

# Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery

## Disaster Reduction Unit (DRU)



### Project title:

Local risk management in earthquake zones of Kazakhstan

### Project number:

00035735

### Programme components:

Natural disaster reduction

**Estimated start date:** 1/9/2004

**Estimated end date:** 1/12/2005

**Implementing agency:** Emergency Agency of Kazakhstan

**Partners:** Red Crescent Society of Kazakhstan, GEF Small Grants Programme, Asian Disaster Reduction Centre, American Red Cross Society

**Total budget:** US\$ 162,500

**Beneficiary countries:** Kazakhstan

### General background

Owing to its diverse geography, climate and infrastructure, Kazakhstan is subject to numerous natural and man-made disasters. In May 2003 the Zhambyl region was hit by a major earthquake that affected 43,300 people and brought devastation to housing and social infrastructure. The consequences of the earthquake showed that individuals and the local administrative authorities, including medical centres, were not prepared for such disasters. Moreover, the scale of the disaster would have been less if the local population had been adequately informed about the potential dangers of a catastrophic earthquake and the measures needed to mitigate the possible effects. Currently, national disaster preparedness measures are inadequate since they fail to cover the majority of the population. In this context, early preparedness, awareness and the mobilization of non-governmental and community-based organizations – as well as local communities themselves – are indispensable for better human safety and security.

### Project summary:

In response to an umbrella initiative by the DRU, this project is designed to support local level risk management. The project aims to help Kazakhstan strengthen local communities to participate in earthquake early warning and preparedness, and to provide the knowledge and skills required for effective mitigation in the event of local disasters. The project is based on the results and lessons learned following the earthquake in southern Kazakhstan in May 2003, and is designed to foster public/private partnerships.

### Overall and specific objectives:

- To strengthen the capacities of local communities to participate in early warning and preparedness for earthquakes; and to equip them with the knowledge and skills required for the effective mitigation of the effects of natural disasters.
- To raise the level of awareness of the local population, decision-makers and public about natural, technological and environmental disasters so that they can better understand the benefits of prevention and preparedness.

### Expected results:

- A survey of the most hazardous and vulnerable settlements; evaluation of the infrastructure, scientific and monitoring capacity and the preparedness of civil society; and elaboration of ways to predict natural disasters;
- Local communities and media who are knowledgeable about earthquake preparedness in the disaster zones of Kazakhstan and Almaty oblast in particular; several risk management initiatives;
- The development, promotion and approval of a government programme on “risk reduction and mitigation of damages from natural disasters” and the allocation of government resources for preparatory measures.

### Activities:

- Carry out a desk review and consultation process to seek the advice of experts on priority actions to enhance local risk management initiatives;
- Develop and distribute teaching modules, textbooks, publications, a television programme and film for schools, universities and households on disaster preparedness measures;
- Implement a pilot project (together with GEF/SGP) and organise community events to raise awareness about disaster reduction and promote community participation and interest;
- Initiate a consultation process with government officials to enhance disaster management initiatives;

- Assist in establishing a mechanism for mobilizing additional funds and support to priority projects of the “risk reduction and mitigation of damages from natural disasters” programme;
- Provide disaster management training to the Red Crescent Society of Kazakhstan to improve their capacity to respond in the event of a catastrophic earthquake;
- Provide regional training for key decision-makers to enhance disaster preparedness in Kazakhstan;
- Organise a workshop to evaluate experiences and activities which could be repeated in other areas/cities in the region.

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