OVERVIEW OF RISKS.

According to the Subnational INFORM model⁴, Tajikistan is highlighted as the country with the highest overall risk in Central Asia. The country experiences multiple natural hazards such as avalanches, earthquakes, floods, mudflows and landslides every year. According to the Tajik Committee of Emergency Situation (CoES), between 1997 and 2017, approximately 150 natural disasters occurred each year. It is also situated in a seismically high-risk zone.⁵

- Tajikistan is a lower middle-income country with a population of 10 million people, 41 per cent of which are children. More than 70 per cent of the population lives in rural areas. The country has the lowest gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in the Europe and Central Asia region and remains the poorest country in Central Asia.

- All regions in Tajikistan are ranked as 'high risk' with an INFORM risk value ranging from 5.8 to 6.7 of out 10 – very high-risk levels, see Figure 2. This shows that the country is facing significant challenges across all dimensions of risk across all administrative levels, with the Mountain Badakhshon Autonomous Region (GBAO) facing the highest risk.

- Hazard & exposure is ranked high across the administrative levels, especially for natural hazards,

and vulnerability is moderate to high, with GBAO showing the highest vulnerability, including for the vulnerable groups category ranked high in GBAO. Socio-economic vulnerability appears high across all administrative levels.

- The lack of coping capacity dimension ranks high in all administrative levels, with institutional capacity of significant concern, while the infrastructure ratings are slightly better but still problematic.

- Overall observations based on the Subnational INFORM results from 2022 is that consistently high scores across all three dimensions indicate systemic challenges in DRM in Tajikistan. This is especially relevant for GBAO, the most remote region, but also for the capital Dushanbe which doesn't show much lower risk ratings than other regions, suggesting potential high risks for other urban centres in the country.

- As per the Children's Climate Risk Index, 3.9 million children are exposed to ambient air pollution, 2.8 million children exposed to heatwaves, and 2.7 million children exposed to water scarcity. Overall, 1.6 million children in Tajikistan are at high risk of climate-related disasters, resulting in a risk level of 5.4, the highest in Europe and Central Asia.

⁴ Source: <https://cesdrr.org/en/inform-subnational-risk-model/>

⁵ Source: <https://www.unicef.org/tajikistan/emergencies-and-disaster-risk-reduction/>

INFORM Risk Model- Tajikistan

COUNTRY (a-z)	FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL (a-z)	Natural (0-10)	Human (0-10)	HAZARD & EXPOSURE (0-10)	Socio-Economic Vulnerability (0-10)	Vulnerable Groups (0-10)	VULNERABILITY (0-10)	Institutional (0-10)	Infrastructure (0-10)	LACK OF COPING CAPACITY (0-10)	INFORM RISK (0-10)	RISK CLASS (V.Low-V.High)	Rank (1-83)	Reliability Index (*) (0-10)
Tajikistan	Districts of Republican Subordination	8.2	6.7	7.5	5.8	5.3	5.6	6.9	5.5	6.3	6.4	High	2	7.5
	Dushanbe (city)	5.1	6.7	6.0	5.3	5.0	5.2	7.2	4.6	6.1	5.8	High	4	7.6
	Mountain Badakhshon Autonomous Region (GBAO)	8.3	6.7	7.6	6.0	7.0	6.5	6.6	5.6	6.1	6.7	High	1	7.5
	Khatlon	8.2	6.7	7.5	5.9	4.7	5.3	7.1	5.3	6.3	6.3	High	3	7.5
	Sughd	7.7	6.7	7.2	5.3	3.3	4.4	7.0	5.3	6.2	5.8	High	4	7.5

Figure 2: NAME OF THE IMAGE BELOW.⁶

5.2. NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT.

The National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Tajikistan was established in March 2012 as part of the State Commission for Emergency Situations. This platform serves as a consultative and advisory body, coordinating the efforts of various government entities and international organizations working on disaster risk management.

- The National Platform aims to strengthen institutional and legal frameworks, improve inter-ministerial

coordination, and integrate efforts in predicting and mitigating disaster risks. It is supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the Swiss Office for Cooperation.

- The National Platform serves also as a coordinating body for disaster risk reduction activities in Tajikistan and leads a unified DRR policy focusing on the reduction of human and economic losses. The National Platform also provides a mechanism for consulting on integrating DRR into development strategies, plans and programs.

⁶ Source: <https://cesdrr.org/en/inform-subnational-risk-model>

National DRR Platform Core Functions

- Developing proposals and recommendations on the formulation and implementation of a unified state policy on DRR.
- Coordination, analysis and advice on priority areas of DRR, requiring concerted action at the national level.
- Ensuring progress towards the goals of DRR.
- Engaging different sectors of society in the discussion on DRR, Coordinating the establishment and operation of thematic working groups based on the knowledge, experience and opinions of all relevant stakeholders.
- Monitoring implementation of recommendations and decisions on DRR by organizations, programs and projects.
- Cooperating with regional, international, donor agencies and specialized organizations on DRR.
- Transferring knowledge from international experience in DRR to the Tajik context.
- Emphasizing the coordination and cooperation of ministries and departments with respect to Tajikistan's obligations as set out in relevant treaties and agreements.
- Advocacy for disaster risk reduction at different levels.

Source: National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Tajikistan https://www.untj.org/files/Publications/DRMP/DRR_and_Development/National%20Platform%20for%20Disaster%20Risk%20Reduction.pdf

5.3. NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

Tajikistan has a comprehensive social protection system in place, which includes elements of social insurance, social assistance, labour activation and social services.⁷ Social security interventions focus primarily on contributory pensions for the elderly, the disabled, and survivors, comprise the largest share of the total SP expenditures (74%). Other contributory interventions include benefits for temporary loss of work due to sickness, maternity, and unemployment. According to the 2019 official statistics as reported by the World Bank, close to 550,000 people (about 6.1% of the population) were covered by social security.

- **Among the social assistance programs, the Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) is the largest and it is a non-contributory assistance that is based on vulnerability matrix.**

The TSA is the country's flagship program that provides cash benefits to 238,970 households / about 15 percent of the population, targeting the most vulnerable households, in all 68 cities and districts of the country. The TSA benefit is adjusted for inflation and in 2021 was amounted to TJS480 (about USD44) per household/per year. In 2022 it is set up at TJS512.

- **With the national expansion of the TSA in mid-2020, two other social assistance programs (energy compensation and allowance for school-**

⁷ Social Protection and Safety Nets for Enhanced Food Security and Nutrition in Tajikistan 2018 https://socialprotection.org/sites/default/files/publications_files/WFP-0000104536.pdf

children from poor families) were integrated into the TSA. The total TSA planned budget for 2021 was TJS110 million (about USD10 million), and in 2022 the planned budget is TJS128 million. The program uses the Proxy Means Test (PMT) and Community-Based (CB) targeting tools and operates a centralized electronic database of records of beneficiaries under the management of the State Agency for Social Protection (SASP).⁸

- Since 2017, the government has advanced its work on shock-responsive social protection (SRSP), largely in the context of floods and the COVID-19 pandemic and is now broadening this work to other hazards and approaches (see more on this in the preparedness section below).

5.4. SCOPING FINDINGS

COORDINATION

There are different coordination platforms for emergencies, social protection, both government-led and also for international actors. The coordination of national responses to emergencies is through the National Platform on DRR, as mentioned in the section above, however social protection is coordinated through a government working group (#08) under the National Development Strategy. For development partners coordination, a separate working group on the SP under the Development Coordination Council is set up, which covers work on SRSP. For international humanitarian actors, the primary platform established is called REACT, and the use of cash assistance is coordinated under a technical working group – an inter-agency Cash Working Group - of this platform; this also covers SRSP.

In 2001, international humanitarian actors established the REACT⁹ as a voluntary (with offi-

cial and unofficial memberships) structure for coordination of international disaster response.

Since its establishment, REACT's structure and mandate underwent significant changes and adjustments in line with the evolving operational environment and existing needs in the country.

- In 2003, the REACT chairmanship was transferred to the **Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence (CoES)** of the Government of Tajikistan. However, this remaining structure and its members is largely comprised of non-governmental actors.¹⁰

- In addition, in 2006 the **UN Resident Coordinator** (2006) was named as co-chair, and in 2008 there was the approval of **Statement of Common Understanding by REACT** partners.

- The REACT plays the central role in coordination of disaster prevention and risk reduction as well as disaster response at all levels and particularly those focused on the community level.

- REACT is composed of members, Chairs, Secretariats national and regional groups, sectoral and technical working groups, a rapid response team and a management group. Any organization involved in disaster risk management activities in Tajikistan that accepts the Statement of Common Understanding is considered member of REACT.

- REACT also incorporates eight **Coordination Groups** covering specific sectoral activities related to disaster risk management. These groups and the leading agencies are as follows: Food Security WFP and FAO, Shelter and non-food items (including temporary camp management): UNDP (IFRC), Health: WHO, Water and sanitation: UNICEF, Education: UNICEF and Save the Children, Logistics: WFP, Protection: UNHCR and

⁸ Adaptive Social Protection System Assessment (The World Bank Report-unpublished)

⁹ Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team https://www.untj.org/files/Publications/DRMP/DRR_and_Development/Rapid%20Emergency%20Assessment.pdf

¹⁰ Apart from COES, all the over 45 members of REACT are non-governmental actors as seen in the REACT as seen here on Annex A of this docs [HCPT CAR Info Bulletin \(untj.org\)](#)

REACT members recognize that:

- The Government of Tajikistan has a sovereign responsibility to assist the population of the country in times of disaster, and to reduce the impact of disasters before they occur.
- The Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence is a central executive body, which ensures the coordination of a range of activities during the planning and implementation of disaster risk reduction, and the preparation and protection of the population, economic objects and the territory of the Republic of Tajikistan from the consequences of natural and technological disasters.
- The humanitarian imperative places a specific responsibility on REACT members to assist the Government of Tajikistan in effectively respond to disasters in Tajikistan.
- Disaster risk reduction is more efficient than post-disaster response in reducing the impact of a disaster.
- Transparency and collaboration are critical to disaster response.
- The flow of information on disaster impacts and response operations is critical for transparency and collaboration.
- The “Sphere” Standards and other best practice in humanitarian assistance should guide efforts to lessen the impact of disasters in Tajikistan.
- The disaster survivor should be consulted in the provision of disaster-related humanitarian assistance.

According to REACT the Statement of Common Understanding

Early Recovery: UNDP. There are no government co-leads for these groups.

- REACT members recognize the need to **integrate the UN Cluster approach** into REACT operations before and during disasters. When the UN Cluster approach is activated in Tajikistan, the **Sectoral Coordination Groups** are considered as “clusters” for the purposes of the UN Cluster ap-

proach but will continue to be an integral part of REACT.¹¹

- REACT members can establish **technical working groups on specific topics** on temporary or permanent basis and can include members from REACT as well as individuals or organizations external to REACT and designate a chair by mutual consent.

¹¹ Statement of Common Understanding Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team REACT – Tajikistan https://untj.org/files/REACT/statement_eng_sep08%20_291009.pdf

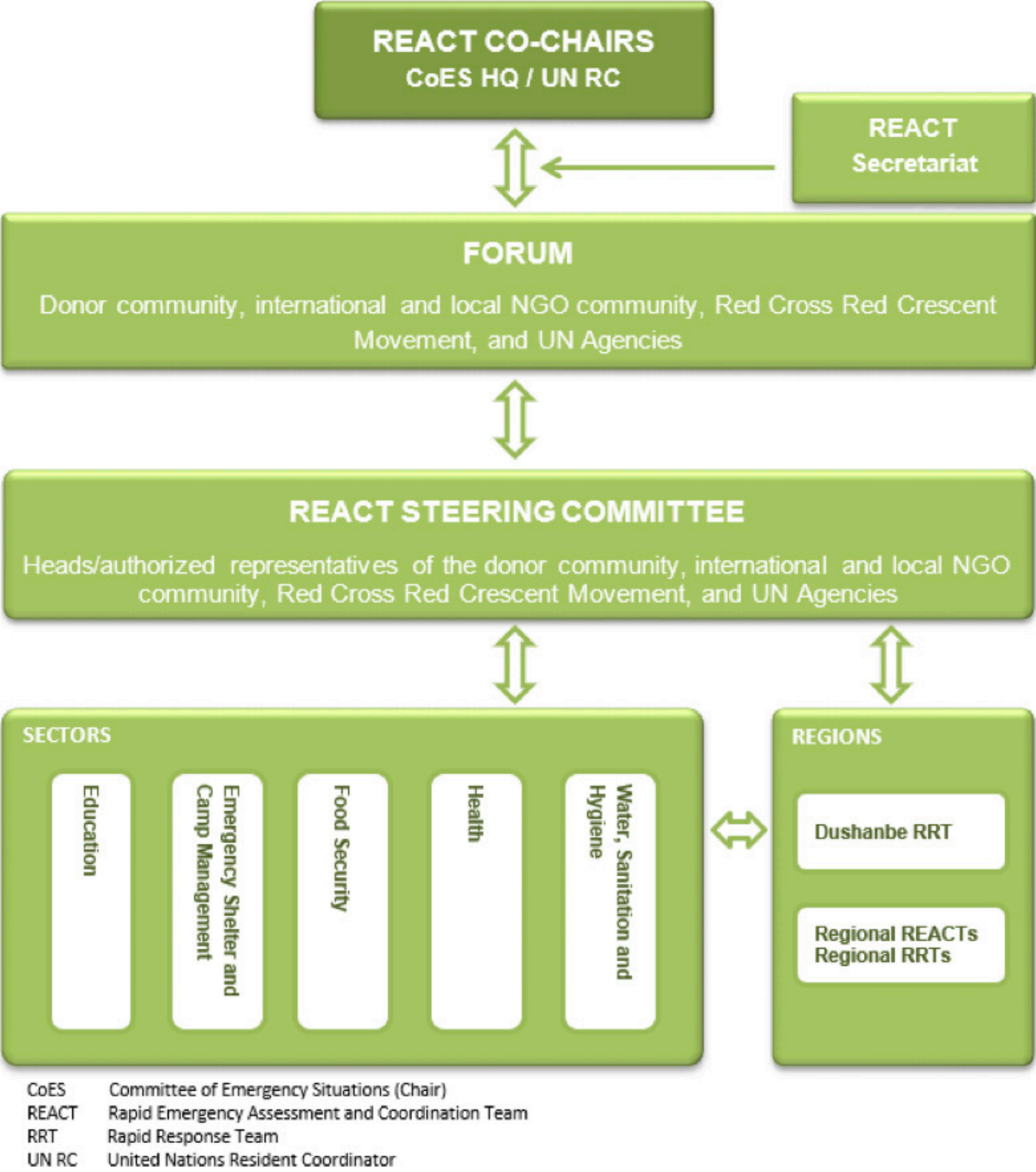


Figure 3: The Structure of REACT in Tajikistan.¹²

¹² Source: REACT IACP Earthquake 2022

The primary platform where humanitarian cash interventions are coordinated is the **Inter-Agency Cash Working Group**. This initially started during COVID 19 and became fully established in January 2023, made possible by the coordination of NORCAP/CashCap and the leadership of the CWG group, UNICEF and WFP as co-chairs.

- **The Tajikistan CWG currently has 12 member agencies and organizations¹³ and is co-chaired by WFP and UNICEF.** The CWG is operating as a technical working group under the Rapid Emergency Response Coordination Team (REACT) - whilst this is reflected in the REACT statement of common understanding (section F) which states that members can establish technical working groups on specific topics on a temporary or permanent basis, since the establishment of the CWG, the REACT documents have not been updated to reflect it. The CWG also operates as a working group under the Social Protection Development Coordination Council (DCC).

- **The participation, leadership and experience of the government and national NGOs in inter-agency cash coordination is limited,** with only the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan actively participating. Previously some government focal points from the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Committee of Emergency Situations, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture attended the CWG training on core cash and voucher assistance skills.

- **Whilst there are regular meetings and information-sharing practices in place, there is still room for improvement.** The CWG is utilized during emergencies, but participation is lower during times of non-emergency (which is when preparedness activities take place).

The **National Development Strategy Working Group 8**, coordinated by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) and chaired by the deputy minister of Health and Social Protection, ensures the coordination of the government agencies involved in social protection. Its main objective is to ensure the coordination of efforts, objectives, and goals highlighted in NDS 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on social protection, sectoral and socioeconomic local development programs, and the budgetary process. It facilitates cooperation and coordination between state agencies, UN organizations, development partners, and other stakeholders.

Development partners coordinate on social protection, including shock-responsive social protection under the Development Coordination Council DCC-Social Protection Working Group. This is chaired by UNICEF, and part of its functions is also facilitating linkages between humanitarian cash and the national social protection system. From time to time, the DCC Social Protection WG meetings are also attended by the government ministries, departments and agencies.

- In Tajikistan, there is a synergy and good coordination between the CWG and the DCC-SP working group as they have a shared leadership (with UNICEF as the chair for the DCC-SP WG is one of the co-chairs of the Inter-Agency CWG), with shared objectives and joint initiatives. Example was the recent training and capacity building in collaboration with CALP Network on Linking Social Protection with Humanitarian Cash Transfers conducted in Dushanbe in February 2024 with participants from government, such as Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Committee of Emergency Situation and other national, international agencies.

¹³ Key stakeholders and members of the inter-agency Tajikistan CWG are WFP, UNICEF, World Bank, Acted, IOM, UNHCR, IRFC, RCST, Mission East, AKDN OCHA and UN Women.

PREPAREDNESS

There are several legislative and institutional frameworks developed in Tajikistan for preparedness and response. This is done according to the multiple hazards and disaster scenarios for the country, such as earthquake, floods, landslides, avalanches, and mudflows.

Relevant legislative and institutional frameworks:

- Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Law of Civil protection (2012)
- Law of Fire Safety (2004)
- Law of Protection of the population and Territories from Natural and Technological Emergency Situation (2004)
- Natural Disaster Risk Management Strategy (2019-2030)
- National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
- Committee of Emergency Situation and Civil Defence
- International Cooperation and Agreement
- Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CMDRM) initiatives

Preparedness work is also ongoing across different non-governmental actors, such as UN, international and national actors like UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Acted, IFRC, Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan (RCST), Mission East and others. Most of these organizations have their own established emergency response plan (EPR) in place with items prepositioned for emergency response.

Inter-agency preparedness work includes:

- The establishment of coordination leadership structure and framework Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team (REACT).

- Development of Inter-Agency Contingency plan on small/medium natural disaster and large-scale natural calamity 2014-2015.¹⁴

- Development/update of the Inter-Agency Contingency plan (IACP) for Earthquake Scenario (July 2021) and currently working on IACP mudflows scenario.

- Development of Inter-Agency Contingency plan (IACP) for Refugee Influx Scenario (August 2021)

- The coordination of the cash components in these contingency plans, identifying preparedness gaps and priority preparedness actions at an inter-agency level will be essential to ensure a coherent approach and complementarity with the national response.

¹⁴ [Tajikistan-IACP-2014-15.pdf \(untj.org\)](https://untj.org/Tajikistan-IACP-2014-15.pdf).

Non-government stakeholders are generally very proactive with advocating and undertaking preparedness activities for the use of cash assistance in Tajikistan. These stakeholders actively promote cash and voucher transfers as a key tool in the provision of humanitarian and development assistance, advocate for implementing large-scale cash assistance programs and advocate for shock-responsive social protection and/or linkages between parallel cash assistance social protection systems. This is demonstrated through the workstreams of different actors, as well as the workplan under the Inter-Agency Cash Working Group. For example, the CWG has:

- A yearly workplan,
- A published Minimum Expenditure Basket and Transfer Value Advisory document,
- A conducted capacity gap analysis and has a capacity building plan
- A completed Core Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) Skills for Programme Staff training and Linking Social Protection with Humanitarian CVA, and is currently developing a country cash assistance dashboard and Financial Service Provider (FSP) assessment.

The government successfully scaled up social protection in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and has a portfolio of work to advance shock-responsive social protection.

- The country has an SRSP readiness assessment (conducted in 2017), SRSP is included in the National Social Protection Strategy with a linked costed plan of action (2024-26). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the TSA successfully expanded temporarily to reach affected population with cash assistance. This work has been supported by UNICEF, and in 2024, the country is also de-

veloping an adaptive and shock responsive social protection framework, with corresponding analysis to inform contingency actions and financing for SRSP.

The government of Tajikistan has consistently demonstrated its unwavering commitment to the social protection sector, including in disasters as emphasized by the President in his annual address to Parliament in December 2023.

- “Over the past seven years, more than 21.9 billion somoni (approx. USD 2 billion) have been allocated from the state budget to support vulnerable groups of the population through the payment of pensions, allowances and compensations, maintenance of social welfare institutions and other obligations, including 4 billion somoni in 2023 alone. During this period, 2 billion 70 million somoni were allocated only for the payment of social assistance for poor families and disabled children, as well as one-time compensation to citizens affected by disasters. In the next three years, the total volume of state budget expenditures for social spheres will be increased, and 61 billion somoni will be directed to this purpose.”¹⁵

Tajikistan has been selected as part of the initial group of 30 countries under the “Early Warnings for All” (EW4All) initiative, launched by the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General in March 2022.

- The initiative is aimed at strengthening (i) disaster risk knowledge, (ii) observations and forecasting, (iii) warning dissemination and communication, and (iv) disaster preparedness and response. UNICEF is supporting linkages between social protection and these systems.

In 2019, there was also a signed agreement with Government and other key partners for the use of social protection and cash assistance. In 2019 a letter of agreement was signed between five parties

¹⁵ President in his annual address to Parliament in December 2023.

(the Committee on Emergency Situations and Civil Defense – COES; the Ministry of Health and Social Protection – HOHSPP; Amonat Bank; the Red Crescent; and UNICEF) to support the implementation of Social Protection in emergency situations.

- However, there remains gaps in the social protection system being systematically used to respond to other emergencies. There are planned advocacy and support by the Inter-Agency Cash Working Group through the co-chairs to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and the Committee of Emergency Situation to strengthen the government approach to the use of shock-responsive social protection and cash assistance in emergencies through participation and involve in the CWG activities.

There are other preparedness gaps, particularly as it relates to Information Management Systems that can quickly include newly affected populations; the pre-registering of beneficiaries that are affected by shocks; and data sharing protocols.

- In addition, whilst national social protection data is rich, there are missed opportunities for its systematic use in emergency responses. Currently, the data managed by the Ministry and the CoES operate separately; limited coordination between these entities mean that it is not systematically utilized for coordinated emergency response efforts. With respect to knowledge management, there is limited or no published documentation and evidencing on cash activities in Tajikistan, which risks institutional memory loss of key lessons learned.

TARGETING AND MODALITY SELECTION

In Tajikistan, targeting modalities are defined using different approaches by government and other actors. For government programs like the social assistance, targeting is based on specific target groups and eligibility criteria.

- In the **TSA program**, the most vulnerable households are considered for this support which currently has about 15% of the population of Tajikistan. The program uses the Proxy Means Test (PMT) and Community-Based (CB) targeting tools and operates a centralized electronic database of beneficiaries under the management of the State Agency for Social Protection. There is currently no standardised government target, nor standardised government transfer value, for the use of social protection in emergencies.

- During humanitarian emergency responses implemented by non-governmental actors, whilst geographical targeting is mostly considered, where there are limited funds certain vulnerability criteria can be introduced but within the affected area of disaster or shock.

- There are certain practices in Tajikistan where national, international and UN agencies use exclusively the list from the national social protection for response or uses the list and additionally other affected population who are not part of the national social registry.

- In situations where the national social protection data is not used, the targeting approach still involve the local community leadership called the Jamoat who lead the process of identification irrespective of the project objectives.

- The coordination on targeting is not seen as effective especially across agencies. There are no harmonized cash targeting tools, no record of 4Ws or similar matrix. This was evident in the last border conflict response in 2021 where cases of assistance duplication occurred. The Inter-Agency Cash Working Group is currently working on a harmonized cash dashboard that captures who does what and where to support better coordination among actors.

With respect to benefit levels, the TSA system provides a low amount over a long period, un-

SCOPING THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND OTHER CASH ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

like the typical humanitarian cash transfer, which is usually for a short duration and plans to cover large needs per time. Whilst an MEB has been conducted this is used by humanitarian actors; there is no defined transfer value for social protection in emergencies.

There is a lack of private sectors partnerships, such as with FSPs, banks and Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) for supporting cash assistance in emergencies.

- There is always a low number of banks and financial institutions responding to tenders related to engaging FSPs. After 2 years of unsuccessful attempts to establish Framework Agreements (FA) with FSPs, RCST succeeded in 2024 to attract 3 banks for participation in tendering - Alif Bank, First Microfinance Bank (FMFB) and Orient Bank. UNICEF is currently supporting a Financial Service Provider (FSP) assessment to see how to better address the gaps and options for the improvement of provider selection for social assistance and emergency programmes. It is worth noting that the national legislation does not allow for bank transfers to refugees.

CAPACITY BUILDING

There have been several initiatives and ongoing collaborations between organizations and the government aiming to build the capacity on the use of shock-responsive social protection and cash assistance. For example, the training organised by the CWG which included international partners as well as focal points from five governmental ministries and two national organisations. Some interviews during the scoping exercise noted that national partners and government have more experience with the delivery of traditional in-kind assistance during emergency than with cash assistance.

During the interviews, several thematic areas were identified as primary capacity need and areas where support is required. These include Mar-

ket Assessment and Monitoring, Cash Feasibility Assessment and Response Analysis, Financial Service Provider Assessment and Engagement and Cash for Anticipatory Action.

It was noted in general there are limited capacities and few cash technical experts in most non-governmental agencies.

KEY FINDINGS

- Social protection is coordinated through a government working group (#08) under the National Development Strategy.
- For development partners coordination, a separate working group on Social Protection is coordinated under the Development Coordination Council co-chaired by UNICEF, which manages SRSP coordination.
- For humanitarian actors, the primary platform established is called REACT where a technical working group called the inter-agency cash working group manages cash coordination.
- There are several collaboration and joint initiatives between the SP working group and inter-agency CWG that strengthen SRSP.
- Coordination between social protection agencies and emergency ministries is often ad-hoc rather than systematic. This hinders the systematic use of social protection in national response plans.

OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SRSP AND CASH IN EMERGENCIES

In Tajikistan, there are key opportunities to strengthen the use and coordination of SRSP and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies. These include:

- **Improving the coordination between social protection and emergency actors:** There are different

platforms for social protection (SP) and emergency response which have limited linkages. The national emergency response is coordinated through the National DRR Platform, while social protection is managed through separate government and development partner working groups. Coordination between social protection agencies and emergency ministries is often ad-hoc rather than systematic. This hinders the systematic use of social protection in national response plans.

- **Integrating social protection in emergency plans:** Social protection is not fully institutionalized in core emergency planning frameworks, like contingency plans, which limits its use during disaster response.

- **Addressing gaps in the governments capacity to implement shock-responsive social protection responses:** This includes financing for the government to scale up shock-responsive social protection in emergencies (although there are workstreams to address these gaps).

- **Focusing on capacity gaps using cash in emergencies:** National and international partners are more experienced with in-kind assistance in emergencies, leading to limited activation of cash assistance in emergencies. Key gaps include financial service provider (FSP) engagement and partnerships with the private sector, market assessments, and cash feasibility analysis.

- **Agreement on the coordination of targeting and transfer values.** Whilst some international actors use social protection beneficiary lists, there is limited consensus on coordinated targeting approaches in emergencies. Whilst an MEB has been conducted this is used by humanitarian actors; there is no defined transfer value for social protection in emergencies.

- **Prioritising preparedness activities, including raising funds for these activities.** It was noted that financial support for preparedness activities tends to be limited, which constrain the ability of

the government and other actors to undertake the above activities.

- **Advocacy efforts with all partners and ensuring further engagement and participation of local actors.** It was noted there is an opportunity to focus on developing unified advocacy messages that clearly communicate local priorities, facilitating coordination and resource mobilization across all partners. This would include the localization of the cash working group, and stronger leadership of the Government over broader coordination of cash activities.

IMMEDIATE WORKPLAN PRIORITIES

- Strengthen CWG through development of inclusive TOR and workplan, SOPs, template, guidelines, and harmonized documents.

- Capacity building of actors including local and national government.

- Encourage engagement of national government and local actors in participating and taking on leadership roles of the CWG.

- Develop common advocacy messages and advocacy on cash and its advantages to the government targeting governments policy and decision makers, and to raise financial support for preparedness activities.

- Conduct FSP and payment mechanism platform assessment.

TO CONTINUE EXPLORING IN TAJIKISTAN

- Joint initiatives among cash actors like assessments, capacity building/training, advocacy.

- Explore and support the potential of local or government-led cash working group.

6. PART 5: KYRGYZSTAN

6.1. OVERVIEW OF RISKS.

According to the Subnational INFORM model,¹⁶ Kyrgyzstan has the second-highest risk profile of the sub-region, although its risk distribution is more varied than other countries, with rankings for sub-divisions ranging from medium to very high.

- Kyrgyzstan is a middle-income country with a population of 6,735,347 million people, 36.5 per cent of which are children.

- Considering the risk distribution, Osh city and Jalal-Abad stand out in the highest risk categories. Vulnerability scores appear moderate across regions, with Osh city as highest (4.8), socio-economic vulnerability scores appear even across regions as well, but vulnerable groups scores show more variation.

- Lack of coping capacity scores are from moderate to high across Kyrgyzstan with institutional capacity of highest concern (score 5.5 to 6.6), while infrastructure rankings are varied.

- Overall observation shows that south administrative levels of Osh, Jalal-Abad, and Batken are generally higher risk than those in the north, and that urban areas of Osh and Bishkek have distinct risk profiles, with higher human hazard rankings. The highest vulnerable group scores (4.7) are in Naryn.

- The INFORM reliability index for Kyrgyzstan ranges is mostly 4.3 which indicates that the findings are more reliable than in Tajikistan but should still be treated with caution when deciding priority geographical locations for preparedness actions.

INFORM Risk Model- Kyrgyzstan

COUNTRY (a-z)	FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL (a-z)	Natural (0-10)	Human (0-10)	HAZARD & EXPOSURE (0-10)	Socio-Economic Vulnerability (0-10)	Vulnerable Groups (0-10)	VULNERABILITY (0-10)	Institutional (0-10)	Infrastructure (0-10)	LACK OF COPING CAPACITY (0-10)	INFORM RISK (0-10)	RISK CLASS (V.Low-V. High)	Rank (1-83)	Reliability Index (*) (0-10)
Kyrgyzstan	Batken	7.0	6.3	6.7	4.6	3.0	3.8	6.3	4.9	5.6	5.2	Medium	10	4.3
	Bishkek (city)	3.9	7.5	6.0	4.1	4.2	4.2	5.5	3.4	4.5	4.8	Medium	14	4.3
	Chui	4.7	6.3	5.6	4.2	3.5	3.9	6.6	4.7	5.7	5.0	Medium	11	4.3
	Issyk-Kul	6.2	6.3	6.3	4.4	2.7	3.6	5.7	5.2	5.5	5.0	Medium	11	4.3
	Jalal-Abad	8.6	6.3	7.6	4.7	2.7	3.8	6.1	5.6	5.9	5.5	High	7	4.3
	Naryn	5.6	6.3	6.0	4.4	4.7	4.6	6.0	5.0	5.5	5.3	High	9	4.3
	Osh	8.2	7.5	7.9	4.4	2.7	3.6	6.0	4.7	5.4	5.4	High	8	4.3
	Osh (city)	6.8	7.5	7.2	5.5	3.9	4.8	6.3	3.5	5.1	5.6	High	6	4.7
	Talas	5.8	6.3	6.1	4.9	2.5	3.8	5.8	5.0	5.4	5.0	Medium	11	4.3

(*) Reliability Index: 0 more reliable, 10 less reliable.

Figure 4: NAME OF THE IMAGE BELOW.¹⁷

¹⁶ Source: <https://cesdrr.org/en/inform-subnational-risk-model/>

¹⁷ Source: <https://cesdrr.org/en/inform-subnational-risk-model/>

- As per the Children's Climate Risk Index in Kyrgyzstan, the children climate risk is medium 4.5 but the climate environmental shocks are high 6.2 while the child vulnerability is low at 2.2.

6.2. NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic (MoES) is the central body of the executive state government, which is responsible for performing the tasks of population protection from natural and man-made emergency situations, prevention and response, civil defence, technological and technical safety monitoring of industry and mining, as well as fire safety.

- The Cabinet of the Kyrgyz Republic (as part of the USSR) approved the Resolution "On the State Commission on Emergency Situations" on July 1, 1991, in order to protect the population and economy infrastructure from emergencies. The Commission was transformed into the State Commission on Emergency Situations and Civil Defence (SCES CD) by the Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic on May 27, 1993. In 1996, the SCES CD was transformed into the Ministry on Emergency Situations and Civil Defence (MES CD).

- In 2001, MES CD and the Ministry of Environmental Protection were merged. As a result, the Ministry of Environment and Emergency Situations (MEES) was established. In 2005 it was transformed into the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic by the Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

- The Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic is responsible for the implementation of the state policy in prevention and elimination of natural and man-made emergencies, performance of controlling and permitting functions of the governance in the sphere of industrial safety supervision, mining supervision, hydrometeorology provision and fire protection.

There is the Inter-Ministerial Commission of Civil Protection (IMCCP), a coordination body of the National System of Civil Protection (NSCP) at the national level.

- The Prime Minister leads IMCCP and the Minister of Emergencies of the Kyrgyz Republic is his/her first deputy. Ministers, heads of government agencies, heads of regional administrations and cities are members of IMCCP. Main tasks include: To lead the implementation of unified national policy in the sphere of civil protection; To coordinate activities of ministries, state committees, administrative agencies, local administrations, local authorities, international organizations and NGOs in the development and implementation of civil protection measures in the Kyrgyz Republic.

At present, the Ministry of Emergencies undertakes a complex of organizational-legal interventions aimed to reform the current system of population protection.

- The goal of the reform is to establish and improve the civil protection system of the Kyrgyz Republic based on integration of the Standard State System of prevention and elimination of emergencies and civil protection of the Kyrgyz Republic into the State System of Civil Protection.

Key DRM laws, frameworks and programs

- **Law No 54 on Civil Protection.** This Law regulates legal relations arising in the field of civil protection of the population and the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic in emergency situations in peacetime and wartime. All citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic, foreign citizens and stateless persons residing on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic regardless of the time of their stay are subject to protection from emergency situations.
- **Law About approval of Classification of emergency situations** and criteria of their assessment in the Kyrgyz Republic of November 17, 2011, No. 733" of December 25, 2012, No. 850.
- **Law No 22 on Fire Safety.** This Law establishes legal and organizational grounds for ensuring fire safety and establishes the sphere of competence of ministries, departments, institutions, organizations and enterprises, and also of the officials and citizens in the sphere of combating fires.
- **National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (2014-2020)**
Source: (1 <https://www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEX-FAOC196590/> , 2 <https://cis-legislation.com/document.fwx?rgn=111799> and 3 Law No. 22 "On fire safety". | FAOLEX)

6.3. NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

The Kyrgyz Republic has a rather extensive social protection system. There are currently several types of social protection programs, including pensions, social insurance, medical insurance, social services and active labor market programs.

- The largest Social Assistance program is the monthly benefit for low-income families with children – Uy-bulogo komok (UBK). There are more than 15 social assistance programs that provide monetary compensation to individuals and families that meet certain eligibility criteria. These are almost all implemented by the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Migration (MLSPM) and the two largest programs provide monthly benefits for low-income families with children and one-time benefits for the

birth of child.

- Social services cover many of the provisions for at-risk children such as orphanages, care homes, and foster services. Implementation of social services is overseen in part by the Ministry of Education and Science and in part by the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Migration (MLSPM). These cover just over 10,000 people and include programs such as orphanages, care homes, and foster families. In addition, some coverage for the elderly, disabled, and at risk is included, such as care homes, personal assistants, and social procurement programs.
- Finally, in-kind assistance ensures that various housing, living, and child-raising costs are covered. Over 600,000 people are supported by free school meals, and 171,000 by energy subsidies in remote areas.

Since 2018, the government has advanced its work on shock-responsive social protection (SRSP), largely in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and is now broadening this work to other hazards and approaches (see more on this in the preparedness section below).

6.4. SCOPING FINDINGS

COORDINATION

There are different coordination platforms for emergencies, social protection, both government-led and also for international actors. The coordination of national responses to emergencies is through the IMCCP, which includes ministries responsible for social protection. For development partners coordination, a separate working group on the SP under the Development Coordination Council is set up, which covers work on SRSP. For international humanitarian actors, the primary platform established is DRCU (see below), and the use of cash assistance is coordinated under a technical working group – an inter-agency Cash Working Group - of this platform; this also covers SRSP.

The Disaster Response Coordination Unit (DRCU) manages disaster coordination in Kyrgyzstan. Established in 2008, the DRCU aims to enhance cooperation and coordination between Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, United Nations Country Team,

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other key actors for adequate and effective humanitarian response to emergency situations.

DRCU is a consultative-deliberative mechanism whose main purpose is to coordinate humanitarian response to emergencies upon the Kyrgyz Government relevant request and enhance collaboration among DRCU partners and other key actors. To accomplish the objective DRCU partners are committed to improve further existing DRCU practice:

- Establish necessary structures (groups, task forces, platforms, teams, network, etc.) by taking necessity decisions to allocate functions, responsibilities, and authority based on developed terms of references.
- Build capacity of and maintain “stand by”/readiness state of appropriate human and material resources to ensure effective and proper emergency humanitarian response, in proportion to emergency threats and risks, and needs on sites.
- Prepare and update emergency contingency plans at sectorial and inter agency level.
- Timely share and disseminate information among DRCU partners on emergency response preparedness/emergency response and render humanitarian aid.¹⁸

¹⁸ <https://www.mchs.gov.kg/en/ozgocho-kyrdaaldarga-zhoop-kaitaruunu-koordinaciyaloo-boyuncha-top-okzhkt/>

SCOPING THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND OTHER CASH ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

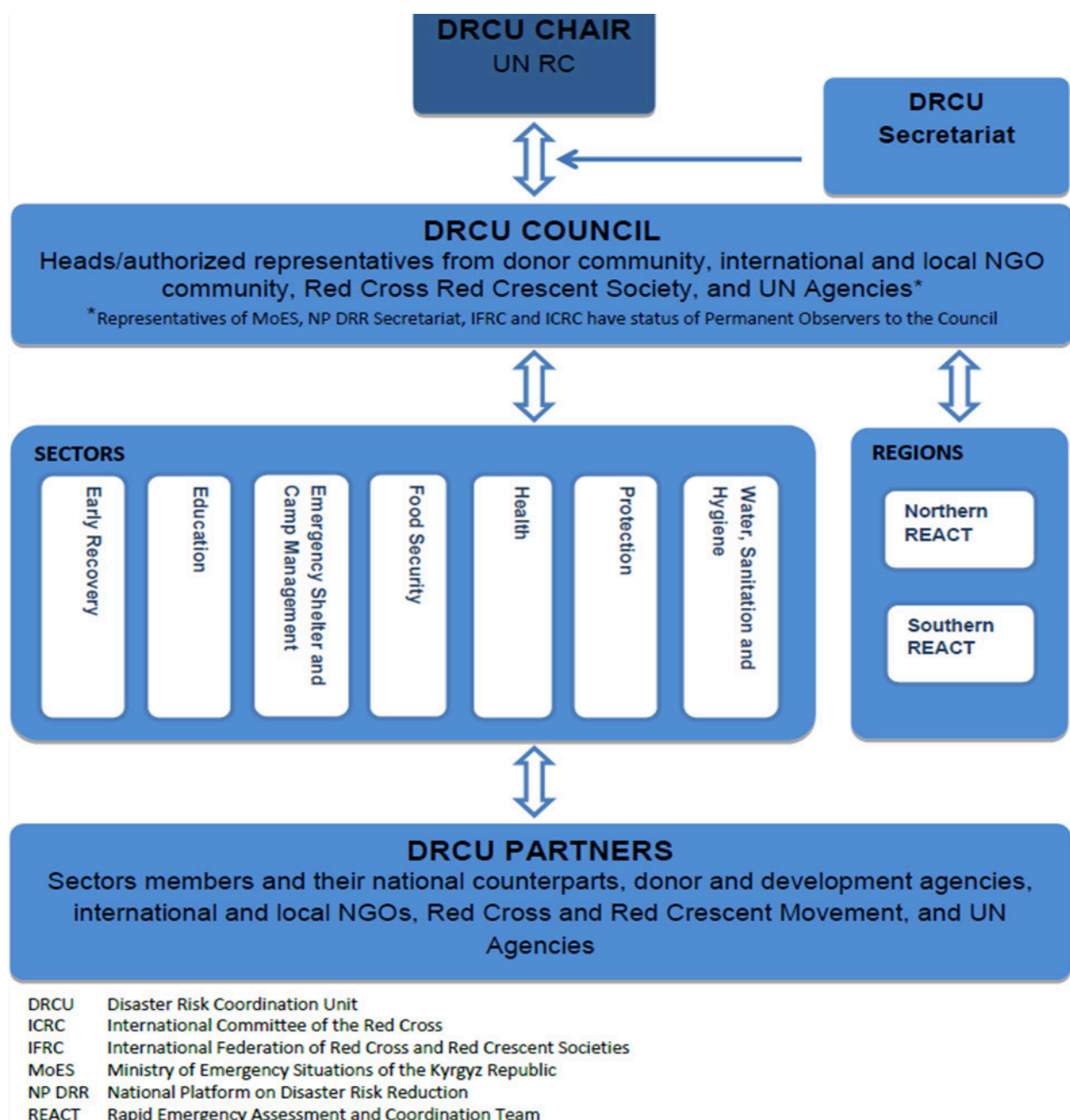


Figure 5: Disaster Coordination Structure DRCU Kyrgyzstan

The Kyrgyzstan CWG is also now up and running with regular day-day work and activities. The Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan (RCSK) is the chair of the CWG. However this is not yet structured as part of the DRCU.

- Key stakeholders and members of the inter-agency CWG are WFP, UNICEF, Acted, IOM, UNFPA, UN-

HCR, IFRC, RCSK, OCHA, Turkish Red Crescent, Swiss Red Cross and German Red Cross

- The Inter-Agency Cash Working Group is led by the RCSK. The RCSK has the largest humanitarian cash implementation operation in the country in terms of coverage and number of beneficiaries reached.

PART 5: KYRGYZSTAN

- There is strong participation, leadership and experience of national NGO's and the national government in cash transfer operationally and in inter-agency space.

The level of Inter-Agency Cash Coordination in Kyrgyzstan is generally good and active according to the people interviewed. All the responses indicate that regular meetings and information-sharing practices are in place. Coordination mechanisms are established and utilized during emergencies, though there may be gaps in routine or non-emergency collaboration.

Development partners coordinate on social protection, including shock-responsive social protection under the Development Coordination Council DCC-Social Protection Working Group. This is chaired by UNICEF and the WFP, and part of its functions is also facilitating linkages between humanitarian cash and the national social protection system.

PREPAREDNESS

Disaster preparedness in Kyrgyzstan like in other countries involves various initiatives and frameworks designed to mitigate risks, enhance resilience, and respond effectively to natural and man-made disasters. These efforts are part of a comprehensive approach to disaster preparedness in Kyrgyzstan, aiming to reduce vulnerabilities and enhance the resilience of government, communities and infrastructure to various hazards.

Inter-agency preparedness work includes:

- Regular DRCU operations and coordination including update of the DRCU operation framework.
- Ongoing work on the updating of earthquake inter-agency contingency plan IACP - there is current work to include cash assistance and SRSP in this plan.

The government successfully scaled up social

protection in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and has a portfolio of work to advance shock-responsive social protection.

- The country has an SRSP readiness assessment (conducted in 2018).

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government extended the duration of its social assistance payments, and also relaxed some targeting criteria, with support from UNICEF.

As a result of UNICEF's ongoing advocacy, new regulations with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the use of cash transfers in emergency situations were approved.

- In collaboration with the MLSWM, UNICEF facilitated the detailed planning and budgeting process for the SOP implementation. This included the development of a comprehensive training program and provision of post-training support, which directly contributed to the Ministry's issuance of an official Order. This Order clarified the division of responsibilities, accountability mechanisms, and the labor required for the Regulation and SOP implementation.

There are non-government national and international organizations who have been implementing cash assistance programs in Kyrgyzstan. This includes the 2021 border conflict to the recent Mudflows in the country. The Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan conducted its CVA preparedness baseline self-assessment in 2021, which led to the development of the CVA Preparedness Plan of Action. This was followed by a mid-term self-assessment in 2023.

Non-government stakeholders are focused on the strengthening and integration of cash assistance. This include looking at the coordination of cash assistance with other forms of support, combining cash assistance with capacity-building initiatives and other support services, and advocating for integrating shock-responsive approaches into the broader social protection system. This is reflected in the efforts of various organizations and the

SCOPING THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND OTHER CASH ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

workplan of the Inter-Agency Cash Working Group. The CWG has:

- A yearly workplan,
- An MEB Taskforce,
- A completed Core Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) Skills for Programme Staff training and Linking Social Protection with Humanitarian CVA.

TARGETING AND MODALITY SELECTION

In Kyrgyzstan, targeting modalities are defined using different approaches by government and other actors. For government programs like the social assistance, targeting is based on specific target groups and eligibility criteria.

- The Uy-bulogo komok (UBK) social assistance program - Monthly benefit for low-income families with children is targeting families with children up to 16 years of age and based on criteria for families with average per capita income below the guaranteed minimum income, as established by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. Beneficiaries of this program are registered through the Corporate Information System for Social Assistance (CISSA) while other social programs use labour market information system (LMIS) for beneficiary registration.

In response to humanitarian emergencies by non-government actors, there is no specific targeting method in place, and there are no established linkages to government databases, like the CISSA. Instead, ad hoc criteria are adopted.

All targeting approaches – whether by Government, or non-government actors, are carried out in collaboration with sub-districts, known as **raions**. Database is available at both the **raion** level and within national systems like CISSA and LMIS.

The coordination on targeting across agencies and government bodies can be improved. This issue was highlighted during the DRCU review

and lessons learned workshop conducted on the 2021 Batken border conflict response, where duplication of beneficiaries was high. As a result, the **Cash Working Group** was tasked with collaborating with the **IM Working Group** to develop a 4Ws dashboard and facilitate the development of a data-sharing agreement protocol. Both tasks are currently in progress.

There is also no coordination on **benefit levels**, however the new SOPs approved by the government have set some guidance.

CAPACITY BUILDING

To bridge the capacity gap among national and international actors in Kyrgyzstan, the Inter-Agency Cash Working Group organized a Core Cash and Voucher Skills for Programme Staff training between 2023 to 2024 in collaboration with the CALP Network and CashCap. The training was a joint effort of WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA and the RCSK. A total of 24 participants from 12 agencies attended, including representatives from one national organization and four government Ministries.

During the interviews, several thematic areas were identified as primary capacity need and areas where support is required. These include Financial Service Provider Assessment and Engagement, Cash Preparedness Action, Cash for Anticipatory Action and Cash Feasibility Assessment and Response Analysis. International partners that were interviewed expressed that they found it difficult to explain the added value of cash assistance to local authorities.

KEY FINDINGS

- The coordination of national responses to emergencies is through the IMCCP, which includes ministries responsible for social protection.
- For development partners coordination, a separate working group on SP is coordinated under the Development Coordination Council co-chaired by

UNICEF and WFP. And manages work and coordination of SRSP.

- For humanitarian actors, the primary platform established is called DRCU where a technical working group called the inter-agency cash working group manages cash coordination chaired by RCSK.

- There are limited joint initiatives between the Social Protection working group and inter-agency CWG with aim strengthen SRSP.

- The CWG is not yet structured as part of the Disaster Risk Coordination Union (DRCU)

- Coordination between social protection agencies and emergency ministries is often ad-hoc rather than systematic. This hinders the systematic use of social protection in national response plans.

OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SRSP AND CASH IN EMERGENCIES

In Kyrgyzstan, there are key opportunities to strengthen the use and coordination of SRSP and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies. These include:

- **Improving the coordination between the CWG and the DRCU:** Lack of structured integration of the Cash Working Group (CWG) within the Disaster Response Coordination Unit (DRCU).

- **Integrating social protection in emergency plans.** For example, ensuring the mainstreaming of the new SOPs on cash transfers into relevant policy documents.

- **Focusing on capacity gaps using cash in emergencies:** National and international partners are more experienced with in-kind assistance in emergencies, leading to limited activation of cash assistance in emergencies. Key gaps include financial service provider (FSP) engagement and partnerships with the private sector, market assessments, and cash feasibility analysis, as well as tools to ad-

vocate for the use of cash in emergencies.

- **Develop a coordinated workplan to address some gaps in capacity on SRSP and cash actors.**

For example, this could include looking into developing strategic policy documents in the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare on SRSP, on the activation protocol for emergencies; on the data sources and data sharing agreements and interconnectivity between systems.

WORKPLAN PRIORITIES

- Facilitate the institutionalization of the Kyrgyzstan CWG under the Disaster Risk Coordination Unit (DRCU) structure by updating the TOR, workplan and its endorsement.

- Development of Minimum expenditure basket and a Transfer value for SRSP and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies.

- Organize high level advocacy to government on the use of cash assistance and its advantages.

- Capacity building and strengthening for government and local partners and the development of dedicated training module for social protection and cash assistance.

TO CONTINUE EXPLORING IN KYRGYZSTAN

- Joint initiatives among cash actors like assessments, capacity building/training, advocacy.

- Explore and support the potential of local or government led cash working group.

7. PART 6: KAZAKHSTAN

7.1. OVERVIEW OF RISKS.

The overall risk profile of Kazakhstan is the lowest in Central Asia with almost all regions in Kazakhstan placed in the very low risk category and the data reliability index is very good (0.6 to 2.0). Broadly this suggests that Kazakhstan has the best capacity in the region to cope with disasters.

- Kazakhstan is a middle-income country with a population of 19,606,633 million people, 31 per cent of which are children.
- Considering the risk distribution, it appears that the urban areas of Almaty and Astana have a slightly higher human hazard ranking, yet natural hazards contribute more to the overall risk rating in Kazakhstan than human-related hazards.
- Generally, earthquakes are dominant risk in Kazakhstan followed by floods, debris flow and landslides

- The INFORM results show that Kazakhstan has been relatively effective in DRM across the country, and the low-risk profiles indicate a good level of preparedness, reduced vulnerability, and adequate coping capacities.

- The recent experience of Kazakhstan in dealing with the largest floods in 80 years, which displaced over 120,000 people across 10 regions, highlighted significant issues in the emergency response due to a lack of coordination among various actors.

- As per the CCRI, in Kazakhstan the children climate risk is medium 4.1 but the climate environmental shocks are high 5.7 though the lowest in the region and the child vulnerability too, remain the lowest at 1.9 very low.



@Red Crescent Society of Kazakhstan (RCS RK).

INFORM Risk Model- Kazakhstan

COUNTRY (a-z)	FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL (a-z)	Natural (0-10)	Human (0-10)	HAZARD & EXPOSURE (0-10)	Socio-Econom- ic Vulnerability (0-10)	Vulnerable Groups (0-10)	VULNERA- BILITY (0-10)	Institutional (0-10)	Infrastructure (0-10)	LACK OF COP- ING CAPACITY (0-10)	INFORM RISK (0-10)	RISK CLASS (V.Low-V. High)	Rank (1-83)	Reliability Index (*) (0-10)
Kazakhstan	Akmola	3.5	0.2	2.0	1.6	2.1	1.9	3.4	3.8	3.6	2.4	Very Low	43	0.6
	Aktobe	2.2	0.2	1.3	2.1	2.0	2.1	3.1	4.5	3.8	2.2	Very Low	45	0.6
	Almaty	5.7	0.2	3.4	1.9	2.9	2.4	4.2	3.9	4.1	3.2	Very Low	33	0.6
	Almaty (city)	4.3	2.9	3.6	1.6	2.5	2.1	3.2	2.5	2.9	2.8	Very Low	36	0.9
	Astana (city)	4.3	2.9	3.6	1.6	2.5	2.1	3.2	2.5	2.9	2.8	Very Low	36	0.9
	Atyrau	6.4	0.2	3.9	2.0	2.2	2.1	3.0	4.4	3.7	3.1	Very Low	34	0.9
	East Kazakhstan	2.8	0.2	1.6	1.8	3.2	2.5	3.5	3.8	3.7	2.5	Very Low	42	0.6
	Karaganda	1.8	0.2	1.0	1.9	2.9	2.4	2.5	4.2	3.4	2.0	Very Low	51	0.6
	Kostanai	2.2	0.2	1.3	1.8	2.9	2.4	3.4	4.5	4.0	2.3	Very Low	44	0.9
	Kyzylorda	4.0	0.2	2.3	2.1	2.0	2.1	3.8	4.3	4.1	2.7	Very Low	38	0.9
	Mangistau	2.3	0.2	1.3	1.5	2.3	1.9	3.2	4.2	3.7	2.1	Very Low	50	1.1
	North Kazakhstan	2.1	0.2	1.2	1.8	2.8	2.3	3.0	4.3	3.7	2.2	Very Low	45	0.9
	Pavlodar	2.5	0.2	1.4	1.6	3.0	2.3	2.8	3.7	3.3	2.2	Very Low	45	0.9
	Shymkent (city)	2.8	0.2	1.6	1.8	2.1	2.0	3.7	3.0	3.4	2.2	Very Low	45	2.0
	Turkestan	5.3	0.2	3.1	1.7	3.0	2.4	4.4	3.4	3.9	3.1	Very Low	34	0.9
	West Kazakhstan	4.2	0.2	2.4	1.5	2.2	1.9	3.4	3.9	3.7	2.6	Very Low	40	0.9
	Zhambyl	4.7	0.2	2.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	3.6	3.8	3.7	2.6	Very Low	40	0.9

(*) Reliability Index: 0 more reliable, 10 less reliable.

Figure 6: NAME OF THE IMAGE BELOW.¹⁹

7.2. NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the central executive body of the Republic of Kazakhstan performing management in spheres of the prevention and response to emergency situations of natural and technogenic nature, civil defence, fire and industrial safety, forming and development of the state material reserve, ensuring functioning and further development of the state system of civil protection, the organization of the prevention and suppression of the fires.²⁰

- Protection of national priorities from emergency situations is one of the important items of the long-term **Strategy of the country development and national policy until 2030** (According to UNDP Disaster Risk Reduction Review). The basic prior-

ities of Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) are mostly corresponded to the principles of national policy in prevention and liquidation of emergency situations of natural as well as man-made characters. The Government Program for 2007-2009 has been adopted specifying measures against negative consequences of natural and man-made disasters and for protection of population, facilities and territory of Kazakhstan.

7.3. NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

- Kazakhstan has developed a comprehensive, multi-tiered social protection system comprising over 40 types of payments to support various vulnerable groups.** Currently, around 5 million citizens receive pensions and social benefits, with this number expected to increase to 6 million by 2029. A key component of the system is the So-

¹⁹ Source: <https://cesdrr.org/en/inform-subnational-risk-model/>

²⁰ Order of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan "Questions of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Kazakhstan" (cis-legislation.com)

cial Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which defines the fundamental principles and directions for social protection.²¹ In 2018, around 30 per cent of the population received some form of social assistance in Kazakhstan.

- The **Targeted Social Assistance (TSA)** is the broadest programme, which is means tested and provided to households where income is below 70 per cent of the minimum subsistence level. **In 2020, there were around 2.2 million TSA beneficiaries.** Other cash benefits for families with children include universal birth grants and a set of categorical benefits to cover specifically vulnerable groups without a means-test (state benefit for childcare up to 18 months, for families who are not insured in the compulsory social insurance system, special benefits for families and mothers with many children, and allowance for the care of a disabled person of the 1st group from childhood). Other social allowances include the old age state pension, disability allowance and survivor's allowance (loss of breadwinner).

- Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) is a cash transfer provided by the state to individuals with monthly average per-capita income below an established threshold of 70 per cent of the minimum subsistence level. TSA is divided into two sub-types, namely:

- **Unconditional TSA**, provided to: (i) single low-income people with limited opportunities to participate in employment in connection with retirement age; (ii) those with disabilities; (iii) those incapacitated by the presence of a disease, which contributes to temporary work incapacity for more than two months; (iv) low-income families in which there are no able-bodied persons; or (v) the only able-bodied

member cares for: a child under the age of 3; a child with a disability; a person with a disability; the elderly; and those in need of outside care and help.

- **Conditional TSA**, provided to single low-income working-age individuals or families and low-income families with an able-bodied member/member, including individuals who are payers of a single aggregate payment. The conditional TSA benefit is available to those who conclude a social contract with the state and actively participate in finding new employment, completing retraining, public works, or are involved in entrepreneurial activities.

- Other forms of social Assistance programmes in Kazakhstan include; Housing allowance, Family and child allowances, Disability social allowance/benefits, Pensions, Disability benefits, Supplementary payments for those not covered by the SI system, public works among others.²²

- One key innovation with the social protection in Kazakhstan is the use of **Digital Family Card (DFC)**. The DFC is an innovative solution that aims to improve the quality of people's lives by utilizing digital technologies and data-driven decision making. The DFC analyses vulnerabilities, identifies target populations, and provides comprehensive public services to vulnerable groups in a proactive manner across the country.²³

- **While individuals impacted by shocks or disasters are not specifically identified as a vulnerable group in social protection regulations, the system does provide for assistance to those facing 'difficult life situations'.** However, updates to the Social Code can take several months to implement. The legal and regulatory frameworks, coordination mechanisms, fund-

²¹ National Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2029, approved by Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 611 of 30 July 2024 <https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/U2400000611#z185/>

²² Report on ASSESSING SYSTEM READINESS FOR SHOCK RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION IN KAZAKHSTAN 2023 by UNICEF Pages 19/20

²³ Kazakhstan's Digital Family Card: Ensuring equal access to social protection - ITU

ing, financial service providers, and management information systems in Kazakhstan enable the implementation of a cash transfer program response in the aftermath of an emergency.²⁴ Historically, when social protection has been involved in responding to shocks, it has been managed through separate, ad hoc emergency decrees.²⁵

7.4. SCOPING FINDINGS

COORDINATION

The Ministry of Emergency Situations oversees and manages inter-government coordination, while the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection oversees and coordinates all national social assistance programmes.

Issues on disaster risk reduction are referred to the Center for Emergency Situation and Disaster Risk Reduction (CESDRR), a regional Center based in Almaty.

- The CESDRR is a permanent intergovernmental body and international organization established to ensure effective mechanisms to decrease the risk of emergencies, mitigate the consequences, organize a joint response through agreed measures of the Parties and to stimulate regional and international cooperation.

- The CESDRR, accredited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan was officially opened on September 14, 2016. Its objectives include:

- Develop cooperation in disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, prevention and elimination of emergency situations.
- Mitigate factors of disaster risk, identify, assess, forecast and monitor emergency situation hazards.
- Coordinate mutual efforts and strengthen preparedness for effective and timely response to emergencies.
- Implement regional and international cooperation in DRR and emergency management.
- Increase the safety of life activities of the population during natural and man-made emergencies.
- Involve international and non-profit organizational grants for disaster risk reduction, development, and implementation of joint international projects.
- Implement international and other programs in the field of disaster risk reduction, prevention and elimination of emergency situations.²⁶

²⁴ Phelps, L. (2019). Assessing Social Protection System Readiness in Kazakhstan

²⁵ UNICEF Kazakhstan. (2023). Assessing System Readiness for Shock Responsive Social Protection in Kazakhstan. Astana

²⁶ <https://cesdrr.org/en/information-about-the-center/>

SCOPING THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND OTHER CASH ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

There is limited coordination between the government and other national and international actors.

Currently, there is no formal humanitarian coordination structure in place. Efforts to establish such a structure have been made, but not been successful. Although the UN has a Disaster Response team, it includes only UN members. During the recent flooding May 2024, an ad hoc platform was established by the government which included heads of central government agencies and local executive bodies for the response and coordination.

The government did not formally request international assistance. Consequently, during the interviews, some international organizations noted that they were unable to effectively assist the affected population. Despite the absence of a formal request, neighbouring countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and countries outside of the region such as Türkiye provided aid independently. The Red Crescent of Kazakhstan also provided assistance through bilateral cooperation with various donors. However, some respondents noted that the overall response would have been improved with a unified coordination strategy.

The level of inter-agency cash coordination as described by the more than half of respondents is almost non-existent.

There are no formal or informal coordination mechanism in place for cash assistance among agencies. Agencies work independently without sharing information or collaborating on cash programs.

PREPAREDNESS

Kazakhstan has done some related emergency preparedness work that includes frameworks, policies and some corporations. Some of those policies and framework include Law on Civil Protection, National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030).

There are indications that low/mid-level emer-

gencies may never receive request for support from the government for the UN and international actors. But For over ten years now in Kazakhstan, there was no response or support given by any international agency; instead the government has been responding to emergencies using their internal capacity.

The UN team in Kazakhstan has a Disaster Response team composed only of UN members.

A survey conducted by the RCO to map out the existing capacities of UN agencies for emergency response revealed that there is little capacity from a few agencies like UNICEF.

In part of the cash readiness efforts, UNICEF has been working with the government partners to ensure that the national social protection system is shock responsive and have so far supported the SRSP readiness assessment, training to government. UNICEF has also developed their internal contingency plan and response strategy though there has been no operational cash response by UNICEF in Kazakhstan.

The **Red Crescent Society of the Republic of Kazakhstan (RCS RK)** initiated its CVA Preparedness program in 2021 following baseline self-assessment workshop conducted in collaboration with IFRC, Swiss Red Cross and Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent Society. In 2024 RCS RK conducted a mid-term self-assessment and extended CVA preparedness programme till 2026.

The government, as seen in the recent flooding, used cash assistance and other modalities respond to the humanitarian needs.

For example, the government decided to provide a one-time compensation of 100 Monthly Calculation Indexes (MCI), equivalent to KZT 369,200, to all families affected by the floods. As of June 24, 2024, 33,321 families had received this payment. Additionally, affected residents received compensation of up to 150 MCI (up to KZT 553,800) for the purchase

of essential items lost in the floods, with 15,355 families having received a total of KZT 7.6 billion in compensation. Further measures include: Automatic assignment of targeted social assistance to 5,000 families in areas where a state of emergency has been declared, without the need for them to apply; Automatic extension of disability re-examination periods for about 4,000 individuals, including children, during the state of emergency, with disability benefits continuing as per previously established groups; Payment of wages for unemployed individuals and those in subsidized employment by the labor mobility center, without requiring employer documentation during the emergency; and Deferment of microloan payments for participants of the youth microcredit program affected by the floods, with additional state support measures under consideration. All 2024 payments will be restructured and distributed in equal installments from 2025 until the end of the financing term. In addition, the Red Crescent Society of Republic of Kazakhstan has delivered cash assistance via IFRC disaster response emergency fund (DREF). It is worthy to mention that no international or UN agency responded directly.

Although stakeholders are positioned to support the government, the government does not accept such offers nor extend invitations for international support, as it is viewed to have the capacity to respond using its internal resources and capacity.

- For example, after the 2024 floods, on April 6, 2024, President Tokayev delivered an official address regarding the severe flooding situation.²⁷ Speaking directly to those affected, the President assured that no one would be overlooked by the state. He pledged that all affected families would receive financial support and other necessary assistance, with full compensation for their material losses. The President directed the government to quickly develop and communicate an effective mechanism for damage compensation, ensuring that the compensation amounts are proportion-

ate to the losses incurred.

Non-governmental stakeholders are **focused on capacity building**. Some such as UNICEF are advocating for integrating cash assistance into broader social protection frameworks an emphasizing the need for shock responsive social protection. IFRC and the RCS RK conducted lessons learned workshop after the DREF cash assistance distribution and developed a workplan for further improvement of such operations.

TARGETING AND MODALITY SELECTION

In Kazakhstan, targeting and selection for social assistance and emergency cash is primarily managed through the government system. Considering that only the government has been responding via the social assistance support and emergencies using their internal capacity.

- The government does not typically allow international organization to respond directly or implement programs. Even few national organizations, like the Kazakhstan Red Crescent Society, when they do, rely on government data from the targeted social assistance (TSA) program, such as was seen during the 2024 flooding.
- The largest social assistance program of the government is the TSA, targeting households living below poverty line which is a threshold determined by the MLSP on the basis of the subsistence minimum level (SML) per capita in percentage terms.
- The current procedure for submitting applications for targeted social assistance is as follows:
 - An individual can apply either at a service provider (such as a career centre, or the village Akim in rural areas) or online via the 'electronic government' web portal. The applicant must present a valid identity document.

²⁷ <https://www.akorda.kz/ru/obrashchenie-glavy-gosudarstva-kasym-zhomarta-tokaeva-v-svyazi-s-tyazhelyoy-situatsiyey-iz-za-pavodkov-634424/>

SCOPING THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND OTHER CASH ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

- Information is being requested through the 'electronic government' gateway to obtain the beneficiaries required data (25 criteria). If certain information is not available in these systems, the applicant must provide the necessary paper documents. If the applicant is unable to do so, the career centre or the village Akim will issue a formal request to the appropriate government agency or organization to obtain the missing information.

In the event of disaster or crisis, the same TSA data with room for new and first-time applicants is used for response efforts.

- Following the lessons learned from the spring 2024 floods, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection revised the rules for the appointment and payment of targeted social assistance (TSA). Under the new provisions, in emergency situations, current TSA recipients (as of the last day of a quarter) will have their assistance automatically extended to the next quarter without reapplication. Furthermore, first-time applicants for TSA during an emergency will not undergo home visits to assess their living conditions.

CAPACITY BUILDING

The general capacity of Kazakhstan's national partners and government for cash assistance during emergencies appears to be moderate according to the people interviewed. However, the government has growing experience delivering cash assistance in emergencies.

Capacity building/training gaps: the respondents indicated the below as key capacity needs and areas they require support: cash for Anticipatory Action, linking humanitarian **cash to social protection, cash preparedness actions.**

- Apart from internal trainings on cash by National Red Crescent Society, UNICEF and IFRC for their staffs and government partners, there has not been any joint cash training initiatives. This under-

score the fact that there is no existing platform for inter-agency cash coordination where such initiatives could be discussed and implemented.

KEY FINDINGS

For the government, The Ministry of Emergency Situations (MoES) leads emergency preparedness and response (EPR) through the Inter-departmental Committee on Emergency Situations (CES), while the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection oversees and coordinates all national social assistance programmes. Coordination between social protection actors and MoEs and CES is undefined, lacking a systematic approach for engaging social protection in EPR.

- During the recent flooding May 2024, an ad hoc platform was established by the government which included heads of central government agencies and local executive bodies for the response and coordination.

- There are limitations in the current legal framework which focuses on search and rescue, evacuation, acute needs, and property recovery, and limited consideration of household-level socioeconomic impacts, such as income disruption or loss of livelihoods. The needs assessment and compensation rules prioritize property damage, without considering family circumstances and special needs (e.g., children, persons with disabilities)

- Cash transfers in emergencies remain underutilized and are not explicitly addressed in the legal framework. Existing norms focus on "in-kind" support, though cash has been used in recent crises for basic needs with success (i.e. 2024 floods).

- There is no formal established humanitarian emergency or development coordination structure, and there is Government reliance on internal resources; no recent acceptance or invitation for international assistance, citing adequate national capacity.

- There is limited engagement with international organizations, including UN agencies, in providing humanitarian support during emergencies. UN has a Disaster Response team, but it includes only UN members

OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SRSP AND CASH IN EMERGENCIES

In Kazakhstan, there are key opportunities to strengthen the use and coordination of SRSP and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies. These include:

- Exploring the coordination mechanisms amongst stakeholders to support contingency planning and preparedness activities.
- Exploring options for establishing an inter-agency mechanism for emergency response in place for catastrophic events (noting that all events in the last 10 years have been within the government's capacity to respond).
- Continuing to build the capacities of government, as well as other partners.

- Advocate for and use of cash in emergencies, including its use to support other sectoral outcomes (health, education etc.).

- Support for strengthening the routine social protection system to enhance social protection system readiness for shocks.

- Standardize tools, guidelines, and approaches to ensure consistency across stakeholders. Particularly, explore potential options for strengthening Digital Family Card, to support SRSP

WORKPLAN PRIORITIES

- Support capacity building efforts with the Government to ensure their programmes cover vulnerable populations and can effectively deliver timely assistance in times of emergencies (i.e. provision of technical assistance to enhance programme design and training).

8. PART 7: UZBEKISTAN

8.1. OVERVIEW OF RISKS.

Uzbekistan like other central Asian countries has high risk associated with natural hazards such as earthquake, floods, landslides and extreme weather.

- The overall risk profile of Uzbekistan is moderate according to the INFORM results. Most of the regions in the country fall in the low and medium risk categories with only a small portion ranked as high risk.
- Uzbekistan is a middle-income country, with a population of 35,163,944, and about 30.2% are children.
- The regional breakdown of Uzbekistan shows the

region of Surkhandarya at Highest risk (4.7, Medium), with Syrdarya second highest (4.6, Medium), and the republic of Karakalpakstan (4.4, Medium). This correlates with the generally low vulnerability scores across the regions (between 2.6 to 4.4), and Syrdarya ranking the highest (4.4).

- The socio-economic vulnerability scores are roughly consistent across the regions, yet the vulnerable groups scores appear to be generally low in most areas, and medium in Syrdarya and Surkhandarya.
- As per the CCRI, in Uzbekistan the children climate risk is medium 5.4 but the climate environmental shocks are extremely high 7.5 the highest in the region and the child vulnerability is low 2.2.

INFORM Risk Model- Uzbekistan

COUNTRY (a-z)	FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL (a-z)	Natural (0-10)	Human (0-10)	HAZARD & EXPOSURE (0-10)	Socio-Economic Vulnerability (0-10)	Vulnerable Groups (0-10)	VULNERABILITY (0-10)	Institutional (0-10)	Infrastructure (0-10)	LACK OF COPING CAPACITY (0-10)	INFORM RISK (0-10)	RISK CLASS (V.Low-V. High)	Rank (1-83)	Reliability Index (*) (0-10)
Uzbekistan	Andizhan	6.4	6.3	6.4	3.3	2.4	2.9	3.5	3.9	3.7	4.1	Low	22	0.6
	Bukhara	5.0	6.3	5.7	2.9	2.4	2.7	3.4	4.7	4.1	4.0	Low	25	0.6
	Fergana	4.8	6.3	5.6	3.0	2.4	2.7	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.8	Low	26	0.9
	Jizzakh	4.6	6.3	5.5	3.0	2.5	2.8	4.0	4.8	4.4	4.1	Low	22	0.6
	Kashkadarya	4.9	6.3	5.6	3.3	2.3	2.8	4.9	5.0	5.0	4.3	Low	19	0.6
	Khorezm	3.0	6.3	4.9	3.1	2.4	2.8	4.8	3.4	4.1	3.8	Low	26	0.9
	Namangan	6.7	6.3	6.5	3.2	2.5	2.9	3.6	4.7	4.2	4.3	Low	19	0.9
	Navoi	4.2	6.3	5.3	2.8	2.3	2.6	2.7	4.6	3.7	3.7	Low	28	0.9
	Republic of Karakalpakstan	6.0	6.3	6.2	3.2	2.7	3.0	4.0	5.4	4.7	4.4	Medium	17	0.6
	Samarkand	5.0	6.3	5.7	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.6	4.6	4.1	4.1	Low	22	0.9
	Surkhandarya	6.6	6.3	6.5	3.6	3.3	3.5	3.6	5.4	4.6	4.7	Medium	15	0.9
	Syrdarya	4.5	6.3	5.5	3.0	5.5	4.4	3.6	4.4	4.0	4.6	Medium	16	0.9
	Tashkent	6.7	6.3	6.5	3.0	2.6	2.8	4.8	4.4	4.6	4.4	Medium	17	0.6
	Tashkent (city)	2.5	6.3	4.7	3.0	2.7	2.9	4.2	2.2	3.3	3.6	Low	29	0.6

Figure 7: NAME OF THE IMAGE BELOW. ²⁸

(*) Reliability Index: 0 more reliable, 10 less reliable.

²⁸ Source: <https://cesdrr.org/en/inform-subnational-risk-model/>

8.2. NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

The Government of Uzbekistan recognizes its vulnerability to natural hazards and has taken important steps to manage disaster risks.

- The protection of the population and territories against disasters caused by natural hazards, or of a human-made or environmental character, is one of the priority areas of the **national security policy in Uzbekistan**. It is essentially aimed at ensuring the safety and protection of the population against various disasters and emergencies (Ministry of Emergency Situations, 2005).

The Government of Uzbekistan has created a strong legal basis for the protection of the population against hazards.

- Among them is the law of Uzbekistan on the concept of national safety (No. 467-I, of 29 August 1997). The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) is responsible for the food security aspect of this law, as part of overall national safety, while the vital national interests recognize the maintenance of optimum ecological conditions for the ability of any person to live, the protection of health of the people, and the creation of a stable ecological situation.
- In January 2001, the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MoES) started cooperation with the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on providing a framework for various programmes of emergency preparedness and disaster-mitigation cooperation.
- There are a number of presidential decrees, resolutions and regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers related to natural hazards and EWS, which have been adopted in the country since 1991.

Key among those laws, frameworks and decrees for Uzbekistan DRM are;

- The law of Uzbekistan No. 824-I. On protection of population and territories against emergency situations of natural and manmade character.
- The decree of the president of Uzbekistan dated 19 February 2007 No. 585. On disaster prevention and relief measures related to flooding, mud flows, avalanches and landslides.
- Warnings on avalanches and mud flows are issued based on conducted monitoring, realized according to the decree No. 4305, dated 2 May 2019, on the measures for the prevention of emergency situations related to the flood, mud flow, snow avalanche and landslide phenomena and elimination of their consequences. This decree defines the tasks of the ministries and agencies involved in organization of monitoring of nature and anthropogenic phenomena and elimination of their consequences.
- The resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 515 (dated 26 August 2020) focuses on further improvement of the state system for prevention of and response to emergency situations of the Republic of Uzbekistan. It defines the structure of the system, as well as the main functions of the ministries, agencies, local governmental bodies and other involved organizations in terms of protection of the population and territories from emergency situations.
- In 2006, Uzbekistan adopted a State Programme on Earthquake Risk Reduction and in 2011 established an earthquake impact preparedness programme. As part of the programme, the Earthquake Simulation Complex at the Institute of Civil Defence was opened in Tashkent in 2015.

- A State Programme on Forecasting Emergency Situations of Natural and Technological Character was approved by a resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 71 of 3 April 2007 (latest amendments in 2020).²⁹

8.3. NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

Uzbekistan has a comprehensive set of social protection programs, including social assistance, social insurance, labour market interventions, and social care services.

- The Strategy of Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030 was adopted in July 2022. In line with the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation (No. 202), the Strategy aims to develop a social protection system of 65 programs that should provide a minimum floor of social protection for all.³⁰

- **Uzbekistan has three social registries of vulner-**

able people in need of assistance.

- The **Iron Notebook** which contains lists of households eligible to receive social assistance, such as families that lost their breadwinners or with the breadwinner unemployed, especially families with many dependents.
- The **Youth Notebook** lists young people with a difficult financial situation and the,
- The **Women's Notebook** includes women with difficult social and living conditions, women who are unemployed and women who are subjected to violence, etc. These notebooks are maintained by the Makhallas, which also provide the assistance and services to individuals listed in the registries.³¹

The largest cash transfer programs with regular long-term expenditures include social allowances for low-income families and people who cannot work and are ineligible to receive a contributory pension. A complete list of social protection programs in Uzbekistan is shown below in Figure 8.

²⁹ Comprehensive Analysis of the Disaster Risk Reduction System for Agriculture in Uzbekistan by FAO <https://www.fao.org/3/cc1905en/cc1905en.pdf> pages 20-22/

³⁰ <https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/strategy-social-protection-population-republic-uzbekistan-approved/>

³¹ UNICEF- Report of an assessment of the national social protection system's readiness to respond to shocks in Uzbekistan, including activation of emergency cash support

Summary of Relevant Programs

Program Type	Program Name
Social Assistance Programs	
Cash Transfer Programs	- Social allowances for low-income families - Social allowances for people who cannot work and are ineligible for a contributory pension
Old-age Social Allowance	- Assigned at age 65 for men and 60 for women
Disability Social Allowance	- For persons with disability of I or II Groups
Survivors Social Allowance	- For families of deceased individuals
Disability Social Allowances (Adults)	- For adult persons with disability from childhood
Disability Social Allowances (Children)	- For children with disability from childhood
Financial Assistance	- For low-income families
Child Benefit	- For low-income families with children
In-kind Social Assistance Programs	
School-related Benefits	- Free meals for primary school pupils - Cash payment for school preparation (uniforms, winter clothes, textbooks, etc.)
Social Insurance Programs	
Contributory Pension Programs	- Old-age pension - Disability pension - Survivors' pension
Labor Market Programs	
Unemployment Benefits	- For registered unemployed persons
Public Works	- Temporary income support and employment opportunities
Social Services	
Residential Care Institutions	- For the elderly, adults with disabilities, children with disabilities, children without parental care

Figure 8: Summary of Relevant Social Protection Programs in Uzbekistan ³²³² Comprehensive Analysis of the Disaster Risk Reduction System for Agriculture in Uzbekistan by FAO.

8.4. SCOPING FINDINGS

COORDINATION

There is also a Humanitarian Country team in Uzbekistan, though it has been inactive since its last meeting in 2017.

- To support coordination, during COVID 19 period, there was a Crisis Management Team (CMT) established for coordination of the response with different working groups like Health, Social Economic, Human Rights, Procurement etc.
- On the development side, the Country Partners Platform, led and co-led by the Ministry of Investment and the World Bank, coordinates development programmes and partners. It has various working groups which includes Health chaired by WHO, Education group by UNICEF, Green development chaired by UNDP and other groups.

The level of Inter-Agency Cash Coordination is generally described by majority of respondents as Ad-hoc. Coordination is sporadic and unstructured. Agencies and the Government may occasionally share information or coordinate on an as-needed basis, and context specific.

PREPAREDNESS

The Ministry of Emergency Situations is the government agency overseeing emergency services in Uzbekistan. It is responsible for aiding the people of Uzbekistan and protecting them during natural disasters, overseeing emergency measures, and coordination of other ministries and departments in such events. The functions of the Ministry were laid out in a **presidential decree dating back to 1996**, which defines the following tasks of the ministry:

- The implementation of state policy in the sphere of emergency situations
- Management of the Civil Defence of the Republic of Uzbekistan
- Coordination of ministries/agencies across the country that specialize in the prevention and elimination of the fallout caused by accidents and natural disasters.
- Targeted and scientifically targeted activities aimed at eliminating emergency situations, protecting the population and the territory of the country and enhancing the sustainability of publicly funded activities, as well as training the public, officials, and government agencies to prevent and respond to emergencies, organization and implementation of technical software development.³³

In the National Disaster management law- protection of people in times of emergencies, cash is not explicitly mentioned, not excluded. Emergency committees are formed ad-hoc, and as there is no standard frameworks for cash assistance, the default (and traditional) modality is in-kind.

Other work preparedness measures along the social protection are the establishment of laws and regulation on social assistance:

- Uzbekistan's Constitution refers to Social Protection as a basic human right and states that "Everyone has the right to Social Protection in old age and in the instances of disability and loss of the breadwinner, as well as in other cases provided by law", and further stipulates that "Pensions, allowances, and other types of social benefits cannot be lower than the officially established subsistence level". A series of laws, decrees, and resolutions define the right to social security and to social services in more details.

³³ <https://www.devex.com/organizations/ministry-of-emergency-situations-uzbekistan-mes-207008/>

Key laws regulating access to social protection programmes and services in Uzbekistan.

- Law No. 938-XII of September 3, 1993, on the Provision of a State Pension to Citizens.
- Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of February 15, 2013, on the Allocation and Payment of Social Benefits and Material Support to Low-Income Families.
- Law No. 3PY-376 of September 25, 2014, on Social Partnerships.
- Law No. 3PY-415 of December 26, 2016, on Social Services for Elderly, Disabled, and Other Socially Vulnerable Categories of the Population.
- Law No. 3PY-139 of January 7, 2008, on the Guarantee of the Rights of the Child.
- Law No. 3PY-162 of July 11, 2008, on the Social Protection of Disabled People.
- Law No. 616-I of May 1, 1998, on Employment.³⁴

The government has a portfolio of work to advance shock-responsive social protection. UNICEF has supported SRSP readiness assessment, legal framework for SRSP, emergency MIS module for HCTs, and training to governments.

In addition, the Red Crescent is about to start their preparedness programme. This will start with National Society CVA self-assessment, followed by development of CVA Preparedness Plan of Action.

There is less engagement on emergency preparedness at inter-agency level. The last Inter-agency contingency planning was last updated in 2014 and some simulation exercises on minimum preparedness in 2017 after which no other engagement especially since OCHA left. Agencies have their internal emergency preparedness plan.

The national government appears to be supportive of cash assistance but mandates that all cash assistance must go through government channels, with no allowances for direct cash transfers by other entities.

Non-government stakeholders are generally very positive and proactive with the use of cash transfers in emergencies. They actively promote cash

transfers as a key tool in humanitarian and development assistance, and advocate for its inclusion in national social protection systems.

TARGETING AND MODALITY SELECTION

Targeting and selection modality is usually through the government system and methodology. Considering that most responses are led by the government through the different social assistance programs.

- The vulnerability criteria are defined based on the target, type and objectives of each social assistance program. The Iron Notebook which contains lists of households eligible to receive social assistance, such as families that lost their breadwinners or with the breadwinner unemployed, especially families with many dependents.

- Disaster response targeting is always linked to this data of the national social assistance program for response to emergencies.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- The general capacity of Uzbekistan national partners is viewed to be low. Though this varies per

³⁴ <https://www.ilo.org/publications/assessment-social-protection-system-uzbekistan-based-core-diagnostic/>

SCOPING THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND OTHER CASH ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

organization depending on their experience in planning, supporting or implementing Cash Assistance.

- There have not been any joint cash training initiatives, and few trainings in general. There have been internal trainings on cash by Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan, UNICEF, IFRC for their staffs. Furthermore, UNICEF organised a training on scaling up cash transfers to government officials
- The stakeholders identified '**cash preparedness actions**' as the key capacity need and area requiring support.

KEY FINDINGS

- There is a Humanitarian Country team in Uzbekistan, though inactive since its last meeting in 2017.
- But there is no established humanitarian emergency coordination structure. The last time a COVID 19, the Crisis Management Team (CMT) was established for coordination of the response with different working groups like Health, Social Economic, Human Rights, Procurement etc.
- On the development side, there is the Country Partners Platform, led and co-led by the Ministry of Investment and the World Bank. With various working groups but no Social Protection working group

OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SRSP AND CASH IN EMERGENCIES

In Uzbekistan, there are key opportunities to strengthen the use and coordination of SRSP and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies. These include:

- Exploring options for updating the inter-agency mechanism for emergency response in place for catastrophic events (noting that the humanitarian country team last met in 2017, and the last

Inter-Agency contingency plan was last updated in 2014).

- **Mapping and Assessment:** Conduct thorough mapping of existing cash initiatives and regular feasibility assessments of operational and government-led HCT systems. Use these assessments to identify gaps, opportunities, and areas for improvement.

- **Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing:** Facilitate training and capacity development activities for government and non-government stakeholders involved in cash programming. Share lessons learned and document best practices to improve future responses

- **Standardization and Harmonization:** Ensure alignment in transfer values, targeting approaches, and feedback mechanisms for cash in emergencies (whether as part of SRSP or parallel responses), building on national social protection frameworks to maintain consistency and efficiency.

- **Development of Joint Contingency Plans:** Collaboratively design contingency plans for rapid deployment of cash assistance during emergencies. This includes pre-agreed roles, responsibilities, and resources to enable quick action when crises occur

- Advocacy with Government to include cash assistance in its contingency plans.

WORKPLAN PRIORITIES

- Support Humanitarian Country Team to establish Cash Working Group to support with advocacy with the Government on the use of cash in emergencies.

- Capacity building and advocacy with government with the establishment of the new agency for social protection called National Agency for Social Protection.

9. PART 8: TURKMENISTAN

9.1. OVERVIEW OF RISKS.

Turkmenistan has a history of recurrent natural disasters that have caused significant economic and human loss. According to the Subnational INFORM model,³⁵ Turkmenistan has a relatively low risk profile with the majority of the administrative levels in Turkmenistan are in the low and very low risk categories, with only a small portion ranked as medium.

- Turkmenistan is a middle-income country with a population of 7,057,841 (based on 2022 census data), and about 34,9% are children.
- The lack of coping capacity analysis show moderate scores across all regions and institutional capacity is roughly consistent (ranges from 3.0 to 3.9) although the infrastructure capacity categories vary slightly.

- Specific administrative levels to highlight in Turkmenistan are **Mary** which has the overall risk, driven (high natural hazard and vulnerability rankings) and **Ahal** and **Lebap** (Moderate natural hazard risks).
- The INFORM assessment suggest that Turkmenistan faces less challenges related to disaster risk compared to other countries in Central Asia.
- The data reliability index however indicates that these results should be treated with caution and further defining of risk profiles at sub-national level will be required to enable data-driven prioritising of geographical locations and preparedness actions.
- As per the CCRI, in Turkmenistan the children climate risk is medium 4.6 but the climate environmental shocks are high 6.5 while the child vulnerability is low 2.0.

INFORM Risk Model- Turkmenistan

COUNTRY (a-z)	FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL (a-z)	Natural (0-10)	Human (0-10)	HAZARD & EXPOSURE (0-10)	Socio-Economic Vulnerability (0-10)	Vulnerable Groups (0-10)	VULNERABILITY (0-10)	Institutional (0-10)	Infrastructure (0-10)	LACK OF COPING CAPACITY (0-10)	INFORM RISK (0-10)	RISK CLASS (V.Low-V. High)	Rank (1-83)	Reliability Index (*) (0-10)
Turkmenistan	Ahal	5.0	0.3	3.0	3.4	3.1	3.3	3.5	4.1	3.8	3.4	Very Low	30	4.7
	Ashgabat (city)	2.4	0.3	1.4	2.4	3.0	2.7	3.5	2.4	3.0	2.2	Very Low	45	5.3
	Balkan	5.6	0.3	3.4	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.9	3.5	3.3	Very Low	31	4.7
	Daşoguz	2.6	0.3	1.5	3.7	2.9	3.3	3.8	4.3	4.1	2.7	Very Low	38	4.7
	Lebap	6.2	0.3	3.8	2.9	1.9	2.4	3.8	4.2	4.0	3.3	Very Low	31	4.7
	Mary	7.4	0.3	4.8	4.4	3.5	4.0	3.9	4.3	4.1	4.3	Low	19	4.7

Figure 9: NAME OF THE IMAGE BELOW.³⁶ (*) Reliability Index: 0 more reliable, 10 less reliable.

³⁵ Source: <https://cesdrr.org/en/inform-subnational-risk-model/>
³⁶ Source: <https://cesdrr.org/en/inform-subnational-risk-model/>

9.2. NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

- The need to systematically reduce the increased impact of disasters is gaining recognition and commitment due to the impact of climate change, which has made it clear that there is a need to accelerate actions on disaster risk reduction, resilience, and climate change adaptation.³⁷

9.3. NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

Turkmenistan has a comprehensive cash-based social transfer system with several non-contributory programmes protecting against defined lifecycle risks. This includes a childbirth allowance, childcare allowance for all children under 3, disability allowance for children, and for adults not in receipt of disability pension, and an allowance for loss of breadwinner, for orphans.

- These are financed by the State budget. In 67% of households at least one type of social transfers or pensions are received. The coverage of the universal child benefit is highest, at 97% (going down to 92% in Dashoguz velayat and to 93% in the lowest quintile).

- Social protection is a government priority under the Presidential Programme for Socio-economic Development of Turkmenistan (PPSD), recognized as a channel for delivering on the State motto “The State Is for People”.

- Social policies target two strategic objectives. One relates to labour and another relates to reducing the number of disadvantaged and vulnerable people through more and better targeted social assistance and higher quality social.^{38 39}

In addition, in 2023, the Shock Responsive Social Protection Readiness Assessment was conducted by the Government with UNICEF support. It

analyzed the feasibility or readiness of Turkmenistan’s SP system to provide cash assistance during emergencies to people affected by shocks, and demonstrated potential opportunities, barriers, and options (along policy, programmatic, systems, and related dimensions) for introducing emergency cash transfers in Turkmenistan. Emphasis was on building national partners’ capacities in HCTs, supporting partners from MLSP, Ministry of Defence Department of Emergency and Rescue Operations, MoFE, Central Bank, NRCST in joining the sub-regional and in-country practical workshops. The Readiness assessment recommendations are setting the base for the development of National Roadmap on introduction of HCTs into the social protection system.

9.4. SCOPING FINDINGS

COORDINATION

Coordination is led at the highest level by the President.

- The UNICEF-IFRC partnership has established a task force for general coordination, led by the Ministry of Civil Defence, Pension Fund as the programmatic lead and UNICEF as a Non-Programmatic/Section lead. The task force includes 16 Ministries and national partners, including Central bank, 2 national banks, and the Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan etc.

- There are plans in the future to create a subgroup for cash coordination under the task force with UNICEF and Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan as co-leads.

Apart from this coordination, inter-agency cash coordination is not functional in-country. The level of Inter-Agency Cash Coordination is generally described by majority of respondents as ad-hoc; coordination is sporadic and unstructured.

³⁷ <https://www.unicef.org/turkmenistan/press-releases/strengthening-local-and-national-capacities-emergency-preparedness-and-response/>

³⁹ Turkmenistan Shock Responsive Social Protection Report UNICEF pages 12 & 18

- Agencies and the Government may occasionally share information or coordinate on an as-needed basis. Apart from the government, other agencies like UNICEF, IFRC, NRCST and others are also supporting system and capacity building of national actors on cash preparedness for emergency response.

PREPAREDNESS

The Turkmenistan legal and policy framework for emergency preparedness and response setting out ways of working for emergency response are quite well developed. The shocks constituting an 'emergency situation', the emergency committee structure, the decentralised apparatus and cross-government engagement and responsibilities in EPR are well defined through a range of laws and decrees.

Relevant Legislation and Institutional Framework.

- Decree 11761 (2011) which covers the development of the activities of the State Commission for Emergency Situations.
- Decree 12283 (2012) outlines activities of the Civil Defence and Rescue Operations Directorate of the Ministry of Defence.
- Law on Civil Defence 2017 sits above this and includes the provisions for maintaining system readiness and response with material resources.
- Decree 13172 (2013) on the Central Services for Civil Defence and Emergency Situations sets out Central Services for Civil Defence and Emergency Situations in different line ministries and their activities.
- Decree 1156 (2019) for DRR platform: This is recognised as the National Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction.
- Law on Prevention and Response to Emergency Situations (2021): provides the legal framework for activities related to prevention of and response to emergency situations.
- National Law on Humanitarian Assistance in Emergencies (2019): this sets out the participation of international actors in emergency response, when government requests support.⁴⁰

As part of preparedness action, the national contingency plan for Turkmenistan was developed which highlight 14 classifications of hazard and disasters and how to response. The response is done usually through in-kind and at local level with some dedicated but at the local level.

- Other preparedness action from partners includes that UNICEF has supported SRSP readiness assessment, is undertaking the development

of an action plan for SRSP, a feasibility study of the national MIS, training to government.

- In 2023, the IFRC and the National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan carried out a feasibility analysis of CVA practical implementation, focusing on legal and financial systems. This was followed by CVA Self-assessment conducted in 2024 and resulted in development of the CVA Preparedness Plan of Action.

⁴⁰ Turkmenistan Shock Responsive Social Protection Report UNICEF page 18

SCOPING THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND OTHER CASH ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

TARGETING AND MODALITY SELECTION

Currently, different targeting mechanisms are used mainly based on local government lists. It is envisaged that in the future the central registry and database of beneficiaries from on the national social assistance program will be used for the targeting of emergency cash programmes.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Apart from internal training on cash by Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan, UNICEF, IFRC for their staff and government official as part of the BHA project in 2024, there have not been any joint cash training initiatives.

- The cash actors indicated that **Cash preparedness action, Cash feasibility Assessment and Gender, APP and other CVA Cross Cutting issues** are the key capacity needs and areas where they require support.

KEY FINDINGS

- The Coordination is led at the highest level by the President.

- A separate official coordination platform for development and humanitarian partners does not exist.

- Through the UNICEF-IFRC partnership a task force was established for general coordination, led by the Ministry of Civil Defense, Pension Fund as the programmatic lead and UNICEF as a Non-Programmatic/Section lead. The task force includes 16 Ministries and national partners, including Central bank, 2 national banks, and the Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan etc.

- There are plans in the future to create a subgroup for cash coordination under the task force with UNICEF and Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan as co-leads.

OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE USE AND COORDINATION OF SRSP AND CASH IN EMERGENCIES

In Turkmenistan, there are key opportunities to strengthen the use and coordination of SRSP and other cash assistance programmes in emergencies. These include:

- **Developing established protocols for cash assistance in emergencies.** For example, including cash assistance in the law of humanitarian assistance, and having a coordinated approach to the contingency planning, including the clear distribution of roles, responsibilities, and resources to enable quick action when crises occur.

- **Utilising the current national platform for enhanced sharing of experiences between partners, as well as trainings and simulation.**

- Joint strategic advocacy with all stakeholders on adaptation of measures related to cash in emergency.

WORKPLAN PRIORITIES

- Capacity building of actors and desktop simulation exercise to test an activation, protocols, roles, and interaction with national and local authorities.

- Advocating and awareness campaign for the government to include institutionalisation of cash assistance for humanitarian emergencies.

10. KEY FINDINGS ACROSS ALL FIVE COUNTRIES

Key findings of this scoping that cut across the five countries are:

- **The need for a common understanding of SRSP and cash assistance.** Stakeholders – whether individual, country, and organization/agency - had different types of understanding about Social Protection, SRSP and cash assistance in emergencies. This lack of consistency makes it hard to promote and coordinate these approaches effectively, and could lead to malpractice (i.e. attempts to align transfer values which have different objectives).

- **Institutionalising Social Protection and Cash Assistance in emergency planning.** Although efforts have been made to strengthen social protection systems and incorporate cash-based interventions during emergencies, gaps remain. There is still a need to institutionalize these approaches within core emergency planning documents (e.g., inter-agency humanitarian contingency plans, or Governmental contingency plans). This is further hindered by often limited coordination between emergency ministries and social protection agencies.

- **Opportunities to advance SRSP and cash assistance in a non-IASC context:** Despite being prone to numerous shocks, Central Asia it is not typically considered an Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) setting. This presents an opportunity to focus on strengthening national and localized approaches to emergency response. However, international actors often revert to assumptions and practice typical of more fragile contexts, for exam-

ple developing parallel humanitarian cash systems before evaluating the readiness of national social protection systems, or before exploring opportunities to work with localized approaches. This potential to align efforts with local systems is underutilized.

- **Tailoring SRSP and the coordination of cash in emergencies to each context:** The scoping exercise identified that different ways of coordinating the use of SRSP and cash in emergencies are emerging – from more traditional development forum and CWGs in Tajikistan, to a Government-led taskforce to coordinate SRSP and emergency cash activities in Turkmenistan.

- **The need for better documentation in the different countries for enhanced cross-subregional engagement and exchanges.** Different countries have advanced different topics, which are unique to the Central Asia context. There is an opportunity for better documentation of these different topics, to cross-fertilise best practices, noting that there is no-one-size-fits-all approach to coordination in the different countries.

- **Lack of Capacity for Cash Coordination in Non-IASC Settings:** There is a capacity gap when it comes to enabling effective cash coordination in non-IASC settings, where traditional humanitarian capacities may be less prevalent. Strengthening local capacity and coordination mechanisms for national response systems is essential to ensure sustainable approaches in this context.

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Turkmenistan Shock Responsive Social Protection Report UNICEF page 18



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