

## ARMENIA

### National Disaster Management Program

#### Disaster Context

Armenia is a landlocked mountainous country situated on the north-eastern part of the Armenian Plateau. The country covers an area of 29,800 square kilometres, including 1,256 square kilometres of surface water in Lake Sevan. The total population is currently estimated at 3 million, according to 2001 interim census data.

Armenia was in a state of severe crisis for much of the past 15 years. A devastating earthquake struck in 1988, killing 25,000 people. A six-year energy crisis also began in 1988, a situation exacerbated by the collapse of the Soviet Union and subsequent high inflation and economic isolation. Approximately 300,000 refugees came to Armenia and some 1 million people left the country between 1988 and 2002, a drain of over 30 percent of the total population. A series of floods and hailstorms struck several regions of the country in 1997, and a drought during 2000 and 2001 compounded the dire situation.

Armenia is prone to many types of natural disasters – earthquakes, landslides, hailstorms, droughts, strong winds and floods occur on a regular basis and cause substantial damage to populated areas. Women, children and the elderly are especially vulnerable to these hazards.

#### Project Title

Strengthening of National Capacity for Disaster Management (ARM/99/012)

#### Sectors

- Institutional capacity-building
- Civil security
- Public awareness
- Disaster management training

#### Funding

UNDP contributed \$600,000 in TRAC 1.1.3 funds and \$20,000 in TRAC 1.1.1 funds.

#### Partners

- Emergency Management Administration under the Government of the Republic of Armenia (EMA)
- National Survey for Seismic Protection
- National Disaster Medicine Centre
- National Stress Centre
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- National Armenian Red Cross Society
- Rescue teams
- Local communities

#### Programme Activities

- Establishment of Crisis Management Centre within the structure of the EMA.
- Development of a draft law on legal status of rescuers for further approval by the National Assembly of Armenia.
- Technical capacity building of all main national counterparts, and provision of equipment, including seismic equipment, ambulances, communications equipment and satellites.
- Development of risk and hazard maps for major natural disasters, such as earthquakes and landslides.
- Development and testing of Geographic Information Systems for major hazards.
- Development of a programme for the protection of populations residing near waste reservoirs of hazardous chemical objects.
- Technical passportization of 32 strategic hazardous constructions in the capital.
- Anti-landslide construction.

- Promotion of contemporary disaster management methodologies through publication, translation and dissemination of all available disaster management training modules to national institutions.
  - Development of new training curricula on psychological and medical aspects of disaster management.
  - Organization and implementation of “Young Rescuers Competition” with participation of schools from four regions of Armenia.
  - Training of more than 700 disaster specialists and 600 school teachers and students in risk and disaster management.
  - Training of state, non-governmental and voluntary rescue teams in water, winter and mountain search-and-rescue activities.
  - Training of potential victims of disasters, rescuers and aid workers in psychosocial aspects of disaster management.
  - Training of general population and medical personnel in vulnerable communities in medical aspects of disaster management.
  - Production of instructional videos on different aspects of disaster management.
  - Publication of leaflets and manuals on disaster management in Armenian.
-