



DRR IN

# Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan

Both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are prone to numerous disasters, including floods, landslides and mudslides, drought, earthquakes, and avalanches. The impact of these disasters is often exacerbated by poor local planning, self help housing and non-compliance to construction codes. In mountainous areas, for example, deforestation, ploughing, and animal grazing have caused extensive destruction of the soil cover, leading to costlier (and deadlier) mudslides and landslides. The frequency and impact of disasters is increasing as a result of climate change and poor environmental management.

In 2009 there were 189 natural disasters in Tajikistan, leaving 45 dead. The geography, climate and topography of the Kyrgyz Republic make it prone to hydro-meteorological, geological and geo-physical hazards. Natural hazards include earthquakes, land and mudslides, avalanches, frosts, droughts, and floods. Heavy snowfall accumulations at higher elevations lead to spring floods which often cause serious downstream damage. Some hazards are seasonal and occur annually; while others are rarer but potentially highly destructive. The country is classified as the

most seismically dangerous territory in Central Asia with 3,000 to 5,000 earthquakes registered annually. More than 20 large-scale natural disasters occurred in Kyrgyzstan between 1992-2008, in which more than 420 people were killed and approximately 234,590 people affected. More recently, Kyrgyzstan faced the destructive effects of landslides, floods, mudslides resulting from heavy rains in Jalalabad, Batken, Talas and Chui provinces in April-June 2009. In addition, a series of earthquakes measuring 5-6 on the Richter scale was recorded in Talas, Osh, and Jalalabat provinces in April, 2009. On October 5, 2008 there was an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.6 in southern Kyrgyzstan. The worst affected area was the village Nura in Alai district, approximately 220 kilometres from the main city of Osh – the village was entirely destroyed as buildings were razed to the ground and according to official sources, a total of 75 people died. As is so often the case, the most vulnerable groups bore the brunt: 37 of the 75 dead were children (14 pre-school children and 23 school students) and 18 were vulnerable elderly individuals.



## Save the Children's Presence in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan

Save the Children started work in Central Asia in 1992, providing food, clothing and shelter to children and families in need. Our programs ensure that all children are born healthy, are properly and adequately fed and cared for in their families and attend safe schools providing quality education for all children. We strive to keep children safe from harm, particularly street children and those living in institutions and orphanages.

In Tajikistan, Save the Children works in Dushanbe, the capital city, and with isolated rural communities in Khatlon province in the south and Soghd province in the north. In Kyrgyzstan, we work in areas including Osh, Chui, Naryn and Talas. Our areas of focus include education, teacher training, health, child protection and children's rights.

Over the past 3 years in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan Save the Children has implemented 2 DRR programs with funding from DIPECHO. Collectively the programs have reached over 159,200 people directly.

### Child-led Preparedness and Response

Through the DIPECHO funded project 'community based disaster risk management', communities are taught to be better prepared to cope with natural disasters and actively influence disaster risk reduction. We implement mechanisms at a national and local level to protect children in disasters. Save the Children strengthen child-led and community-based disaster preparedness and response capacity at all levels of engagement in both Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and improve the links between community, district and national level planning. Save the Children works at three levels: through child-led DRR initiatives at the school level (linked to activities to integrate DRR into the existing national curriculum), through developing community-based DRR planning and response systems (linked to district level DRR and response planning), and by supporting communities in their practical use through simulations and small-scale mitigation interventions. Communities and children participated in the following activities: attended a child rights convention, learnt about child protection in emergencies, conducted hazard mapping, prepared early warning system, and were involved in the development of risk maps using the Google Earth program. Small scale mitigation projects with 35-40% of community participation in more than 25 communities have been undertaken with DipECHO support. In addition, the key disaster risk preparedness messages were disseminated through children facilitators and child-to-child learning.

Save the Children builds community/village level capacity to respond to disasters – with a specific focus on addressing children's vulnerability. The program builds on the existing structures in the communities, expanding risk analysis and disaster risk reduction lessons to the village and school levels. Community disaster response plans are linked to the government planning and response system through the Committee (in Tajikistan) and Ministry (in Kyrgyzstan) of Emergency Situations.

### Capacity Building

Save the Children reduces community vulnerability and strengthens national DRR capacities in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan by helping national institutions to integrate DRR in education and child protection in emergencies and increased awareness among local and national actors to DRR to promote a 'culture of prevention'.

Save the Children has been working with national authorities and has developed a strong partnership with the Committee of Emergency Situations (COES) and Ministry of Emergency Situations (MOES) in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan respectively. The Committee of Emergency Situations in Tajikistan and the Ministry of Emergency Situations in Kyrgyzstan are the national authority bodies that take the lead on disaster risk reduction as well as emergency response at the national level. Save the Children together with COES/MOES reviewed child protection in emergencies training materials and developed country specific training modules and supported the integration of child protection into provincial and district COES/MOES emergency training plans in both Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

### DRR and Education

Save the Children has shown a strong commitment to ensuring the participation of the Ministry of Education and by fostering a leadership role for children in DRR. Save the Children has incorporated disaster preparedness formally and informally through education programs. These programs teach children how to protect themselves and offer children opportunities to spread information and raise awareness of DRR issues. Save the Children strengthened the integration of DRR into the formal education system in Tajikistan and developed subject specific teacher guides to integrate DRR into the existing curriculum, beginning with the development and testing of geography and physics lessons. We developed teacher guides targeting the 5th – 9th school class which included lesson plans, methods and practical examples on DRR teaching.



**Above:** DRR training for children in school, Tajikistan

**Cover:** Boys at a distribution point supported by Save the Children in the neighborhood of Kizil Kishtak in Osh, Kyrgyzstan.