

Early Childhood Development and Education in Emergencies



COUNTRY PROFILES

Bosnia and Herzegovina | Georgia
Kyrgyzstan | Moldova | Tajikistan

The Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Tajikistan country profiles were prepared by Aigly Zafeirakou. She co-authored the Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia country profiles together with Radmila Rangelov-Jusovic and Marika Shonia respectively.

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The cover photograph was taken in 2004 in Georgia by Nelly Kepuledze. The children shown in the photos in this publication are children enrolled in the early childhood programs of ISSA's national member organizations, as well as those participating in programs supported by UNICEF. Photographs appearing in the Georgian country profile on pages 34, 39, 45, 47, 48, and 50 are reprinted with permission from the UNICEF Newsletter 1, 2009. (UNICEF in Georgia, Newsletter, 1(12), 2009).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

2–7

Introduction

8–27

Bosnia and Herzegovina

28–54

Georgia

55–74

Kyrgyzstan

75–96

Moldova

96–127

Tajikistan

INTRODUCTION

The *five country profiles on early childhood development and education in emergencies* in the CEE/CIS region (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Tajikistan), are the result of a partnership project between UNICEF and ISSA, focused on mapping Early Childhood Development (ECD) resources in the region for emergency preparedness. The profiles provide an overview of the emergency context in the five countries, especially with regard to the needs and rights of young children and their families. *Making children an immediate priority in emergency planning and management in the CEE/CIS region* is the main lesson from this exercise.

The focus on young children in emergency preparedness in the CEE/CIS region is in line with recent thinking at a global level on the prevention, mitigation, and response to the negative effects of emergencies on children, especially young children. Child development in the early years – from birth to the age of eight – is critical for overall human development and depends on effective care, stable and loving relationships, and adequate stimulation. International analysis and research on poverty alleviation and on disaster reduction shows that in the case of emergencies, (i.e., disasters induced by natural events and human factors¹), young children and the elderly are among the first victims and most vulnerable groups. Young children in emergency situations are more likely to experience life-threatening and other physically, emotionally, and socially extreme situations. Young children, when the protective family mechanism weakens or breaks down, become more vulnerable to violence, abuse, and exploitation. It has been demonstrated that prolonged “toxic stress” resulting from intense adverse experiences in early childhood can result in permanent changes in the development of the brain.²

Disasters caused by natural hazards can be especially traumatic for children and youth. Experiencing a dangerous or violent flood, storm, wildfire, or earthquake is frightening even for adults, and the devastation to the familiar environment (i.e., home and community) can have long-lasting and distressing effects. Often an entire community is impacted, further undermining a child’s sense of security and normalcy. These factors present unique issues and coping challenges, including the need to relocate when the home and/or community have been destroyed. The role of the family becomes especially important in the case of young children with respect to buffering or exacerbating the trauma and emotional reactions.

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1. This report uses the following definition of *emergencies*: Emergencies include situations such as disasters, violent conflict, or complex crises that generate a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society involving widespread human, material, economic, or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.
 2. *The Effects of Childhood Stress Across the Lifespan*, CDC/USA, 2008.

The negative impacts of emergencies on young children are multiple, affecting all dimensions of their development. Physical injury, loss of parents, caregivers, or other family members, friends, and neighbors; neglect because parents or caregivers are also distressed and physically or emotionally unable to provide effective care, food, and support; loss of house and other possessions; disruption of daily routines – these all have a negative impact on child psychology. Lack of basic hygiene makes young children vulnerable to infectious diseases. The breakdown of infrastructures can result in a lack of access to clean/safe water, sanitation, shelter, and food. The collapse of social structures can result in exposure to violence, crime, abuse, and exploitation. The disruption of daily life leads to the lack of opportunity to play and interact with peers and caregivers. These can undermine the young child’s physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development.³

Most children, with adequate help from parents and other caring adults, will be able to cope over time. However, some children may be at risk of showing more extreme reactions. The severity of children’s reactions depends on their specific risk factors, such as exposure to the actual event, personal injury, or loss of a loved one, as well as pre-existing risks, such as a previous traumatic experience or mental illness. The quality of their support network (family, community, school) is also a factor. Symptoms of more severe distress may differ depending on age, but can include thumb sucking, bedwetting, clinging to parents, sleep disturbances, loss of appetite, fear of the dark, regression in behavior, and withdrawal from friends and routines.⁴

To what extent are the needs⁵ of young children and their families taken into account in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery in the CEE/CIS region? Before any answer to that question can be provided, one should have a picture of young children’s status in the region. According to the latest UNICEF analysis,⁶ children in CEE/CIS countries, following two decades of transition, remain vulnerable. While the last decade of economic growth helped improve all indicators of child well-being, they also made inequalities more visible within countries. Furthermore, with the global economic crisis, there is a risk of diversion of resources from social expenditure and support of families and children. Reduced public investment in the needs of young children,

3. Early Childhood Care and Development in Emergencies Working Group EEWG, www.ecdgroup.com/emergencies.asp.

4. National Commission on Children and Disasters, October 2009, *Draft Interim Report*, Washington, D.C.

5. The report uses the following definition of children’s needs in emergencies: mental and behavioral health, physical health and trauma, child care, and education (National Commission on Children and Disasters, October 2009, *Draft Interim Report*, Washington, D.C.).

6. UNICEF, 2009. “Child Well-Being at a Crossroads: Evolving challenges in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Innocenti Social Monitor 2009”, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Florence.

together with poor public capacity of delivering services and decentralization of accountabilities, will likely present long-term implications for child development, school completion, social stability, and poverty reduction. Thus, the challenge for CEE/CIS countries continues to be to develop policies to reduce inequalities in terms of access to basic services for children and their families, as well as to identify and integrate children at risk of marginalization.

In addition to the economic context, multiple emergencies (both the natural and man-made disasters regularly observed in the CEE/CIS region) have a strong impact on development, including human survival and the protection of young children. The most common types of natural disasters in the region are hydro-meteorological disasters (floods, storms, droughts, and related disasters), geophysical disasters (earthquakes), and biological disasters. The majority of reported disaster-related deaths in the region are related to drought, floods, and earthquakes.⁷ In addition, a number of deadly conflicts have occurred both between countries in the region and within countries (the Bosnia and Herzegovina war of 1995; the civil war in Tajikistan, terminated in 1997; the armed conflict between Russia and Georgia in 2008). These conflicts resulted in fatalities among young children, as well as in other negative impacts such as injury, loss of parents and/or caregivers, neglect, loss of house, loss of family members, or disruption of daily routines.

During the last decade, governments in the region, together with international organizations and initiatives (International Strategy for Disaster Reduction ISDR, EU initiatives and programs), have partnered to reduce disaster risks and to provide recovery as part of a global agenda (Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, GFDRR). Still, the role of school systems and education, as well as the needs of children, are not generally fully integrated in the regional or country-level emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, despite a thematic cluster “Platform on Knowledge and Education” established within the ISDR Interagency Task force (2005) and some promising country-based programs.

Taking all of this into account, the purpose of preparing the five country profiles on ECD in emergency preparedness are a first attempt: (i) to provide valuable basic information on ECD/Education in emergencies in the selected countries; (ii) to outline key issues on further boosting the agenda of young children’s needs and ECD within the emergency strategies; (iii) to identify emergency related risks and vulnerabilities that could arise in ECD/Education; and (iv) to document the present capacities and eventual gaps of key players in the ECD subsector. The five profiles represent a starting point for additional systematic work to assess and document the

7. ISDR, Disaster Statistics 1995–2005 at www.ISDR.org.

presence and capacity of ECD and education structures and actors with respect to emergency knowledge, emergency training programs, and emergency materials, as well as the availability for national and regional players of emergency technical documents, including strategies and action plans.

What Issues Do The Five Country Profiles in CEE/CIS Region Reveal?

Young children's needs and ECD are generally absent from the emergency preparedness and response strategies in the region. Each of the five country profiles identifies a general omission of young children from emergency preparedness and response strategies. This is worrisome given the fact that the most vulnerable groups in case of emergencies are precisely the young children, together with the elderly, especially those from low socio-economic families and those living in rural areas. While CEE/CIS countries with international support are developing or reviewing the country strategies and plans and mechanisms for emergency preparedness response and recovery, little has been done at the level of education preparedness and response to emergencies, and a great deal remains to be done in order to include the needs of young children and the ECD sub-sector in this work. The issue of integrating children's needs far more prominently in national emergency strategies and action plans is critically important. A consistent, continuous, advocacy action initiated by international organizations promoting the rights and needs of young children in partnership with all ECD stakeholders at the country level is crucial in order to address this issue.

Limited coverage of preschoolers is an obstacle to address the needs of young children in emergency planning and management; it is crucial to also address those outside existing ECD services. In four out of five countries, the coverage of ECD services is below 50% for 3- to 5-year-olds, going down to 10% in some countries (Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan) and as low as 3% in rural areas. This situation is rather similar to other countries in the CEE/CIS region. In this respect, it is crucial to support countries in developing strategies addressing the needs of young children in case of emergencies not only within the existing system of ECD services and institutions, but also outside, in order to reach young children through families and communities. The second area of intervention fits well with the priority of most country emergency plans to support emergency preparedness and response at the community level.

The profiles underline the consequences of the multi-sector dimension of early childhood. The profiles show how, in each country, the children's needs are addressed by various institutions and expertise, which are all also supposed to play their role in emergency situations. The profiles underline that in order to make an ECD in emergencies strategy successful and effective, it is critical to take an integrated, multi-sector approach in each country, including health, social

protection, community organization, and schools, among others, as well as working through the national, sub-national, as well as community levels. Beyond common characteristics, the profiles stress that such multi-sector approaches will have particularities in each country.

The importance of integrating and taking full advantage of available in country and regional experience, expertise and field presence. The five profiles suggest building on existing experiences in the region in order to achieve the integration of children's needs into existing and new emergency strategies and action plans. This should include sharing information in terms of initiatives, training, material, and measures about lessons learned across the region regarding addressing the needs of young children within national agendas on emergency preparedness response and recovery.

Table 1 on the following page presents a synopsis of information from the five country profiles regarding four key areas: enrolment in early education; recent natural and man-made disasters; education plans for emergencies, including ECD; availability of ECD in emergencies, programs, training, and materials.

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Table 1: Synopsis of ECD in Emergencies – Five Country Profiles

	ECD enrolment for children aged 3–6	Recent country natural and man-made disasters	Education plans for emergencies, including ECD	Available programs, training, materials
Moldova	80 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood, droughts, earthquakes, Fragile status of Transnistria 	Education Focal Point and emergency plans for schools, including kindergartens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic evacuation plans in kindergartens Basic information for schools, including kindergartens, once a year Psychosocial Component in the Emergency Response System
Bosnia and Herzegovina	13.2 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural disasters, war, and post-conflict recovery 	No coordinated disaster management at the state level; high decentralization among Entities, Cantons, and Municipalities; the same for Education; no reference to ECD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mine Risk Education program, including training and materials TV programs and videos psychosocial support programs Peace education programs
Georgia	50 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earthquakes, floods, landslides, avalanches, etc. Armed conflict 2008 	No available information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher training on Crisis Psychology Mine Risk Education ECD networks and partnerships for developing ECD psychosocial sub-sector, providing training recreation kits, Child Development Center and ECD services for displaced children
Kyrgyzstan	11%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High frequency of natural disasters, (around 200 per year), earthquakes, and energy shortages Toxic and radioactive waste MoE Focal Point, nothing specific to ECD Ongoing effort to prepare emergency and mitigation plans at local level 	Education Focal Point for Emergencies; no specific reference to ECD; decentralized system for Disaster Risk Management; MoE asks Local Education offices to prepare emergency plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National TV program <i>Keremet Koch</i> “Healthy Lifestyle” information booklet; First Aid for Children Booklet on good practices and lessons learned in community and school based disaster preparedness in Central Asia, 2008; UNISDR, Geneva
Tajikistan	10 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide variety of natural disasters: earthquakes, floods, landslides, avalanches, and energy shortages Civil war during the 1990s 	MoE Focal Point for emergencies; National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and Plan under preparation; not clear if referenced to ECD and children needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good number of materials for school preparedness and response to emergencies, under the REACT and DIPECHO programs Training of ECD HR on Psychosocial Support for Young Children in Emergencies



COUNTRY PROFILE

Early Childhood Development and Education in Emergencies **BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA**

Radmila Rangelov-Jusovic, Bosnia and Herzegovina

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Country Context	10
B. The Context: Characteristics of Young children, Parents'/Caregivers' Situations, and the Preschool System in Bosnia and Herzegovina	11
C. Disaster Risk Analysis	14
D. Government Institutions Responsible for Emergencies and Coordination Mechanisms	16
E. National Policies, Strategies and Ongoing Programs for Emergencies	18
F. Education and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies	20
G. Recommendations	22
H. Reference List	25
Annex: Bosnia and Herzegovina – Country Profile	26

Emergencies: *Emergencies include situations such as natural disasters, violent conflicts, or complex crises in which large segments of the population are at risk of dying, experience immense suffering and/or face loss of dignity, and are in need of external support.*

A. Country Context

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH), one of the former republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, is situated in south-eastern Europe, on the western Balkan Peninsula, and has a population of approximately four million. The country declared its independence in March 1992. The four-year war that followed left the country's resources devastated. Approximately 1.2 million people, nearly half the pre-war population, became refugees, and one million were internally displaced. It is estimated that over 200,000 people, mainly civilians, were killed. Among these were nearly 17,000 children. Some 35,000 children are estimated to have been wounded and approximately 1,800 disabled.

The Dayton Peace Agreement signed in November 1995 ended the war and started the peace process. This established BH as a state comprising two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBH) and the Republika Srpska (RS); there is a small disputed region in the north of the country, the District of Brčko, which comes under international administration.

Twelve years after the war, BH's infrastructure and services have been restored to almost pre-war levels. In 2009, BH's development horizon was dominated by accession to the European Union (EU). The country is officially a 'potential candidate', and a significant majority of the population sees its future as being within the EU. The reforms required are both extensive and enormously challenging. Recent years have seen some concrete signs of commitment to reform: the Partnership for Peace agreement signed with NATO in late 2006, and the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) signed with the European Commission in June 2008. However, BH continues to grapple with the post-war political structures which were set up, and socio-economic transition. The Dayton Peace Agreement established BH as a state with limited central power. It assigned competency for social, educational, health care and fiscal policies to many levels of government and administration (including the state, the Republika Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina with its ten Cantons, and the District of Brčko).

In addition to the State Council of Ministers, both entities of BH have separate ministries, as do the ten Cantons in the FBH. Governance is thus shared by 13 political units, each possessing constitutional and legislative authority; it is managed by some 181 ministries. This fragmentation constrains the provision of equitable services and threatens sustainability because of extremely high administrative costs.

The BH economy has seen stable macroeconomic growth in recent years. GDP growth has averaged 6% per annum since 2000, largely due to trade integration with the EU. The international financial crisis is beginning to be felt, however, as economic indicators weaken: imports and exports have declined dramatically; EU and regional commodity prices have dropped, as has demand. At 5.5%, growth in 2008 was down on 2007, while this year's GDP is expected to reflect the downturn in the balance of payments.

Despite some economic improvement, poverty remains widespread. One in five households (18.4%) lives below a relative general poverty line; figures for 2007 figures show higher numbers of heads of households who are pensioners (19.5%), unemployed or looking for work (23.4%), 'housewives' (25.5%), or disabled (44.4%).

B. The Context: Characteristics of Young Children, Parents'/Caregivers' situation, and the Preschool System in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The last ten years in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been characterized by transition processes in all spheres of the society which, directly or indirectly, have impacted on the lives of children. The country is additionally burdened by efforts to overcome the consequences of the recent conflict; while adverse economic fluctuations also reflect the increase in poverty rates. The poorest population categories include families with three or more children (66% of this group lives in poverty), and households with two children (nearly one third, or 32% of this population lives in poverty).



UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys show that the total full immunization rate is only 61.2%. Polio coverage has dropped to 79%, while immunization against measles has increased from 25 to 75%. Only 17% of children under six months are exclusively breast-fed; 20% of children aged 0–11 months are fed adequately. As far as domestic violence is concerned, 35% of children aged 2–14 have been subject to at least one form of psychological or physical punishment from their mother or other household members. MICS 2006 confirms the degree of positive correlation between parents' education and the likelihood of violence: women with a low educational status tend to accept domestic violence and physical punishment.

In spite of numerous laws that regulate the field of social and child protection in BH, the conclusions are that there is no minimum set of standards as regards the protection of children and families, which could be harmonized at the state level.

The data from the Living Standards Measurement Survey (UNDP, 2001) show that approximately 5% of BH's population is illiterate. However, there are currently no reliable data on literacy rates. Furthermore, there are no reliable data on the structure of the country's population as regards education levels. According to data provided by the BH Household Budget Survey (UNDP, 2004), 8.7% have had no formal education; 34% have only completed primary education; 49.7% reached secondary education; 5.1% reached post-secondary education; and 4.3% have completed higher education.

Children aged up to 14 years constitute 18.33% of the total population. According to latest data, population trends have displayed worrying tendencies: since 2002, the trend has been negative in RS and equaled -1.1 for 2004; in FBH in the same year it amounted to $+1.7$.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has the lowest percentage of preschool-age children enrolled in such education in Europe (6–12%, mostly in urban areas). All data are estimates, due to the lack of proper statistical data at all levels; the last census was carried out in 1991.

Last year, 16,260 children were placed in 196 preschool institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to data from the Federal Institute for Statistics, the number of children included in preschool education who had been brought up in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina during school year 2007/2008 stood at 8,724. This represents roughly 13.2% of the estimated eligible population of 66,000 young children between 3–6 years of age.

Table 1: The number of children, preschool institutions and educators in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (data overview for a five-year period)

Category	School year					Over the five-year period	
	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	increase/decrease %	
Children	8,761	8,298	8,081	8,029	8,724	-37	-0.42
Educators	652	680	647	644	674	+22	+3.37
Preschool institutions	123	129	129	128	124	+1	+0.81

According to data submitted by the Association of Employees in Preschool Institutions in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the number of children at nursery age (between six months and three years old) who are included in the programs of public preschool institutions totals 1,694. It is estimated that approximately 3% of the eligible nursery-age population currently uses nursery services. Private institutions provide most of these services in large cities.



Within the education reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina, nine years of primary education was introduced for the 2005/2006 school year, which has caused a further decrease in the number of children in preschool institutions. The most important novelty introduced within this structure is that children start going to school at the age of six, rather than seven years of age, which was the rule before the reform. However, in the territory of the FBH, the reform of primary school education has not been implemented at the same pace in each Canton.

There are no organized preparatory classes or other transition programs; obligatory preschool classes, intended to start in the 2009/10 school year, were postponed due to difficult economical conditions.

The reasons for the current early childhood education situation are multiple. The coverage of children in preschool education and care is not free of charge; this poses a problem for families which are vulnerable in a socio-economic sense, and most especially children from marginalized groups such as the Roma, minority groups, and displaced people whose mothers often work outside of the home. The network of preschool institutions has not yet branched out sufficiently, and they are rarely accessible to children from the rural communities. Preschooling remains a privilege given only to children living in urban areas. Current trends in the development of preschool institutions do not allow for a significant increase in preschool education services. Educators and associates in preschool institutions are insufficiently trained for educational and care-giving work with children who have special needs. This poses a problem for the successful implementation of inclusive preschool education. In addition, there is also the problem of insufficient adjustment of premises in preschool institutions (stairs, toilets, entrances), which hampers the movement of children who have wheelchairs or other physical challenges. Most preschool institutions lack playground and other facilities, and teaching materials. Greatly increased teacher training is needed on contemporary trends and innovations in preschool education, including active-learning methodologies, play centers and effective early-language development and literacy methods.

According to the MICS Survey (UNDP, 2006) the net enrollment rate in primary education amounts to 97.2%. Some of the key results of UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys have shown that, compared to 2000, the net primary school attendance rate increased from 94 to 98.4%, but the attendance rate for Grade 1 was reduced from 94 to 90.7%.

C. Disaster Risk Analysis

Hazard/threat. A number of issues continue to pose problems for BH in terms of human security. Some of these are a direct result of the 1992–1995 conflict, particularly issues regarding unexploded landmines, weapons and ammunition. Currently, 34% of the territory of BH is contaminated with landmines (approximately 1,700 km²). The most recent estimate of the number of unexploded mines is 220,000. Mines, therefore, continue to pose a major threat to the lives of BH citizens. Casualty rates (both fatal and otherwise) in BH have, however, steadily decreased since the end of the war. Child casualties decreased to single cases in 2006 and 2007, and zero in 2008. All casualties now seem to be adult males who intentionally enter mined areas for economic reasons. Of the 52 casualties reported during the period, 15 involved accidents in unmarked areas. Landmines also impede development for tourism, agriculture and environmental protection.

Another legacy of the war is the widespread presence of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and ammunition. An estimated 19% of the population possess SALW; 16%, or approximately 495,000 of households possess these weapons illegally. Although considerable progress has been made regarding the destruction of weapons and ammunition, the high levels in civilian and military possession, as well as BH's large military stockpile of surplus ammunition, continue to pose a threat to personal security.¹

In addition to political and socio-economic issues, natural phenomena such as flooding, heavy snowfall and landslides hit Bosnia and Herzegovina almost every year, causing a variety of humanitarian challenges. During the first part of 2009, the country experienced two emergency situations: a cold snap and flooding. Global warming and climate change may mean that the incidence of these phenomena will not decrease in the near future, but rather intensify. Furthermore, there is increasing public awareness of risks such as industrial accidents, the increase of road accidents, and increased population movement. The level of poverty and the existing weaknesses in the country increase the destructive effects of natural and man-made disasters for the most vulnerable.²

Vulnerability. Multiple groups are considered particularly vulnerable due to various reasons and different needs. They include the following:

- more than one-third of the population is unemployed, especially youth (almost two-thirds of whom are unemployed);

1. Common Country Assessment 2008, UN Country Team in Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: <http://undg.org/docs/10263/CCA-BH-2008-FINAL-WEB-ENG.pdf>

2. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies office in Sarajevo, Program Update, 31 August 2009.

- pensions are below the official threshold of relative poverty, making elderly people a particularly vulnerable group;
- those dependent on social welfare allowances;
- people with disabilities with a limited safety net;
- a high number of displaced people and minority groups face discrimination and exclusion;
- human trafficking has emerged as a potential risk, especially to women.

Increasing food and energy prices, exacerbated by the recent introduction of value added taxes (VAT), adds to the hardship that the vulnerable experience.

Extremely low temperatures hit parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina in January 2009, followed by a lack of gas supplies, which worsened the conditions of those most vulnerable. Heavy rainfall in the second half of January and early February caused severe flooding in southern Bosnia and Herzegovina. Some 2,630 people from 765 families were affected, and almost 170 houses were flooded. Food reserves were destroyed, water sources contaminated, and vast areas of cultivated land flooded.

Poor quality infrastructure, narrow roads and mountain passes make access difficult and physical structures more vulnerable to the impact of floods and other natural hazards. Potential access to disaster-affected areas is further challenged by the presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance in many parts of the country. Moreover, the current political situation, characterized by the delicate balance between various entities and administrative structures, is further exacerbated by regional events and complications arising from neighboring countries. In addition, the proposed announcement by the Peace Implementation Council of the closure of the Office of the High Representative is a cause for concern.



D. Government Institutions Responsible for Emergencies and Coordination Mechanisms

Disaster management and risk reduction capacity is not coordinated at the state level, because responsibility is highly decentralized among state ministries.

The current legislation at state level is based on a set of laws defining the roles and the competences of all the administrative levels involved in civil protection. The Law on Ministries and other administrative bodies³ in Bosnia and Herzegovina has transferred some civil protection competences from the entity to the state level. This is summarized as follows.

The *Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina* has competence over: the protection of international borders; inner border crossings; traffic regulation at BH border crossings; prevention and detection of perpetrators of criminal acts of terrorism; narcotics trafficking; falsification of domestic and foreign currency; human trafficking; and other criminal acts with international or inter-entity elements. It also has competence for international cooperation in all fields falling within the Ministry's scope.

The Ministry of Security is further competent for: the protection of persons and buildings; the collection and use of intelligence of interest to the security of BH; organizing and streamlining the efforts of entity ministries of internal affairs and those of Brčko District in the field of security issues of interest to BH; fulfilling international commitments and co-operation in enforcing civil protection; co-ordinating entity civil protection services and their plans in case of natural or other disasters within BH; and the development of protection and rescue plans and programs.

The Ministry of Security also enforces immigration and asylum policy in BH and regulates procedures in regard to the movement and stay of aliens.

The *Ministry of Transport and Communications* defines strategic planning in the areas of international and inter-entity communications, transport, infrastructure and information technologies.

The *Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees* is responsible for cooperation with the Red Cross Association, the International Red Cross Committee, and humanitarian organizations.

The *Ministry of Civil Affairs* is responsible for minefield clearance activities.

3. *Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 5/03 and 45/06.



The Law on Ministries and other Administrative Bodies in Bosnia and Herzegovina also defines procedures for the approval of military assistance to civilian authorities in the case of disasters, according to the authorizations of the *State Presidency*.

The FBH and the Republika Srpska, along with Brčko Federal District, exercise a degree of autonomy from the state, under which they have full independence when it comes to operational matters. They must be considered as separate units, despite being under the mandate of the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina in matters including strategic planning, coordination and international cooperation.

The two entities and Brčko District (within the framework of their competences in the area of protection and rescue) define, plan, train, organize, finance and execute protection and rescue with the aim of reducing risks and removing or mitigating the harmful consequences of disasters caused by natural or other hazards. In the event of disasters, the Ministry of Security cooperates with the Red Cross Association and other humanitarian organizations to manage protection and rescue operations.

At lower levels of civil protection and rescue organization, entity civil protection administrations (Civil Protection Administration of the FBH, and the Civil Protection Administration of the Republika Srpska) and the Department for Public Security of Brčko District (Civil Protection Service) are organized and operational.

E. National Policies, Strategies and Ongoing Programs for Emergencies

Concerning national policies, the key relevant existing legislation include the following.⁴

- The Law on Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina⁵ states that the Ministry of Defense has the authority to engage military forces in the case of disasters, upon request from appropriate civilian bodies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or the entities through the Parliamentary Assembly.
- The Law on Mine Clearance in Bosnia and Herzegovina⁶ regulates the organizational structure of mine clearance, and of monitoring mines and unexploded ordnance in the country. It also defines which bodies have competence for mine clearance, the rights and obligations of those who carry out mine clearance, and controls the execution of this law.
- The Law on the Red Cross Association of Bosnia and Herzegovina (RCA-BH)⁷ defines the role and the competences of the Red Cross in cases of disaster caused by natural hazards, epidemics or other emergencies. The RCA-BH has authority over energy supply, border control, transport of people and goods, as well as over the broadcasting of information.

There are several other laws promulgated by the Bosnia and Herzegovina state parliament with potential bearing on the civil protection sector during emergencies.⁸

Legislation covering civil protection is currently undergoing major transition, from the current structure to a new framework of laws prepared with the support of UNDP and NATO. Of particular note is the Law on Protection and Rescue, covering people and assets in cases of disasters caused by natural hazards, which was passed in May 2008. The Law defines: the

4. South Eastern Europe Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Programme, 2008, *The Structure, Role and Mandate of Civil Protection in Disaster Risk Reduction for South Eastern Europe*, available at: http://www.unisdr.org/preventionweb/files/9346_Europe.pdf

5. *Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 88/05.

6. *Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 5/02.

7. *Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 49/04.

8. The Law on the Protection of Forests (*OGBH*, 23/03); the Law on Veterinary Science in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*OGBH*, 34/02); the Law on Food (*OGBH*, 50/04); the Law on the Implementation of the Convention on Prevention of Development, Production, Accumulation and use of Chemical Weapons and their Destruction (*OGBH*, 15/06); the Law on Protection against Radiation and Nuclear Safety (*OGBH*, 88/07); the Bosnia and Herzegovina Strategy for Action against Terrorism (2006–2009); the Program of Protection against Chemical Weapons and Reaction in Case of Disaster and Incidents that include Chemicals (*OGBH*, 80/06).

protection and rescue of people and material goods in cases of natural or other disasters in BH; the execution of international obligations and cooperation in the areas of protection and rescue (i.e. civil protection); authorizations of BH institutions; and the coordination of activities of BH institutions and bodies, entity civil protection administrations and the authorized civil protection body in Brčko District. The Law prescribed the founding of the State Operations Communication Centre, and established the emergency call number, 112.

Other laws include the Law on Transport of Dangerous Substances in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Law on Environmental Protection, both of which are at an advanced stage of preparation. The adoption of a new Law on Protection and Rescue in Bosnia and Herzegovina is critical for the whole structure of civil protection. It is worth observing that this Law defines the roles of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ministry of Security, and the other ministries and administrative bodies involved in the planning and execution of civil protection activities (including protection and rescue). The Law establishes competences in the field of international obligations and international cooperation.

The need to enhance the coordination of risk reduction and disaster management. According to UNDP and other UN agencies, BH does not yet have a coordinated disaster management and risk reduction capacity at the state level, because responsibility is on the one hand highly decentralized among state ministries (the Ministry of Security, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Affairs, and the Ministry of Civil Affairs). Responsibility is further distributed around the country's entity, cantonal and municipal governments. The government's capacity to deal effectively with existing and future human security threats therefore remains inadequate.⁹

The lack of coordination is also evident in specific initiatives such as the existing National Avian Influenza Contingency Plan. Coordination is expected to improve; however, the adoption of a State Disaster Risk Reduction Law in April 2008 envisages the establishment of a national coordination body on disaster management. Work remains to be done on clearly defining priorities, and steps remain to be taken in upgrading the country's capacities to plan, assess, prevent or mitigate the effects of natural or other disasters.

9. UN Country Team in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2008, *Common Country Assessment*, available at: <http://undg.org/docs/10263/CCA-BH-2008-FINAL-WEB-ENG.pdf>

F. Education and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies

Bearing in mind the relationship between education and fragility, and the ways in which education can contribute to building peace, the state, and stability, the main challenge is how education can play a ‘transformative role’ in relation to conflict. Education has a crucial role to play in terms of providing equal access to educational opportunities, but it also has an important role in modeling shared or separate development to successive generations. According to IANEE, Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the countries in which the education system has become a victim of peace agreements. The Dayton agreement has led to a constitution that recognizes the existence of three constituent peoples. However, devolving educational administration to multiple authorities and separate schooling means that young people are being educated to think of themselves as different nationalities, rather than common citizens. This may ultimately become a future security threat.¹⁰ There are a number of examples and reports of violence among children based on ethnicity or religion, discrimination and segregation, which could lead to future conflict.¹¹ However, there are no efficient strategies or systemic activities to change this situation.

The Mine Risk Education Project. Several organizations, including UNESCO, UNICEF and other local organizations, have implemented projects targeting preschool and primary school children in the area of landmine protection. Through Mine Risk Education (MRE) in schools, almost 100,000 children have seen UNICEF funded puppet shows in primary schools; 1,200 teachers have been trained and now conduct MRE as part of their regular activities. *Puppet shows* in primary schools dramatize the danger of mines and spell out the risk of unexploded ordnance. Performed by the Genesis Project,¹² the content is synchronized with the BHMACE Mine Risk Education policy. Traditional MRE, often adapted from military briefings, can be sterile, dull and inappropriate for fidgety six year olds with short attention spans. In contrast, puppets offer opportunities for interaction and spark imagination and creativity, also *holding children’s attention*. While puppet theater has been a stunning success and remains a core activity for the Genesis Project, UNICEF has encouraged them to reach out to older children (aged eight to 12 years) who are able to engage more intellectually and directly in mine risk education/mine action.

10. Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, 2009, *Global Consultation – Bridging the Gaps: Risk Reduction, Relief and Recovery*, available at: [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/OCHA-7TGQUA/\\$file/inee_gc_2009_report_final.pdf?openelement](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/OCHA-7TGQUA/$file/inee_gc_2009_report_final.pdf?openelement)

11. Save the Children Norway (SEE), 2008, *Discrimination of children in schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Summary of the Scientific Study*, available at: <http://www.scn-see.ba/?l=en&a=1&b=2&c=49&d=23>; Open Society Fund BH, 2007, *Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina – What do we teach our children?*, available at: <http://www.soros.org.ba/obrazovanje.asp>

12. <http://www.genesis-bl.org/eng/activities.htm>

With the Ministries of Education, UNICEF has worked mainstream MRE into the ordinary school curriculum. This involves producing and distributing updated Mine Awareness Education Kits to all preschools, primary schools and secondary schools. However, looking at the school curricula, Genesis Project staff found that most pupils received no more than one class session (45 minutes) in mine awareness each academic year, often from teachers who were not well-informed themselves. This is far from sufficient, so the Genesis Project has sought ways to mainstream MRE across the curriculum. They began holding workshops for teachers, giving them the basic message, and brochures with sample lesson plans. They then had teachers brainstorm, with others from their discipline, ways to integrate mine awareness into other classes. Currently, various activities on mine awareness and emergency are being organized by the local Red Cross, such as providing workshops for school children, and organizing local and cantonal competitions about landmines and first aid.

TV programs/videos; Genesis Project. UNICEF has backed up its other initiatives with a broad *public awareness and mass media campaign*. The Genesis Project has broadcast a six-episode series warning children of the dangers of mines, unexploded ordnance and small arms, on nine stations throughout the country. Video tapes of the programs, integrated with resource packs, have also been distributed to schools. AMI has produced a 90-second television advertisement which was broadcast *repeatedly on the three most popular local TV stations in their project areas*.

Social-psychological support projects. Organizations like Wings of Hope,¹³ Vive Zene,¹⁴ and some others work continuously to educate professionals working with traumatized children, youth, adults and the public. They organize external education for professionals, psychologists, neuropsychiatrists, pedagogues, school teachers, youth organization volunteers working with war-traumatized people, introducing new methods and approaches to help change the perception of war trauma from a disease towards it being a state of mind. They hope that such trauma can be viewed as a “normal and sound human reaction to abnormal and unsound events”, through “therapeutic fairy tales and their use in work with children”.

Peace education projects. The World Vision organization has introduced Peace Education programs into primary schools as a tool for learning how to build peaceable classroom foundations, and integrate peace concepts and conflict resolution skills into the existing curriculum. This has been done through role plays, games, brainstorming, discussions, problem solving, and by using Peace Education materials. It is World Vision’s belief that this is the best way for students to develop respect, the ability to care, responsibility, and reverence for life, and also to learn how to nurture these values. The primary objective was to increase the professional competence of primary

13. <http://www.wings-of-hope.ba/projects/education-e.html>

14. <http://www.vivezene.ba/eng/implementirani.htm>

school teachers and raise awareness about tolerance, conflict prevention and resolution, and to propagate notions of co-existence through the introduction of Peace Education programs.¹⁵

Education for Peace (EFP)¹⁶ is one of the implemented programs. It is an innovative whole-school program that creates violence-free and peaceful school environments conducive to meeting the emotional, social, and intellectual needs of diverse school populations. Through creating a peaceful school environment characterized by *unity in diversity*, EFP harnesses the freeing and healing properties of *unity* in order to meet the manifold needs of increasingly *diverse* populations in different cultural settings. The emphasis on peace is based on the fact that peace and education are inseparable aspects of civilization. No civilization is truly progressive without education, and no education system is truly civilizing unless based on the universal principles of peace.

Emergency and evacuation plans in schools. There are some forms of emergency planning, evacuation plans and similar documents which exist in schools. However, they are very formal documents without any clear application. Teachers are not prepared, or aware, of what they would have to do in such situations, and nor are children.

G. Recommendations

In Bosnia and Herzegovina since the end of the war (i.e. the 1995 Dayton Agreements), the international development and relief organizations, together with government, local NGOs, and communities, have tried to ease the horrible impact of the war, especially for economically disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (including young children between 0–7 who are in the most critical moment of their development process). We learned that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, several post-war and current projects are helping to support children and their families in the aftermath of disasters (especially after the war). They supply peace education and support the co-existence of different ethnic groups. Thus, critically important experience and know-how of aftermath intervention is available for other countries to profit from. This expertise should not be lost.

In this respect, the Bosnia and Herzegovina country profile is a great place to start, since it provides some very good initial information on past and ongoing projects/initiatives which have targeted young children, students, families and the whole community. It is imperative to continue doing this, and to draw further lessons from BH's unique experiences, in order to help improve

15. <http://www.worldvision.ba/content/view/15/17/lang,en/>

16. <http://www.efpinternational.org/>

preparedness for, and relief and response to emergencies in the country and elsewhere. This is especially so for young children covered (or not) by early childhood development (ECD) services, as well as for their families, and the children and families of ethnic minorities.

Lessons learned from past and current experiences in BH can be drawn in terms of outcomes, adopted strategies, institutional and organizational arrangements, alliances and partnerships at the community level, the impact on human resources capacity, and produced materials. An overview of all this from the point of view of ECD is extremely relevant, not only for BH, but for other countries who may or do confront similar challenges, and would profit from the transfer of lessons learned.

► **Advocacy level, for international organizations**

RECOMMENDATION 1

Gather and share lessons learned on child and early childhood development interventions in the aftermath of the war in BH. International organizations under the leadership of UNICEF should gather and codify information on projects/initiatives regarding emergencies which target young children and their families, including ECD services. This should include gathering more data on socio-psychological support projects, on MRE projects which have shown impressive results, as well as on educational materials on emergencies, existing human resources expertise, implementers, and donors in the area of young children in emergencies.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Help the country to integrate the needs of children in national strategies and operational planning. Advocate and help governments to integrate the needs of children across all inter- and intra-governmental disaster planning and operations, including the needs of children being brought up in minorities. Advocate and help the government and partners to address (through the National Strategy for Emergencies) an immediate and long-term health, mental, educational, housing and human services preparedness, and to address the recovery needs of young children, including those being brought up in minorities.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Improve coordination among donors and within Ministry sectors and share information on activities, training, assessments, produced materials. Produce a list of people who are trained (volunteers and education staff) in the areas of ECD and preparing young children for emergencies.

► Operational level, for both government and international organizations

RECOMMENDATION 4

Develop a twofold strategy to reach: (a) children in kindergartens and; (b) children below the age needed to attend grade 1, and who are beyond the reach of early childhood development services. Develop strategies and programs which will cover both groups. The first group may be reached through interventions at the level of ECD institutions, as well as through community and country-wide interventions. The second group may be reached through community and country-wide interventions.

RECOMMENDATION 5

A participatory needs assessment of young children and their families, for community-level emergency preparedness and response. With expert support, the various MoE should perform a country-wide needs assessment of teachers, students, and parents in schools and kindergartens or community-based centers, regarding their own preparedness and responsiveness to emergencies. In addition, psycho-social needs assessment should be performed in selected ECD facilities and families/communities, paying special attention to minorities in order to prepare for psycho-social support within the educational programming in emergencies.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Assessment of human resources capacity, and of available materials for early childhood development emergencies. Before any commitment from international organizations to support MoEs and communities, an assessment should be made of existing ECD human resources capacities, at the community, ECD facility, regional and central levels (MoE). Their capacity to carry out activities related to ECD in emergencies, targeting young children under seven years old, both in and out of ECD services should also be assessed. Additionally, all materials which have been produced in BH over the last 15 years (visual aids, video and TV programs, and texts) should be gathered and assessed if they concern children, teachers and families on the subject of emergency preparedness and responding to emergencies.

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Annex: Bosnia and Herzegovina – Country Profile

Source:	<i>The CIA World Factbook</i> https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html
Location:	Southeastern Europe, bordering the Adriatic Sea and Croatia
Area:	total: 51,197 sq km country comparison to the world: 128 land: 51,187 sq km water: 10 sq km
Land boundaries:	total: 1,538 km border countries: Croatia 932 km, Montenegro 249 km, Serbia 357 km
Coastline:	20 km
Terrain:	mountains and valleys
Population:	4,613,414 (July 2009 est.)
Ethnic groups:	Bosniak 48%, Serb 37.1%, Croat 14.3%, other 0.6% (2000) <i>note:</i> ‘Bosniak’ has replaced ‘Muslim’ as an ethnic term, in part to avoid confusion with the religious term ‘Muslim’ – an adherent of Islam
Religions:	Muslim 40%, Orthodox 31%, Roman Catholic 15%, other 14%
Languages:	Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian
Government type:	emerging federal democratic republic
Capital’s name:	Sarajevo

Economy – overview:

The interethnic warfare in Bosnia and Herzegovina caused production to plummet by 80% from 1992 to 1995 and unemployment to soar. With an uneasy peace in place, output recovered in 1996–1999 at high percentage rates from a low base; but output growth slowed in 2000–2002. Part of the lag in output was made up in 2003–2008 when GDP growth exceeded 5% per year. Banking reform accelerated in 2001 as all the communist-era payments bureaus were shut down; foreign banks, primarily from Western Europe, now control most of the banking sector. The *konvertibilna marka* (convertible mark or BAM) – the national currency introduced in 1998 – is pegged to the euro, and confidence in the currency and the banking sector has increased. Bosnia’s private sector is growing and foreign investment is slowly increasing, but government spending, at nearly 40% of adjusted GDP, remains high because of redundant government offices at the state, entity and municipal level. Implementing privatization, however, has been slow, particularly in the Federation where political division between ethnically based political parties makes agreement on economic policy more difficult. A sizeable current account deficit and high unemployment rate remain the two most serious macroeconomic problems. Successful implementation of a value-added tax in 2006 provided a predictable source of revenue for the government and helped rein in gray market activity. National-level statistics have also improved over time, but a large share of economic activity remains unofficial and unrecorded. Bosnia and Herzegovina became a full member of the Central European Free Trade Agreement in September 2007. Bosnia’s economy has been largely sheltered from the global financial downturn although key economic indicators

have worsened. Key exporters in the metal, automobile and wood processing industries have reported a worsening performance and have announced layoffs and output reductions.

GDP – real growth rate: 5.5% (2008 est.)
country comparison to the world: 72
6% (2007 est.)
6.9% (2006 est.)

Population below poverty line: 25% (2004 est.)



Source: CIA World Fact Book.



COUNTRY PROFILE

Early Childhood Development and Education in Emergencies **GEORGIA**

Marika Shonia, *Georgia*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Country Context	30
B. The Context: Characteristics of Young children, Parents'/Caregivers' Situations, and the Preschool System in Georgia	32
C. Disaster Risk Analysis	36
D. Government Institutions Responsible for Emergencies and Coordination Mechanisms	36
E. National Policies, Strategies and Ongoing Programs for Emergencies	39
F. Education and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies	42
G. Recommendations	49
H. Reference List	52
Annex: Georgia – Country Profile	53

Emergencies (definition): Emergencies include situations such as disasters, violent conflicts, or complex crises that generate a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society, involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.

A. Country Context

Located on the eastern coast of the Black Sea, Georgia is a post-Soviet country with a current estimated population 4.4 million.¹ Its population, ethnically and culturally, is widely diverse; its geopolitical location at a crossroads between Asia and Europe is economically promising, as well as cause for potential threat.

The Georgian economy suffered the most among the post-communist countries from its transitional period. Although enjoying a relatively well-off position during the Soviet period, it suffered from a drastic fall of output, and severe energy crises. Statistical data suggest that the Georgian economy suffered from one of the most drastic declines. Below are figures that depict the severity of the situation.

Table 1: Average Economic Growth Rate

Year	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
% age change in GDP	-15	-20	-45	-25	-11

Source: UNDP Annual Report, 1996.

The rate of the fall of output was also very high: in 1995 output was less than 25% of the 1989 level.²

In addition to these problems, the situation in Georgia was aggravated by a brief civil war and two ethnic conflicts, which resulted in the secession of two border regions from the country. As a result, hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDP) were left without shelter, and scattered around the country.

The economy rose from 1994 when the government started extensive liberalization and stabilization efforts. However, in spite of spectacular growth for a couple of years, the economy

1. Department of Statistics, 2009.

2. *Ibid.*

could still not recover to its pre-transition level. The reason was that the government was not able to maintain the existing level of growth, which already in 1998 had started declining.

The big change came with the so-called Rose Revolution in November 2003, when the new government (composed of predominantly young Western-educated officials) was elected with overwhelming popular support, and with the start of major radical reforms. International institutions and Western governments praised the country’s fight against corruption, and its economic liberalization measures.³ Comprehensive reforms have been implemented in the areas of military defense, police, education, health, energy supplies, etc.

Table 2: Georgia – Selected Economic Indicators

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
GNI per capita (US\$, Atlas method)	680	730	860	1,060	1,330	1,560	1,990
Unemployment rate, average (%)	11.1	12.6	11.5	12.6	13.8	13.9	13.6
Real GDP growth (% change)	4.9	5.5	11.1	5.9	9.6	9.4	12.4
CPI (year-on-year, % change)	3.4	5.4	7.0	7.5	6.2	9.6	11.0

Source: Department for Statistics at the Ministry of Economic Development; World Bank staff estimates.



3. World Bank, 2006; World Bank, 2009.



In summer 2008, the brief Russian-Georgian war was ignited from one of the ethnically contested regions of South Ossetia. As a result, many families fled their homes, and the number of displaced people increased; infrastructure was heavily damaged all around the country. This was exacerbated by the world economic crises, resulting in the temporary suspension of some activities, as well as budget cuts. However, with the strong financial and technical support of Western governments, the results have not been disastrous, and the economic situation has begun to recover.

B. The Context: Characteristics of Young Children, Parents'/Caregivers' Situations, and the Preschool System in Georgia

The most recent World Bank Poverty Assessment Report finds that children in Georgia are at a slightly higher risk of poverty than the general population: 12% of children (compared to 9% of the general population) live in extreme poverty, while 28% of children (compared to 24% of the general population) live below the poverty line. Similar to overall poverty, child poverty is concentrated in rural areas. Children living in rural areas comprise less than half of all children in the sample (46%), but represent 61% of all poor children. For children, housing problems can pose risks to their health and safety, but also may impact on their educational and social

development. The risk of poverty for children is strongly related to their parents' employment status and receipt of social transfers. All the following factors are associated with a higher poverty risk for children:⁴

- lack of local employment opportunities;
- the number of children in the household;
- households with children or adults suffering from disability or chronic disease, and thus needing special care and increased medical expenses;
- parents' lack of education.

The rates of preschool enrolment declined through the 1990s; public spending on preschool was drastically cut; the number of preschool institutions was almost halved on the late 1980s: and out of 2,454 public preschools in 1990, only 1,197 were functioning.⁵ Preschool enrolment rates are low compared to the European average.

Inequality to access ECD services. According to the World Bank Poverty Assessment (2008) as well as a UNICEF survey (2008), rates of enrolment in preschool are dependent on various factors. Locality is the key factor – children in urban areas are almost 30% more likely to be enrolled in preschools than those from rural areas. Economics is another factor – children from families with higher incomes are also more likely to be enrolled. Additionally, children from ethnically Georgian families are more likely to be enrolled, compared to ethnic minorities. The absence of preschools, a preference for home-based care, and financial shortages have been identified as the major reasons for parents not enrolling their children in preschool.⁶ The absence of uniform national policies in the fields of early development and preschool education prevent public agencies from taking relevant measures to address issues of access and equity.

Enrolment. According to a UNICEF survey (2008), preschool attendance in the country is not universal and ranges from less than 10% (when children are in their second year of life) to over 60% (when children are aged five or above). The exact number of children attending preschools has not been officially estimated, and the figures differ from source to source. With regards to preschool education, the 2007 Global Monitoring Report⁷ reports a gross pre-primary enrolment rate of 49%; a child-rearing study carried out in 2005 by UNICEF indicates kindergarten attendance among 3–6 year olds to be around 55%.⁸ The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey for 2005 estimated that 44% of 3–4 year olds were attending preschool; and 58% of children in

4. World Bank, 2008.

5. Department of Statistics, 2009.

6. World Bank, 2008.

7. UNESCO, 2006.

8. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, 2006.



primary grade 1 had attended preschool in the previous year.⁹ Based on UNICEF Findings from the National Baseline Study (*Early Childhood Development in Georgia, 2007*), the actual number of **3–6 year old children** attending preschools is close to 50% nationally. However, the number is much higher in urban areas (around 60%) than in rural areas (around 40%).

Low attendance. Many children who register for preschool do not attend, and so existing notions of access may be over-estimated. The reasons for not sending the child to preschool, based on the findings, depends on a combination of different factors, such as costs, distance to school, food quality, conditions of the facilities, or having grandparents at home, etc. For instance, while some of the preschools have less than 40 registered students, others have 100 or more students, and some are even overcrowded. Though significant positive changes have taken place in the country at different levels in this area, there are still, according to the survey, a small percentage of preschool institutions with special-needs children. One of the reasons is that the preschools need to have organizational capacity, and teachers need a relevant training background to successfully be able to deal with children in this category.

Quality issues. Apart from access, quality of preschool education is also a concern. The central government, together with local municipalities and with the support of the international donor community, is working on nationwide policies to improve the access to and quality of preschool education. One of the important ECD initiatives in this area is the UNICEF co-funded Step by Step preschool education pilot project promoting democratic and quality teaching methods, ensuring inclusion and special attention for children with special needs.

Recent ECD policies and initiatives. In the past three years, ECD has been introduced onto the government's agenda. A *National Alliance on Early Childhood Development* (2006), dealt with by parliament, developed a comprehensive strategic framework for the system-wide integration of all elements of ECD in the Health and Education sectors in Georgia.¹⁰ Among the goals of the

9. National MDG Targets and Indicators.

10. UNICEF Georgia Annual Report, 2007.

ECD Alliance are: to support the government of Georgia in effective program/policy planning; to improve coordination, harmonization and alignment of international aid for the improved leveraging of ECD results; to support/introduce innovative approaches to strengthen government commitments to child-friendly national programs; and to increase budgetary allocations in the social-development field in favor of child development.¹¹

An ECD National Strategic Plan of Action (ECD NSPA) has been developed “to attain greater results for young child survival, growth and development”. The overall objective is that all children in Georgia (aged 0–6 years) may reach their development potential, and receive access to early childhood rights.¹² In addition to the ECD NSPA, an ‘Inclusive Education Strategy’, ‘National Goals of Preschool Education’, and ‘Georgian Validated Early-Learning and Development Standards’ (ELDS) have been developed.

An *ECD Scientific Research and Clinical Center* has also been established under the Institute of Child Health. Georgia is also decentralizing its power at the municipal level, and shifting child welfare reform (de-institutionalization) from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Health.



11. Early Childhood Development National Strategic Action Plan, 2007–2009.

12. *Ibid.*

C. Disaster Risk Analysis

Georgia is a disaster-prone country, which frequently experiences natural hazards (e.g. earthquakes, floods, landslides, mudflows, avalanches, and drought) as well as man-made emergencies (e.g. industrial accidents, traffic accidents, and armed conflicts). Compounding factors such as demographic change, unplanned urbanization, poorly maintained infrastructure, lax enforcement of safety standards, socio-economic inequities, epidemics, environmental degradation and climate variability amplify the frequency and intensity of disasters, and call for a proactive and multi-hazard approach. Disaster risk reduction is a cross-cutting and complex development issue. It requires political and legal commitment, public understanding, scientific knowledge, careful development planning, responsible enforcement of policies and legislation, people-centered early-warning systems, and effective disaster preparedness and response mechanisms. Close collaboration of policy-makers, scientists, urban planners, engineers, architects, development workers and civil society representatives is a precondition for adopting a comprehensive approach and inventing adequate solutions. Multi-stakeholder and inter-agency platforms can help provide and mobilize the knowledge, skills and resources required for mainstreaming disaster-risk reduction into development policies, for coordination of planning and programs, and for the provision of analysis and advice.

Internally Displaced Persons, including 6,000 children aged 0–8. The year 2008 turned out to be an extremely challenging one for Georgia. The August conflict, among other deteriorating effects, had a negative effect, particularly on women and children. In the aftermath of that conflict, 133,000 people became internally displaced persons (IDPs) in their own country. Though the majority had the opportunity later to return to the places of their former residence, they turned out to be deprived of their previous sources of living, and parts of their property. According to the government of Georgia, to date, approximately 100,000 people have returned to areas adjacent to the administrative border with South Ossetia, leaving some 30,000 that remain displaced, including 6,000 children under the age of eight.

D. Government Institutions Responsible for Emergencies and Coordination Mechanisms

Emergency Management Department (Ministry of Internal Affairs). This department's obligations include: the coordination of activities for the prevention of emergency situations; the limitation and liquidation of emergencies' impacts throughout the country; the implementation of civil defense tasks during military situations; the coordination of an emergency response planning process; the preparedness of the central rescue brigade (including the NBC group); training local fire-fighters/rescuers; forecasting and monitoring emergency situations; risk notification and



the provision of recommendations for on-site action. For the purpose of implementing scientific programs and limitation measures to prevent natural and man-made emergency situations, and to lessen and eliminate their consequences, an expert advisory board sits within the department.

Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation. This is a state agency, responsible for implementing state policy in its sphere, and for realizing tasks designed by the government of Georgia or its prime minister, on the basis of existing legislation. In the tasks it realizes, this Ministry represents the state. As part of the executive, it has competence in the following areas: legal and social protection of refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, refugees, ecological and other migrants; control of migration; and resettlement. In all these spheres, the Ministry elaborates and implements state policy. It is accountable to the government of Georgia, and financed from the state budget. According to the Presidential Decree, the Georgian Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation is responsible for coordinating the evacuation of populations during emergency situations.

Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI). Within its competences, this Ministry defines the main areas of regional development policy, elaborates concepts, draft legislation and government programs. The MRDI is not directly responsible for emergencies and disasters. However, the Ministry has some supporting functions: supporting the recovery process from emergency events; generally monitoring the governors' activities (particularly during emergency situations); providing and coordinating transportation in emergency situations, and supporting

the recovery process of disaster-affected road systems; and drafting recommendations in the sphere of emergency management at regional and local levels. In order to improve emergency management mechanisms at the regional level and strengthen governors' coordinative functions, new amendments to the law were adopted in August 2009, and will soon take effect. Accordingly, the state's Trustee-Governor becomes a central government trustee for the region: coordinating emergency response activities and organizing joint action in respective territorial units; deciding on the use of subordinated emergency forces, according to a National Response plan and legislation; issuing individual legal acts in order to protect the population and the territory from emerging threats; coordinating evacuation processes during emergency situations; coordinating the emergency accommodation of evacuees; receiving and analyzing particular information for the purpose of drafting and organizing preventive measures against particular threats; coordinating and supervising the distribution of humanitarian aid to disaster victims; coordinating rescue operations and other emergency activities; coordinating measures for the normal functioning of public organizations during emergency situations; as well as performing other functions.

National Environment Agency, Department for Geological Hazards and Geological Management (Ministry of Environment). Responsibilities of this Agency include: study-assessment of natural, geological hazardous processes and man's influence on the geological environment; geo-monitoring; checking tendencies of geological processes and scales development; dangerous risk assessment; forecasting disasters and their development in time and space; assessing the damage caused by disasters; planning urgent palliative and preventive measures; identifying man-made influences on the geological environment in case of geo-ecological complications; zoning territories in order to assess dangerous geological risks and produce specialist maps; the collection, analysis, and generalization of data of different types and scales of natural geological hazards; assessing and analyzing the effectiveness of limitation and protective measures carried out in response to geological disasters; choosing and implementing optimal international practices, taking into account local geological and social conditions; issuing annual information bulletins, guidelines, reviews and reference books related to hazardous geological events; anticipating *force-majeure* events caused by geological hazards; carrying out engineering, geological, geo-dynamic and geo-ecological research for various projects; preparing engineering/geo-ecological reports to help protect land areas; preparing information packages for the sites where licenses have been obtained for mineral mining; registering the finding of mineral and ore deposits, and establishing state or land-ownership; monitoring of subterranean waters.

National Environment Agency – Hydrometeorology Department, Ministry of the Environment. This Agency's responsibilities include: organizing, optimizing and the smooth running of hydrometeorology observation networks (concerning meteorology, hydrology, marine hydrometeorology, agro-meteorology, snowfall and avalanches, glaciology, aerology, radiolocation, ozonometry, actinometry, and observing water tables); keeping a system for collecting,

storing and disseminating hydrometeorological observation data (including in international networks); hydrometeorological forecasting (producing and issuing bulletins, reviews, notices and other materials containing actual and forecast information); providing the populace, state management bodies, commercial sectors and other interested parties with actual and forecast hydrometeorological information, including expected hydrometeorological events; identifying possible hydrometeorological threats, assessing potential damage, and planning responses; working to prevent the threat of avalanches, hail, adverse precipitation and other unfavorable hydrometeorological events; locating unfavorable hydrometeorological events according to frequency and intensity throughout Georgia.

E. National Policies and Strategies, and Ongoing Programs for Emergencies

The major policy in place for emergencies is the National Emergency Response Plan, based on the 2007 Law on Emergency Situations.

Currently, the *Office of the National Security Council* of Georgia oversees crisis management in the country. A preliminary study of existing legislation has been completed, and the first draft of an envisioned future model of crisis management has been prepared. Furthermore, one of its most important areas of work is to coordinate the work of the government of Georgia in preparing a comprehensive threats-assessment document, covering all manner of emergencies. At the



same time, the Office of the National Security Council of Georgia has been actively involved in coordinating government actions with respect to the H1N1 virus.

A key program in the country related to emergency preparedness and response is the joint UNDP and government program on strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Georgia. The UNDP DRR strategy for Georgia was finalized in February 2009, and it attempts to address threats identified following the 2008 war, and has a comprehensive approach towards crisis prevention and limitation.

Early childhood development and preschool education is one of the sectoral components of the *Consolidated Education Strategy and Action Plan 2007–2011*.

Georgia is currently in the phase of formulating a national strategy for ECD in recognition of the universally acknowledged importance of “expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education” (EFA Goal No. 1). UNICEF is providing extensive technical and expert support in this process.

A comprehensive model will be set up for preschool education and early childhood care. The principles of organization and management will be clearly defined within the model, as well as mechanisms of funding. The model will contain clear delineation of rights and responsibilities of local and central governments in the management and control of preschools.

Although responsibility for management of pre-school institutions lies with local governments, central government will be involved in developing normative framework for early childhood education (ECE). Specifically, tasks and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education and Science will include:

- establishing standards for ECE;
- providing support in the introduction and implementation of standards;
- assuring ECE quality.

State policy towards developing preschool education is also focused on providing assistance to those experiencing financial problems, thus reflecting social needs of population.

An important factor for supporting the smooth performance of the preschool education system will be the introduction of a feasible and efficient funding scheme that will enable it to reach those preschool-age children who are currently not attending. There is an agreement that inputs to funding will be made jointly by local municipalities and central government.

A crucial area for the further development of ECE is improvement in the quality of learning achievement. This will be done through improving teacher qualifications and developing curricula and learning materials for preschool education.

The Early Childhood Development 2007–2009 National Strategic Plan of Action was developed as a result of multisectoral consultation in November–December 2006. The consultation was facilitated by an expert group from Yale University, US, through the support of the UNICEF Georgia office. The representatives of the parliament, Ministries of Labor, Health, Social Affairs, Education and Science, professional associations, NGOs, and international development partners were involved in the process.

The purpose of creating the document was to develop a shared sector vision for effectively incorporating ECD principles and standards of care into sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, and to develop reforms for ensuring a holistic approach to early child health and development.

Five operational strategies were outlined:

- 1) **ECD mainstreaming into national policies** with the goal to establish the National ECD Alliance under the auspices of the Georgian parliament;
- 2) **ECD mainstreaming into the health sector and services** with the goal of introducing and enhancing child development through a sensitive approach, within existing health programs and ongoing reforms;
- 3) **ECD mainstreaming into the preschool education sector and services** with the goal of improving participation and access to quality preschool education for all children in Georgia based on equity and inclusion principles;
- 4) **ECD mainstreaming into academia** with the goal to improve the quality of ECD services as a result of integration into the education curriculum of academic institutions;
- 5) **ECD mainstreaming into education programs for parenting/families** with the goal to improve the knowledge, attitude and practices of families and communities in ECD.

The national, inter-sectoral ECD Alliance was established by the Committee on Health and Social Affairs of the Parliament of Georgia in collaboration with UNICEF. The Alliance acts as an umbrella agency for coordinating various efforts in early childhood development. The Alliance consists of representa-





tives of the Parliament of Georgia, the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Science, academia, professional associations, local NGOs and international development partners.

The objectives of the ECD Alliance are: to coordinate and oversee the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of national programs for ensuring a holistic child-development agenda; to support the government of Georgia in effective program/policy planning, and the harmonization and alignment of international aid; to introduce innovative approaches for

strengthening governmental commitments; and to increase budgetary allocations for the social development field in favor of child development. In order to attain the objectives, the Alliance relies on four major strategies:

- 1) Advocacy and Communication;
- 2) Inter-sectoral Planning and Coordination;
- 3) Resource and Partnership Leveraging;
- 4) Monitoring and Evaluation.

Though there is not a single national emergency/disaster management policy or plan in place, during the August 2008 conflict, consolidated efforts were made where the UNICEF Regional Office and its partners played a proactive role in initiating and facilitating a coordinated emergency response relevant to the situation in cooperation with the ECD Alliance, local ministries, and civil society organizations. General tasks and goals were: to allocate roles and responsibilities among partners; to mobilize resources; to conduct inter-agency needs assessment (data collection); vulnerability and capacity mapping; emergency response implementation; simultaneous early recovery implementation; and to perform monitoring and impact evaluation.

F. Education and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies

Various governmental agencies cooperate in cases of emergencies to alleviate the consequences of, as well as to avoid and prepare for hazardous situations. In the ECD/Education sector, the leading public agencies are the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation, and the local government agencies.

Education Sector Interventions: Training and School Materials

- *Teacher training on the practical use of crisis psychology.* UNICEF, together with the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia**, and the **Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia**, have undertaken training of teachers on the **practical use of crisis psychology**, helping them to recognize signs of post-war trauma and to understand whether and how to deal with these problems in the classroom, or to refer children for further consultation. This process was conducted in phases by first equipping psycho-social professionals and trainers, who then went on to train teachers. Overall, approximately 2,200 teachers from 64 schools in Gori, Tbilisi, and Rustavi have received the training, meaning that approximately 30,000 children have benefited (or will benefit) from this initiative.
- *Provision of basic school materials.* 164 schools damaged and/or affected by the conflict have been provided with basic school materials through the provision of UNICEF ‘School in a Box and Recreational Kits’ to cover 78,000 conflict-affected children.
- *Textbook provision.* In order to encourage children’s return to school, UNICEF has collaborated with **Save the Children** in a special book drive for new and used textbooks. As a result, up to 10,000 textbooks have been collected for conflict-affected primary grade students. A further 30,000 new textbooks were provided to 5,000 conflict-affected and vulnerable children in the regions of Gori, Kareli, Kaspi and Khashuri, as well as to IDP children living in the



various collective centers of the capital, Tbilisi. The procurement of new textbooks was a joint effort of the **Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia**, UNICEF, **World Vision**, the Estonian **Ministry of Education**, the Latvian **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Lithuania's **Alma Adamkus Charity and Support Fund**, and the **International Rescue Committee**.

- *Mine risk Education.* UNICEF, in cooperation with the **HALO Trust** and the **Ministry of Education and Science**, launched a program aiming to teach 46,000 children in 180 schools in Gori, Kareli, Kaspi and Khashuri about the dangers of unexploded land mines and other remnants of war. This was done within the scope of the Mine Risk Education Project. A special curriculum and relevant learning materials were designed, teachers were trained, and special lessons were launched in conflict-affected zones, with funding from the **German government**.

ECD Emergency Plan with UNICEF support (August 2008). In view of the August 2008 conflict, UNICEF and the government of Georgia (among other urgent measures taken), strived to assess and consolidate intentions and practices to design, strategize and implement ECD and preschool services for children from IDP settlements and poor/disadvantaged families from local communities during emergency and transitional phases. UNICEF's NYHQ ECD Unit¹³ provided technical assistance to UNICEF-Georgia in designing an ECD Emergency Action Plan to meet the needs of the most vulnerable young children of Georgia.

The *main objective* of the UNICEF Technical Assistance was to assess and identify immediate priorities for young children during the early recovery in ECD to meet the needs of those young children most at risk within IDP and local communities, in close coordination with national ministries and local partners, and also to ensure continual access and quality support to existing ECD/preschool services.

Consultation process. UNICEF organized consultations with key stakeholders. Using multiple sources of evidence, ECD practitioners were pre-selected and invited to meetings (these included caregivers, UNICEF staff, institutions, relevant ministries, municipalities, local and international NGOs, civil societies, international organizations and UN agencies) in order to become familiar with, and reach, an understanding of regional and local contexts. NGO partners running community-based projects and services in social protection, social inclusion, education and ECD/preschools were also invited. Communication was initiated with IDPs and local community members (including young children) to observe and learn about their needs. Semi-structured interviews and field observations were conducted on an informal basis in order to meet pre-established objectives. The aim was to achieve an in-depth understanding of interviewee's

13. Arnaud Conchon, Emergency Program Specialist in Early Childhood Development.



opinions on the ECD emergency situation and gain a quality analysis of the findings, which were presented in the ECD Emergency Action Plan. Gathered information was shared with stakeholders. Several sites were identified, selected, and visited (including collective centers, IDP settlements, kindergartens and ECD centers, schools, day-care centers, institutions, marginalized groups and isolated pockets of young children in urban and rural areas).

ECD networks and partnerships have been established through governmental and municipal cooperation: with the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation (MRA); the Ministry of Education and Science (MOES); the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (MOHSA); the Ministry of Justice; and the Ministry of Finance as well as through UN agencies. The international community also provided its humanitarian response, ensuring the availability of basic services. Key partners involved were the **Charity Humanitarian Center Abkhazeti**, the **International Rescue Committee**, the **Norwegian Refugee Council**, **Save the Children**, **Terre des Hommes**, **Every Child**, and **World Vision Georgia**.

Activities and Measures

ECD psycho-social sub-sector. Multidirectional measures and steps taken within the partnership approach include the following.

- NGOs visited IDP collective centers and assessed the psycho-social needs of IDP children in Gori and in main vulnerable areas.
- Emergency foster-care services were established, training people to receive children from institutions until long-term solutions could be found.
- Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) were established for IDPs living in collective centers.
- Social workers were identified to undergo ECD activities in CFS and assist those in need of psycho-social support.
- Training of schoolteachers in psycho-social counseling and mine-awareness was provided.
- ECD activities were provided to children aged 3–6 years in the relevant target locations.
- Distribution of recreation kits, text books and ECD materials to young children.
- Support to the Public Defender to establish a presence in affected areas.
- **A Child Development Centre** supported by UNICEF, the Trieste Institute of Child Health, and the government of Lithuania, was established within the framework of National Early Childhood Development, providing quality health services for IDP children and learning materials for parents, with UNICEF assistance.





- ECD services for displaced children: together with the **Elizabeth Gast Foundation**, the **International Rescue Committee** and **World Vision**, UNICEF established up to 60 kindergartens/child-friendly spaces in conflict-affected areas villages and IDP settlements to give displaced children access to early childhood education. The new kindergartens also serve as a resource center for parents in need of advice on health, nutrition and protection.

Health, water and sanitation sub-sectors. In general, the health response has been quite good under the circumstances. There have been sufficient human resource capacities, but services provided were not always of a high quality.

- Joint ECD/Health packages were delivered, promoting the use of the UNICEF/WHO Care for Development Program.
- Immunizations were provided with early-stimulation and nutrition in line with government requirements.
- Interventions from the MoH were free of charge, and persons could receive outpatient and inpatient health-care service.
- The government has supported IDPs, providing a list of medication available through the primary care skill system (polyclinics, and ambulatory services).
- Effective collaboration was established with NGOs and UN agencies (including UNICEF) in birthing and newborn centers.

- Monitoring the capacity of public health services: UNICEF-led investigations revealed a shortfall in the capacity of public health services to identify the diseases affecting IDPs in West Georgia. UNICEF financed the hiring of an additional 27 epidemiologists who were assigned to particular camps and IDP centers where they worked on diagnosis and medication.
- UNICEF provided financial support for the disinfection of 537 IDP camps and centers in West Georgia.
- UNICEF, in partnership with other organizations (**UNHCR, Premiere Urgence, CARITAS, Oxfam GB, the International Rescue Committee, Action Against Hunger, and Abkhaz-intercont**) stepped in to alleviate some of the need for clean water and adequate sanitation. Projects giving emergency support in water, sanitation and hygiene were carried out, both in the areas where a conflict had unfolded, and in the many places that IDPs settled.
- UNICEF and its partners organized a system of committees, which undertook responsibility for overseeing hygiene standards, both in collective centers and in the wider communities. In addition to this, children have been educated as to why and how it is important to maintain hygiene standards.
- Access to clean water: in collaboration with the Shida Kartli local government, UNICEF also obtained sufficient chlorine powder to cover water chlorination needs for the 2008/2009 winter period; and in partnership with the Shida Kartli Water Department, procured six electric water pumps and a Caterpillar machine for earthworks to improve access to water for villages in the area adjacent to the administrative border with South Ossetia.

Food and nutrition intervention targeting young children and their families.

- *Needs assessment.* Following the conflict, UNICEF worked with the **World Food Program** and the **Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN** in a joint needs assessment of people rendered homeless by the war (IDPs), and provided wide-ranging aid to 78,000 conflict-affected children and their families.
- *Donors' cash assistance to IDP families.* One of the main areas to benefit from UNICEF's intervention was that of health and nutrition among displaced families. The government of Georgia responded to the problems of obesity (and in many cases under-nutrition and malnutrition among IDP children), revealed by the joint needs assessment, by suggesting a program of direct cash assistance to IDP families, as proposed by pediatricians. **UNICEF, the WFP and UNHCR** all contributed funds for the direct cash



assistance program, under which families with children under two years old were given 100 lari per month. This was lodged in the mothers' bank accounts to buy the right food and hygienic items for their babies. UNICEF provided a one-off payment of 100 lari for purchasing winter clothes for children under six years of age. Advice on what food mothers should buy for their babies was drawn up by the Academy of Pediatricians.

- *Breastfeeding and re-lactation interventions.* A crucial component of the emergency nutrition program for IDPs was tackling their problems with breastfeeding. The danger in the emergency situation was that breast-milk substitutes, which had been donated in great quantities, would be used more widely than needed by nursing mothers in the IDP community. To address this issue, pediatricians worked with the group of mothers to achieve re-lactation, which they managed to do in 14% of cases. At the same time, a strategy was put in place to ensure that all the babies of IDPs were fed well, and that breast-milk substitutes reached those mothers who could not breastfeed their babies.

Evacuation Plans and List of Contact Persons for kindergartens in case of emergency situations. At the municipal level, measures have been taken to equip existing preschools with evacuation plans in cooperation with the **Head and Regional Offices for Emergency Situations**. The preschools were provided with a list of contact persons in the relevant agencies in case of emergency situations.

G. Recommendations

Georgia has been through a recent war which momentarily displaced around 300,000 people. International assistance and relief organizations (together with the government, local NGOs, and communities) have tried to ease the conflict's horrible impact (especially for the most vulnerable, economically disadvantaged, and groups such as young children and the elderly). Given this, it is imperative to draw lessons in order to improve preparedness, relief and response to future emergencies, especially for young children within and out of ECD services, as well as their families. The following are questions which have still to be addressed.

- *Assessments and lessons learned from the UNICEF-led ECD intervention during the war.* What do we know about the effectiveness of the networking and partnerships that had been established through governmental and municipalities cooperation, as well as through UN agencies, under the guidance of UNICEF?
- *Available Human Resources for ECD in emergencies in Georgia.* A database of the people skilled in the preparedness and response to emergencies, responding to the needs of young children, should be established. People who did receive some kind of information/training and capacity-building during and after the war may include teachers' families, older students, volunteers, community leaders, health specialists, medical doctors, nurses, etc.

- *Capacity building at the level of communities.* What does exist at the community level in order to address the needs of young children in emergencies?

► Advocacy level

RECOMMENDATION 1

Advocate and help government to integrate the needs of children in Georgia, across all inter- and intra-government disaster strategies, planning and operations.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Advocate and help the government and partners to address, in the National Strategy for Emergencies, the immediate and long-term health, mental, educational, housing, and human services preparedness and recovery needs of young children in Georgia.

► Strategy development level

RECOMMENDATION 3

Options to reach young children and their families, especially in rural areas. In Georgia as in other selected countries, any ECD activity for emergency preparedness and its response should be twofold:

- a) activities targeting the ECD community (educators and other staff, children) in all kindergartens of the country;
- b) activities targeting children excluded from any kind of ECD services. A combination of the below options may be considered:
 - 1) train school students who will bring information to families, young siblings, and communities;
 - 2) produce and broadcast radio and TV programs (including cartoons), targeting young children;
 - 3) use human resources at the community and intermediary levels (doctors, nurses and teachers) to provide information on preparedness for emergencies, targeting young children and their families;
 - 4) train volunteer students and support them to reach communities, and to bring information and materials to families in these communities, specifically targeting young children (aged 3–7). The activity should be built by making use of already existing volunteer teams in the country.



► Operational level for both government and international organizations

RECOMMENDATION 4

Improve networking capacity and partnership of state (central local) communities and international partners.

RECOMMENDATION 5

The MoE, together with donor support, should perform *an assessment of kindergartens*, ECD educators, young students and parents regarding preparedness and response to emergencies. Start from the most vulnerable and poorest communities through a *participatory process*.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Define specific strategies and action plans to address the needs of young children for Internally Displaced Persons, based on lessons learned from the aftermath of the 2008 conflict.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Identify and/or create databases on human resources available for implementing contingency plans.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Specify a role for ECD educators and directors during preparedness and response, for various kinds of emergencies in order to address the needs of preschoolers.

RECOMMENDATION 9

Identify and gather data on ECD emergency materials available in the country.

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Annex: Georgia – Country Profile

Source:	<i>The CIA World Factbook</i> https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gg.html
Location:	Southwestern Asia, bordering the Black Sea, between Turkey and Russia
Area:	total: 69,700 sq km country comparison to the world: 120 land: 69,700 sq km water: 0 sq km
Land boundaries:	total: 1,461 km border countries: Armenia 164 km, Azerbaijan 322 km, Russia 723 km, Turkey 252 km Coastline: 310 km Terrain: largely mountainous with Great Caucasus Mountains in the north and Lesser Caucasus Mountains in the south; Kolkhet'is Dablobi (Kolkhida Lowland) opens to the Black Sea in the west; Mtkvari River Basin in the east; good soils in river valley flood plains, foothills of Kolkhida Lowland
Population:	4,615,807 (July 2009 est.)
Ethnic groups:	Georgian 83.8%, Azeri 6.5%, Armenian 5.7%, Russian 1.5%, other 2.5% (2002 census)
Religions:	Orthodox Christian 83.9%, Muslim 9.9%, Armenian-Gregorian 3.9%, Catholic 0.8%, other 0.8%, none 0.7% (2002 census)
Languages:	Georgian 71% (official), Russian 9%, Armenian 7%, Azeri 6%, other 7% <i>Note:</i> Abkhaz is the official language in Abkhazia
Government type:	republic
Capital's name:	T'bilisi

Economy – overview:

Georgia's economy sustained GDP growth of close to 10% in 2006 and 12% in 2007, based on strong inflows of foreign investment and robust government spending. However, growth slowed to less than 3% in 2008 and is expected to slow further in 2009. Georgia's main economic activities include the cultivation of agricultural products such as grapes, citrus fruits, and hazelnuts; mining of manganese and copper; and output of a small industrial sector producing alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, metals, machinery, aircraft and chemicals. Areas of recent improvement include growth in the construction, banking services, and mining sectors, but reduced availability of external investment and the slowing regional economy are emerging risks. The country imports nearly all its needed supplies of natural gas and oil products. It has sizeable hydropower capacity, a growing component of its energy supplies. Georgia has overcome the chronic energy shortages of the past by renovating hydropower plants and by bringing in newly available supplies from Azerbaijan. It also has an increased ability to pay for more expensive gas imports from Russia. The construction on the Baku–T'bilisi–Ceyhan oil pipeline, the Baku–T'bilisi–Erzerum gas pipeline, and the Kars–Akhalkalaki Railroad are part of a strategy to capitalize on Georgia's strategic location between Europe and Asia and develop its role as a transit point for gas, oil and other goods. Georgia has historically suffered from a chronic failure to collect tax revenues; however, the government has made great progress and has reformed the tax code, improved tax administration, increased tax enforcement, and cracked down on corruption since coming to power in 2004. Government revenues have increased nearly four-fold since 2003. Due to improvements in customs

and tax enforcement, smuggling is a declining problem. The country is pinning its hopes for long-term growth on a determined effort to reduce regulation, taxes, and corruption in order to attract foreign investment, but the economy faces a more difficult investment climate both domestically and internationally.

GDP – real growth rate: 2.1% (2008 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 156
 12.3% (2007 est.)
 9.4% (2006 est.)

Population below poverty line: 31% (2006)



Source: CIA World Fact Book.



COUNTRY PROFILE

Early Childhood Development and Education in Emergencies **KYRGYZSTAN**

Aigly Zafeirakou, USA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Country Context	57
B. The Context: Characteristics of Young children, Parents'/Caregivers' Situations, and the Preschool System in Kyrgyzstan	58
C. Disaster Risk Analysis	60
D. Government Institutions Responsible for Emergencies and Coordination Mechanisms	61
E. National Policies, Strategies and Ongoing Programs for Emergencies	63
F. Education and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies	64
G. Recommendations	67
H. Reference List	69
Annex 1: Kyrgyzstan Country Development Strategy (2009–2011)	71
Annex 2: Kyrgyzstan – Country Profile	73

Emergencies (definition): Emergencies include situations such as disasters, violent conflict, or complex crises that generate a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society involving widespread human, material, economic, or environmental losses and impacts, which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources

A. Country Context

The *Kyrgyz Republic* is a low-income country with a gross national income (GNI) per capita of US\$780 in 2008. A country of 5.3 million people, it is landlocked and mostly mountainous. Gold, agricultural products, textiles, and energy products make up the bulk of the country's exports. The industrial production base is relatively small. The Kyrgyz Republic has implemented systemic reforms to create the foundations of a market economy. The country has made considerable progress in attaining macroeconomic stability in the past few years. Average GDP has grown at about 5.5% a year since 2003, and the high rates of poverty have started to decline since 2000. Despite pro-poor growth in the past few years, the country remains poor with about 35% of the population living below the poverty line. Poverty is mostly a rural phenomenon, with three-quarters of the poor living in the rural regions, partly due to sluggish developments in agriculture in recent years. Access to basic public services such as health, education, running water and public sewerage has deteriorated over the past 17 years. Reducing poverty will require strong and sustained economic performance, especially in the rural areas; growth in small and medium enterprises can be induced by an improved business environment, better social protection strategies, and good governance.¹

By 2009, the global financial crisis was having a devastating impact on families in emerging Europe and Central Asia, including Kyrgyzstan, with the risk of the region losing a fifth of its poverty reduction gains of the past decade, according to a new World Bank report. According to the report *The Crisis Hits Home – Stress-Testing Households in Europe and Central Asia*, families have been hit by credit market shocks, the increasing prices of goods and services, and rising unemployment.²

1. World Bank, 2009.

2. World Bank, 2009.

B. The Context: Characteristics of Young Children, Parents'/ Caregivers' Situations, and the Preschool System in Kyrgyzstan

Child status is improving in Kyrgyzstan, but many children still live in poor and extremely poor households, with little child development stimulus, especially in poor rural areas.³ In Kyrgyzstan, child mortality is 44 per 1,000 and this is lower than in other countries in Central Asia. The under-five mortality rate is 65 per 1,000. As for child well-being, almost all children in Kyrgyzstan are immunized. However, children living in poor households are twice as likely to die as children living in the richest households; and 7% of children under five years of age suffer from stunted growth. In Kyrgyzstan, up to 30% of children under five have not had an adult participate with them in at least four of the following activities within the previous three days: reading or looking at books; telling stories; singing songs; visiting outside the home/yard; playing; and naming/counting things.⁴ Thus, there is an urgent need to support communities and households, especially in poor and extreme poor situations, to improve their children's comprehensive development.⁵



3. UNICEF, 2008.

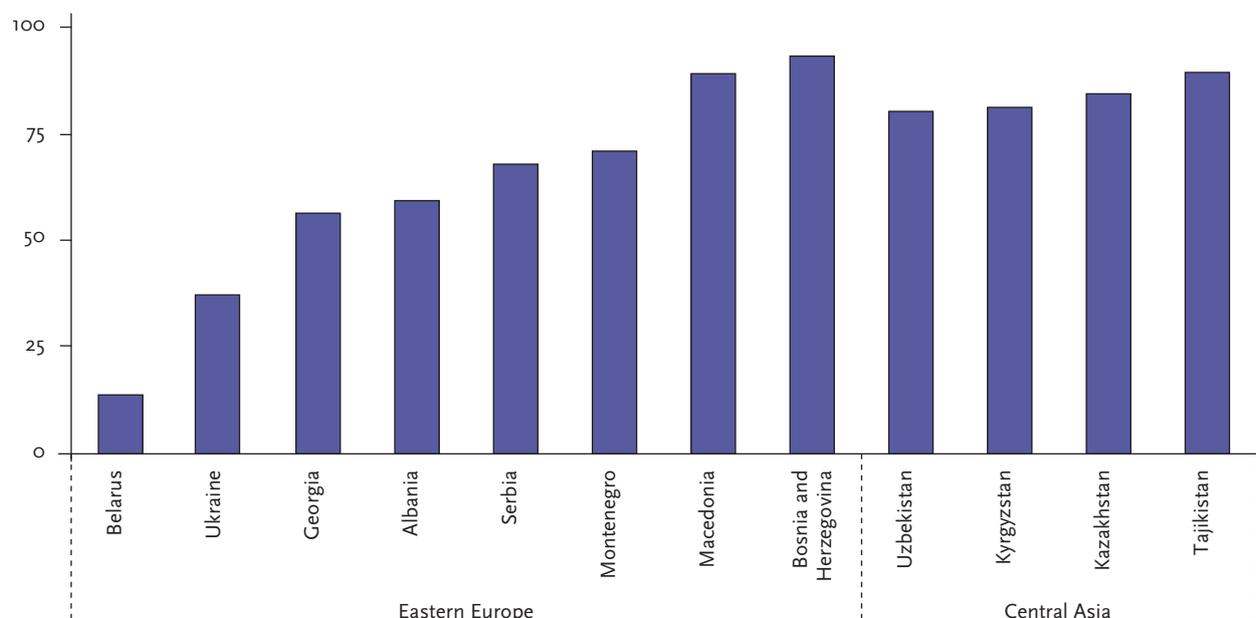
4. UNICEF, 2008; MIICS (Kyrgyzstan), 2006.

5. World Bank Technical Proposal for FTI II, 2009.

Support for neglected children and children in institutions is one of the most crucial problems faced by the country. By various estimates, at present there are over 10,000 neglected children, along with over 23,000 working children and 20,000 children not attending school. The problem of children’s support needs to be addressed more closely, as disregarding the issue may lead to national human capacity “de-capitalization”.⁶

The Early Childhood Education and Development (ECD) subsector faces urgent issues of access, equity, and quality: 75–80% of children aged 3–5 years old are not attending any form of organized Early Childhood Education program.⁷ (UNICEF 2008, National Statistics 2008). By 2007, public kindergartens were covering 11% of young children, mostly 3–5 years old, but the coverage for rural areas was only 3–4%. Kyrgyzstan has one of the lowest rates of access to ECD programs. Diagram 1 illustrates the access issues within the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Diagram 1: Children 3–5 years old without access to ECD programs



Source: *Emerging Challenges for children in Eastern Europe*, UNICEF, 2008.

Equity issues: any form of ECD services covers the poorest the least. In Kyrgyzstan and in rural areas (which are the poorest areas of the country) only 4.2% of children aged 3–5 years old have access to public-municipal kindergartens. In urban areas, 24.4% of children are enrolled in public kindergartens. While coverage in urban areas is low, the difference between the rural and urban areas is striking.

6. UNICEF, 2008.

7. UNICEF, 2008 (National Statistics).

Learning opportunities and teaching-learning processes are outdated in Kyrgyz preschools: Most students in grade 1, especially those from rural areas, are not prepared for the first year of school. According to the National Statistics survey (2008), only 20% of students at grade 1 graduated from preschools and 38% from preparatory classes (100 or 200 hours of teaching per year). Also, the teaching profession in preschools faces enormous challenges, such as extremely low salaries, very sporadic training (if any), poor professional status, and an aging teacher demographic.

C. Disaster Risk Analysis

Hazards/threats: Natural and climatic conditions of the Kyrgyz Republic pose a constant threat of hazardous natural processes and phenomena. Kyrgyzstan is exposed to more than 20 dangerous natural processes and events, out of the 70 known in the world. Earthquakes, landslides, mudflows and floods, avalanches, high-altitude lakes in danger of bursting, and water logging present the greatest threats to sustainable development, human life, life-support objects, and settlements. Annually in the country, about 200 emergency situations occur caused by natural disasters; more than 1,000 families have been resettled from danger areas. 75% of the population of the country live in 74 settlements which are located in possible seismic areas. In addition, there exist no fewer than 5,000 land-slide hazard sites. In Kyrgyzstan there are 92 constructions where 250 million m³ of toxic and radioactive waste products are placed. Of these, in state structures, there are 36 tailing pits and 23 dumps, 30 of which are uranium and six of which are toxic-waste disposals. In addition, the provision of safe drinking water remains a challenge in Kyrgyzstan. Donors continue to work to supply safe piped water to the majority of the country.



Vulnerability: Between 2002 and 2009, 25,339 families in Kyrgyzstan have been affected by disasters. While the current economic situation (including the poor income from agriculture, issues of food security and energy, the challenges to education, health care, drinking water, and social protection) concerns the whole population, it continues to weigh heavily on vulnerable groups, and any further deterioration would hit this part of the population particularly hard. Especially in the education system, as of November 2009, in some schools and kindergartens, coal has been purchased for winter heating. But in more remote areas, with the heavy winter and the roads often impassable, schools may be closed for an extended winter period.⁸

8. *A Rapid Multi-Sector Needs Assessment*, Office of the Resident Coordinator of the UN in Kyrgyzstan, November 2009.



D. Government Institutions Responsible for Emergencies and Coordination Mechanisms

Legislation: The most important laws in Kyrgyzstan related to preparedness and response to emergencies are: (i) the Law on Tailings and Waste Rock Dumps; (ii) the Law on Radiation Safety of the Population of the Kyrgyz Republic; (iii) the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on the Protection of the Population and Territories from Natural and Man-Made Emergency Situations; and (iv) the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on Civil Defense. While the legislation is generally acceptable and it defines authorities, roles, and responsibilities at all levels of government and in the private sector, the implementation is challenging because of a lack of regulations to support primary legislation, and the lack of coordination, technology, and resources to implement necessary measures.⁹ (Kyrgyzstan, *Disaster Hazard Mitigation Project*, World Bank 2004)

Ministry of Emergency Situations (MoES) and Local Communities: The MoES is the national lead agency for Disaster Risk Management (DRM). A considerable proportion of DRM is delegated to the local self-governance bodies, the *Ayil Okmotu*.¹⁰ However, local self-governments, despite

9. World Bank, 2004, *Disaster Hazard Mitigation Project*, Kyrgyzstan.

10. Law No. 45, 2000.

an ongoing decentralization process, have an extremely limited ability to act upon DRM issues because of two main factors: (i) a lack of capacity and resources; and (ii) the absence of an integrated DRM system that would fine roles and responsibilities at the central regional (*rayon*) and the local self-governance levels (*Ayil Okmotu*). In addition, several NGOs, as well as bi-lateral, international, and multi-lateral agencies, have implemented community-level DRM, although sporadically and without guarantees for sustainability.

E. National Policies, Strategies and Ongoing Programs for Emergencies

Risk management in the National Strategy for Human Development: The government considers the National Strategy for Sustainable Human Development, adopted in May 1997, as the appropriate framework for risk-management of disaster hazards. The broad objective of government policy in this area is to reduce the vulnerability of the population and the economy to hazardous processes. In this respect, five specific goals have been set: (i) to provide timely warnings to the public of the threat of natural and man-made disasters; (ii) to reduce and mitigate human and material losses from disasters; (iii) to establish a single monitoring system to ensure the safety of the population; (iv) to improve disaster preparedness by training the population; and (v) to improve





rescue preparedness against disasters. Another related plan is the National Environmental Health Action Plan¹¹, which includes a chapter on natural and industrial disasters.¹²

Country Development Strategy on Protecting the Population from Disasters: In Kyrgyzstan, the Country Development strategy (2009–2011) has a whole component on managing the comprehensive protection of the population and territories from natural disasters and accidents. The strategy foresees a new national system of civil protection, uniting the tasks and functions of two protection systems. The new system will include the authorities, forces, and resources of the national structures of the executive authority, and institutions of local government and organizations (including solutions for the protection of the population and territories from emergencies). The coordinating body is the Interdepartmental Commission on Emergency Prevention and Mitigation chaired by the prime minister of the Kyrgyz Republic.¹³

A National Disaster Response Plan 2009–2011 was developed and submitted for approval to the Government. The law on Civil Protection was approved in May 2009.

11. NEHAP, 1997.

12. World Bank, 2004, Disaster Hazard Mitigation Project, Kyrgyzstan.

13. Country Development Strategy, 2009–2011.

F. Education and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies

In Kyrgyzstan there is no specific reference to kindergartens concerning emergency preparedness and response, because kindergartens are part of the ongoing emergency planning for all schools in the country.

Education Focal Point for Emergencies: The Ministry of Education has a focal point for emergencies, responsible for facilitating the preparedness work of the Ministry of Education on emergency situations towards schools. However, since the focal point for emergencies is the Director of Resources Provision (building supplies), the role is almost exclusively limited to the assessment of infrastructure; extremely poor resources do not permit the Director to accomplish the infrastructure safety control plan.

The Ministry of Education recently issued an Order on Emergency Preparedness (Order #23–534 March 17, 2009), that defines the roles of the MoE at the central and local levels, regarding preparedness and response to emergencies (natural disasters such as landslides, flooding, earthquakes, and others).

The Education sector follows the country's decentralized system for Disaster-Risk Management: In Kyrgyzstan, the MoE recognizes that emergency preparedness and response is carried out by the responsible state institutions and bodies at regional, district, municipal, and local self-governance levels, as described in the recent 2008–2010 Strategic Document: *Mainstreaming Disaster Reduction Management into Decentralization in Kyrgyzstan*. Thus the entities of the MoE at the central and decentralized levels follow the country's emergency system.

Preparation of plans and activities at the regional, district, and municipal education management levels: The MoE, according to the Order on Emergency Preparedness, demanded the above decentralized instances to: (i) prepare activities and mitigation plans for natural disaster preparedness before June 2009; (ii) prepare mitigation plans for natural disasters; and (iii) organize rescue forces in case of disaster phenomena. However, the level of implementation and deadlines for the above activities at the country level are not clear.



Introducing emergency preparedness activities in schools: The MoE demanded the decentralized education authorities (Order of March 2009) at the regional, district, and municipal levels, to organize information and training activities for students on how to react in case of natural disasters and catastrophes, and to prepare schools for an immediate response to emergencies. The deadline for reporting actions to the MoE was June 1, 2009.

The role of the Ministry of Education on current emergency preparedness in schools: According to the Order, at the MoE, the Head of the Department of Vocational Education (Sadykov K.J.) and the Head of the Department of Preschool, Primary, and Extracurricular Education (Kudaibergenova A.D.) should prepare proposals, within one month after the Order was issued, on how schools should organize and implement information and training activities to prepare students to respond to natural disasters.

It is clear that through the 2009 Order, the MoE has tried to implement a national plan and to provide support to local education offices on preparing **emergency and mitigation plans for primary and secondary schools, including kindergartens**, in line with the decentralization process of the country and the



ongoing effort to mainstream DRM into decentralization in Kyrgyzstan. More information is needed in order to assess the level of implementation and follow-up of the Ministerial Order.

High-school students and teachers have participated in emergency training through a UNDP supported program. In selected communities of the UNDP Project Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management into a Decentralization Process in Kyrgyzstan, training has been conducted with the main purpose of testing the preparedness and the response plans of RRT (Rural Rescue Teams). According to the preliminary training plan (scenario) *After the First 3–4 Magnitude Earth Tremors and the Threat of Aftershocks*, members of RRT developed plans based on the following main phases of response:

- early warning;
- controlling the RRT and organizing responses;
- evacuation of students;
- search and transportation of victims;
- the supply of medical first aid in disaster-affected areas.

Participants of the training were: heads of oblast administrations from the MoES; their deputies; heads and staff personnel of rayon departments from the MoES; representatives of local self-governance; members of Commissions for Emergency Situations; principals and teachers; high-school students; members of RRT; members of Rural Committees for Emergency Situations; and moderators of medical first-aid training. Teachers and students from high schools of all the pilot communities were involved in evacuation activities – comprising more than 350 people altogether.¹⁴

14. See <http://www.undp.kg/en/media-room/news/article/news-list/14-crisis-prevention/1127-ucheniya-selski-komand-spasatelej>

G. Recommendations

► Advocacy level

RECOMMENDATION 1

There is the momentum to include ECD and the needs of young children in the country's emergency agenda. Because of the ongoing revision of the National Policy Strategy and Plan on Preparedness and Response to Emergency Situations, this is a great opportunity to make sure that ECD and the needs of young children in emergency situations are included. A key role should be attributed to UNICEF as lead of the education cluster.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Undertake structural assessment of building safety of kindergartens and preschool organizations and revise the State Standard on Building and maintaining preschool organizations. Currently, apart from state kindergartens, more than 300 community-based kindergartens (CBKs) operate in the country. These CBKs were established by local communities with support from different international agencies and are often located in premises that are not specially constructed preschool buildings. Currently, information on the safety of these buildings is missing at the central level. There is a common acceptance that the building of additional conventional kindergartens is financially unfeasible in the foreseeable future. Alternative forms of early educational arrangements such as CBKs are being promoted in order to dramatically expand access to ECD programs for young children. It is important that premises be safe and of a national standard, wherever children gather.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Improve coordination among donors and within Ministry sectors and share information on activities, training, assessments, produced materials and a list of trained people (volunteers and education staff) in the areas of ECD and preparing young children for emergencies.

► Operational level, for both government and international organizations

RECOMMENDATION 4

Conduct a needs assessment of young children and their families, for emergency preparedness and response, through a participatory process. The MoE and CoES, with external expertise support, should perform a country-wide needs assessment of teachers, students, and parents in schools and kindergartens/community-based centers regarding preparedness and response to emergencies. In addition, a psychosocial needs assessment will be performed in selected ECD facilities and communities in order to prepare related activities for psychosocial support within educational programming for emergencies.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Assessment of human-resources capacity and available materials for ECD emergencies.

Before any commitment by international organizations of support for the MoE, an assessment should be produced of existing ECD human-resources capacity, at the community, ECD facilities, regional, and central levels (MoE), in order to carry out activities related to ECD in emergencies targeting young children up to seven years old within and beyond the reach of ECD services. An additional activity should be to gather and assess all materials (visual aids, video and TV programs, and texts) for children, teachers and families on the topic of emergency preparedness and its response, produced in the country within the previous five years.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Develop a twofold strategy to reach: (i) children in kindergartens; and (ii) children beyond the reach of ECD services. Develop strategies and programs that will cover the two groups of young children of preschool age: the 10% enrolled in kindergartens and the 90% not receiving any form of preschool service.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Target and plan the scaling up of ECD of emergency activities/projects in order to cover the whole country.

Start with the most vulnerable and poorest communities and target young children in vulnerable communities. The MoE, together with CoES and UNICEF, will identify disaster-prone districts which are at the same time the most vulnerable, and those with or without preschools. For this purpose, the DIPECHO project list may also be used.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Build on existing human resources and materials for emergencies. Reinforce capacity and coordination among the sector's focal points (at the central, intermediary, and local levels) under the direction of the Ministry of Emergencies and the Ministry of Education. Coordinate between the ministries on selecting and adapting a training package on *information, training, and modern efficient materials* for school directors of kindergartens, teachers, students, parents, and local community emergency teams.

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World Bank, (2009) *The Crisis Hits Home – Stress-Testing Households in Europe and Central Asia*, Washington, D.C.



Tools

European Community Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) & the Netherlands Red Cross (2008) *Good practices and lessons learned in community and school based disaster preparedness in Central Asia*, Geneva (the idea of this booklet is to present good practices and lessons learned, gathered by National Red Crescent Societies of Central Asia, through implementation of community and school-based disaster preparedness projects funded by DIPECHO. It is the first time that such best practices and lessons learned have been published.)

First Aid for Children, manual skills of first aid issued by The National Society of the Red Crescent

Healthy Lifestyle, information booklet issued by The National Society of the Red Crescent and The Society of the Netherlands Red Cross

National Television Keremet Koch, an animation produced by Tolkun Jukusheva, Project Officer, Save the Children Kyrgyzstan tolkun@savethechildren.kg

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UNDP, Kyrgyzstan

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Annex 1: Kyrgyzstan Country Development Strategy (2009–2011)

Managing the comprehensive protection of the population and territories from natural disasters and accidents

To improve and develop an integrated network for the Crisis Management (Emergency Response) Center based on the use of modern information technology	Ministry of Emergency Situations	2008–2011	Real-time communication and collection of information from emergency areas for making prompt decisions for prevention and neutralization of threats
To strengthen cooperation and coordination in the area of emergency response between the government and international organizations under the UNDP's <i>Coordinating Group for Emergency Response in the Kyrgyz Republic</i> project	Ministry of Emergency Situations, National Agency for local governments, UNDP (subject to approval), donor organizations (subject to approval)	2008–2009	Improved efficiency of joint efforts of the Kyrgyz government and international organizations in the area of emergency response
To ensure the involvement of local governments in the management of disaster risk under the UNDP's <i>Integration of disaster risk management into decentralization process in Kyrgyzstan</i> project	Ministry of Emergency Situations, UNDP (subject to approval), National Agency for local governments	2008–2010	Strengthening of the disaster risk management capacity of LSGs
To develop and implement programs of emergency prevention and response, as well as to design and survey activities	Ministry of Emergency Situations, (Department for Emergency Prevention and Response, Legal Unit of the Department for Emergency Prevention and Response, Agricultural Water Resources Protection Unit, Department for Protection of Population and Territories)	2008–2011	Protection of the population and territories against water erosion, floods, and the raising of subsurface water levels
To improve the performance of mining supervision and conduct occupational safety inspections	Ministry of Emergency Situations, State Agency for Mining Supervision	2008–2011	Improvement of industrial safety at enterprises, and dangerous industrial objects
To develop and implement investment promotion programs for the implementation of projects rehabilitating river bank protection dams in the Kyrgyz Republic	Ministry of Emergency Situations	2008–2011	Promotion of investments for the implementation of projects aiming to rehabilitate river bank protection dams (152.2 km)

Managing the comprehensive protection of the population and territories from natural disasters and accidents

To create a system of complex monitoring and forecasting of landslide processes based on GIS technology and remote exploration in the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic	Ministry of Emergency Situations, National Academy of Science, Central Asian Earth Research Institute (subject to approval), State Geodetic Agency (subject to approval)	2008–2011	Creation of a system for monitoring and forecasting of landslides
To create a comprehensively operating network for monitoring hydrological and seismic crust movements in the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic, as well as in neighboring Central Asian countries	Central Asian Earth Research Institute (subject to approval)	2008–2011	The existing system of estimation of seismic danger, forecasting earthquakes
To rehabilitate meteorological stations/posts and finish the implementation of the <i>Swiss support for Hydrometeorological Services in the basin of the Aral Sea (final phase)</i> project	Ministry of Emergency Situations (Kyrgyzhydromet)	2008–2011	Improvement of hydrometeorological observations and hydrological forecasts
To strengthen the technical capacity of fire-prevention and search-and-rescue services	Ministry of Emergency Situations (HQ of the State Fire-Fighting Service, search-and-rescue services)	2008–2011	Increase of the efficiency of fire-prevention and search-and-rescue services with special machinery, and equipment
To develop and implement projects for emergency response at protective works on mine tailings and rock dumps	Ministry of Emergency Situations (Department of Emergency Monitoring and Prevention, and Protection of Tailings)	2008–2011	Maintenance of the geotechnical stability of tailing and rock dumps
To implement the World Bank's Disaster Hazard Mitigation Project (in the town of Mailuuusu)	Ministry of Emergency Situations (Disaster Hazard Mitigation Project of the World Bank)	2008–2011	Minimization of the impact of radionuclides from abandoned tailings and rock dumps in Majluusu on people, livestock, river flora and fauna
To hold an international donor forum on radioactive waste (with the assistance of the UNDP Country Office in the Kyrgyz Republic)	Kyrgyz Government, Ministry of Emergency Situations, UNDP (subject to approval)	2008–2009	Raising awareness of the international community concerning existing transboundary problems in the area of management of radioactive waste in the country

Annex 2: Kyrgyzstan – Country Profile

Source:	<i>The CIA World Factbook</i> https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kg.html
Location:	Central Asia, west of China
Area:	total: 199,951 sq km country comparison to the world: 86 land: 191,801 sq km water: 8,150 sq km
Land boundaries:	total: 3,051 km border countries: China 858 km, Kazakhstan 1,224 km, Tajikistan 870 km, Uzbekistan 1,099 km Coastline: 0 km (landlocked) Terrain: peaks of Tien Shan and associated valleys and basins encompass entire nation
Population:	5,431,747 (July 2009 est.)
Ethnic groups:	Kyrgyz 64.9%, Uzbek 13.8%, Russian 12.5%, Dungan 1.1%, Ukrainian 1%, Uygur 1%, other 5.7% (1999 census)
Religions:	Muslim 75%, Russian Orthodox 20%, other 5%
Languages:	Kyrgyz 64.7% (official), Uzbek 13.6%, Russian 12.5% (official), Dungan 1%, other 8.2% (1999 census)
Government type:	republic
Capital's name:	Bishkek

Economy – overview:

Kyrgyzstan is a poor, mountainous country with a predominantly agricultural economy. Cotton, tobacco, wool, and meat are the main agricultural products, although only tobacco and cotton are exported in any quantity. Industrial exports include gold, mercury, uranium, natural gas, and electricity. Following independence, Kyrgyzstan was progressive in carrying out market reforms such as an improved regulatory system and land reform. Kyrgyzstan was the first Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) country to be accepted into the World Trade Organization. Much of the government's stock in enterprises has been sold. Drops in production had been severe after the breakup of the Soviet Union in December 1991, but by mid-1995, production began to recover and exports began to increase. The economy is heavily weighted toward gold export and a drop in output at the main Kumtor gold mine sparked a 0.5% decline in GDP in 2002 and a 0.6% decline in 2005. The government made steady strides in controlling its substantial fiscal deficit, nearly closing the gap between revenues and expenditures in 2006, before boosting expenditures more than 20% in 2007–08. The government and international financial institutions have been engaged in a comprehensive medium-term poverty reduction and economic growth strategy. In 2005, Bishkek agreed to pursue much-needed tax reform and, in 2006, became eligible for the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative. Progress fighting corruption, further restructuring of domestic industry, and success in attracting foreign investment are keys to future growth. GDP grew more than 6% annually in 2007–08, partly due to higher gold prices internationally, but growth is likely to decline from that level in 2009, due to declining demand and lower commodity prices in the wake of the international financial crisis.

GDP – real growth rate: 7.6% (2008 est.)
 country comparison to the world: 25
 8.5% (2007 est.)
 3.1% (2006 est.)

Population below poverty line: 40% (2004 est.)



Source: CIA World Fact Book.



COUNTRY PROFILE

Early Childhood Development and Education in Emergencies **MOLDOVA**

Aigly Zafeirakou, USA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Country Context	77
B. The Context: Characteristics of Young children, Parents'/Caregivers' Situations, and the Preschool System in Moldova	78
C. Disaster Risk Analysis	80
D. Government Institutions Responsible for Emergencies and Coordination Mechanisms	82
E. National Policies, Strategies and Ongoing Programs for Emergencies	83
F. Education and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies	85
G. Recommendations	90
H. Reference List	92
Annex 1: Coordination with Counterparts in Moldova: Inter-sectoral, UN, NGOs, Civil Society, Institutions, etc.	94
Annex 2: Moldova – Country Profile	95

Emergencies (definition): Emergencies include situations such as natural disasters, violent conflict, or complex crises in which large segments of the population are at risk of dying, experience immense suffering, and/or face loss of dignity and are in need of external support.

A. Country Context

Moldova is a low-income country with a gross national income per capita of US\$1,260 in 2007. The country is small, landlocked, and densely populated. It has few natural resources and is entirely dependent upon imports for its primary energy requirements, as well as for inputs for its manufacturing industries. Agriculture accounts for roughly 34% of the country's GDP and many people still make their livelihoods in this sector. Over half the population lives in rural areas.

In the early years of the current decade, Moldova's economic performance was commendable, in contrast to its deteriorating performance through most of the 1990s. The country successfully stabilized. It launched structural reforms to stimulate growth and started setting up an effective social protection system. However, a significant reform agenda remains. While Moldova achieved independence in 1991 as a middle-income country, it is now one of the poorest countries in Europe. The poverty rate is highest (survey 2006) in small towns and villages (30.1 and 34.1% respectively), and lowest in large cities (20.6%). Nearly 66% of the poor live in rural areas. Today (2009) Moldova faces a number of challenges, including the following:

- **The global economic crisis has significantly clouded its immediate economic outlook.**
- **A potential poverty increase in 2009 as a result of global financial crisis.**
- **The global crisis will complicate fiscal policy in Moldova.**
- **Potential return of migrants** (www.worldbank.org/ECA/countryprofile).

B. The Context: Characteristics of Young Children, Parents'/ Caregivers' Situations, and the Preschool System in Moldova

The most recent UNICEF International Research Centre, Innocenti (2009) analysis shows that the period of economic recovery – from the late 1990s to 2008 – brought with it improvements in most of the average indicators of child well-being in the country. There was a decline in child income poverty and child mortality. However, Moldova has high levels of extreme child poverty with more than half of children under 16 living in extremely poor households and representing approximately one quarter of the country's poor population. Extreme poverty is more widespread in rural areas, followed by secondary cities. While chronic and acute malnutrition among children (6–59 months) lie well below emergency thresholds, many families and children in

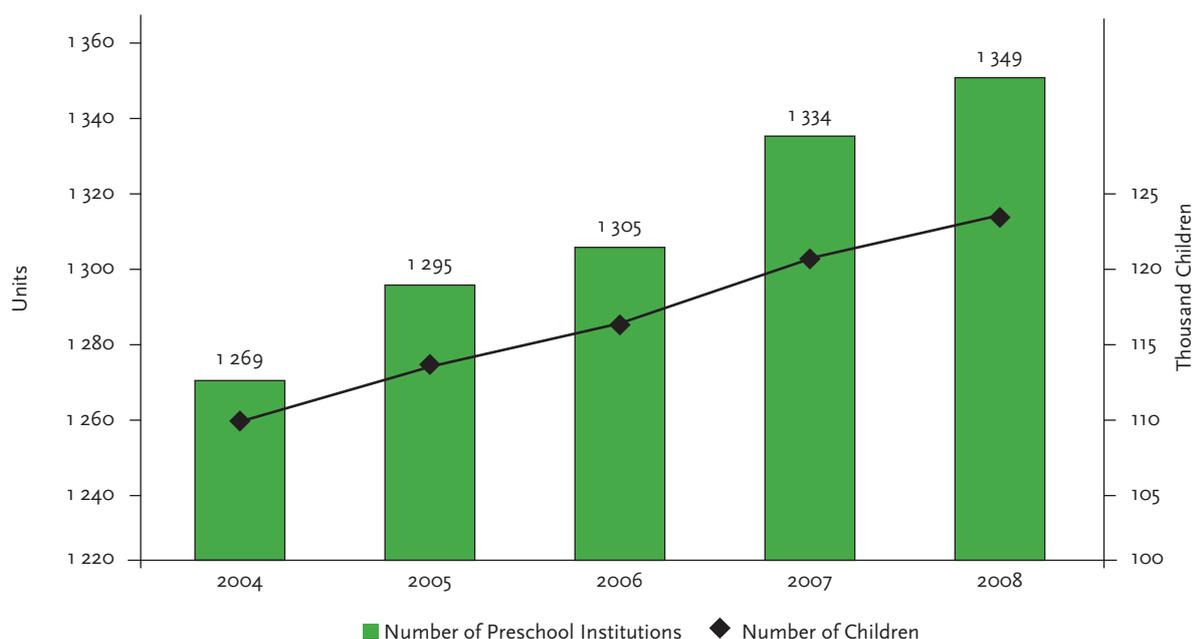
Moldova are at risk of facing a precarious food security situation (data 2007). Many children live in houses with unreliable access to basic utilities: 27% of the urban population and 89% of the rural population live in dwellings not connected to the public water network (data 2005–2006) and around one-fifth of rural households have no access to improved sanitation. This affects the life of children and parents/caregivers in multiple ways. As for the family caregiver structure, 37% of children aged 0–14 years were not living in families with both parents, and in slightly more than half of the cases, this was due to the migration of one or both parents (data 2007). In addition, more than 1% of the child population aged 0–17 lives in some form of institutional care (including boarding schools).¹

As for preschool education in Moldova, in late 2008, there were 1,349 preschool institutions operating in the country, of which 23% of kindergartens were located in urban areas, and 77% in rural areas. The number of children enrolled in preschool education has increased recently and amounted to 123,900 in late 2008 – 3.2% more than in 2007. Most children covered by preschool institutions were between 3 and 6 years old (105,500, or 85%). There has been a slight recovery in terms of enrolments since the transition.



1. UNICEF, Innocenti 2009, 'Child Well-being at a Crossroads: Evolving Challenges in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States', *Innocenti Social Monitor* 2009.

Diagram 1. The evolution in the number of preschool institutions and in the number of children



Source: Informative Note, National Statistics, Moldova, 2009

The gross enrolment rate in preschool education in urban areas was higher (90.8%) than in rural areas (65.2%). Still, many poor families and those living in villages cannot pay the fees to enrol their children, and around 280 communities lack ECD services. Educators in kindergartens are poorly paid, and young and more qualified educators tend to abandon the profession and emigrate. Currently, a public intervention has been under way since 2006, aiming at revitalizing ECD services and increasing quality, to reach children out of ECD services; and expand ECD services; it is supported by the Education for All Fast Track initiative (US\$8.8 million).

C. Disaster Risk Analysis

Hazards/threats: It is not clear if an official disaster risk assessment according to international procedures is available in Moldova. However, an abundance of information and related analyses exists.² In this respect, it is a positive development that Moldova is part of a regional initiative of the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) established by the World Bank and the UN, which supports the risk assessment of participating countries.

2. Waterfield, 2007.

According to a recent analysis,³ Moldova is exposed to a number of natural and man-made disasters, of which floods and droughts have been the worst in recent decades. It also suffers from other less important risks such as landslides (1999), fires (2008), accidents with radioactive material emissions, chemical contamination, and airplane accidents. The south of the country in particular is a seismically active region that presents a real threat of a large-scale disaster. Other potential risks are associated with political conflict situations. For instance, the potential for civil unrest and conflict still exists in relation to the status of the breakaway region of Transdnistria. The same analyses differentiate disasters in Moldova as *slow onset* (such as soil erosion), and *quick-onset* (such as floods, which need a rapid response).

Vulnerability: All analyses of emergency assessments in Moldova agree that children – especially young children, the poor, vulnerable, or at-risk children with migrating parents – and the elderly are those parts of the population that would suffer the most pronounced impact from emergencies.



3. Waterfield, 2007; Scarborough, 2008; ISDR/World Bank, 2009.



D. Government Institutions Responsible for Emergencies and Coordination Mechanisms

The main actor in emergencies (disaster preparedness and response) in Moldova is the *Civil Protection and Emergency Service (CPES)*. The CPES is in charge of developing and implementing the policy, strategy, and plan at national, intermediary (*rayon*), and local governance levels. CPES's key structure for emergency plan preparedness and response is a training center for emergencies. This training center – one in Chisinau and another in Ohrei – is quite strong. Its role is to enhance and support the response capacity of most of the stakeholders involved, by providing information and training at the local level. The training center works with the major and other village and municipal authorities, as well as with local Civil Protection rescue staff. It also works with *rayon* and central sector levels, and with the heads of ministries.⁴

4. Colliard, 2009.

Each national government sector – Education, Health, and Protection – has to prepare its own plan for the central, regional, and local levels. These plans have to be updated and re-endorsed yearly by CPES.

Table 1: Key Actors in the Disaster Risk Reduction and Response System Related to Education

Central level	Intermediary level (Rayon)	Local-level communities
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Civil Protection Emergency Service	Directorate of Emergency Situations	Mayors and local authorities
Ministry of Education	Directorate of Education, Rayon	Schools, kindergartens (staff, students, parents)
Ministry of Social Protection	Social Protection Directorates	Social assistants and social workers
Ministry of Health	Health Services	Local NGOs

In emergency situations, the chain of command is both quite clear and rather complex: a National Commission for Emergency Situations is convened, chaired by the PM with the presence of all ministries. This Commission will then activate the central and intermediary (*rayon*) Commissions for Emergency Situations, which together cover all the jurisdictions of the country. At the local level the *ad hoc* local civil protection teams, chaired by the mayor and municipal authorities, will operate.

Preventive and preparedness measures, including some contingency plans, are developed and directed by the *Civil Protection and Emergency Service (CPES)*. *The CPES has specific preventive and preparedness protocols to be applied following the type of emergency situation at stake – e.g. for a pandemic situation, flood, earthquake, etc. Currently, the efficiency of these measures is being assessed by a team of the following agencies: the World Bank, the European Union, and other international players. Capacity building of the CPES is underway with donor support, especially in the aftermath of the flood crisis (2008).*

A special Rescue Division is directly linked to the national Commission for Emergency situations.

E. National Policies, Strategies, and Ongoing Programs for Emergencies

Currently, (2009), national policy, the strategy for emergency preparedness, and response are under revision by the government with support from the donor community, especially after the 2008 flood emergency situation and the pronounced UN interest in the impact of climate change on emergency situations. A recent comprehensive assessment of the disaster-risk reduction in the



country has set up a number of recommendations for National Policies and an overarching strategy development.⁵

Key assessments and initiatives for revising the country's policies and strategies. To revise Moldova's policies and strategies, good use can be made of an abundance of information and analysis on emergencies and regional initiatives, in particular the following:

a) The regional initiative, the South Eastern Europe Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Program (SEEDRMAR), supported by the UN and the World Bank in order to reduce vulnerability to disasters and enhance knowledge of vulnerability to disasters in South Eastern Europe.

Specific objectives are updating and developing policy directions, strategies, and plans for preparedness and response to emergency situations.

- b) A World Bank support program for the government on developing an economic strategy on natural hazards, predominantly focused on rural areas.
- c) The 2004 Action Plan of the EU and the Republic of Moldova.
- d) The Partnership for Peace initiative (PfP) with NATO (2007).
- e) The Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI) launched by the Stability Pact (2000).
- f) The Drought Assessment (WFP/FAO 2007).

Together these form the reform environment to develop and review the government policy directions for emergency preparedness and response. However, among all these initiatives, no specific reference is made to the role and responsibilities of the ECD/Education sector.

The country's strategy on emergencies is also under revision. The current strategy clearly promotes the strategic role of the Minister of Interior Affairs (Civil Protection and Emergency Service, CPES) for planning and implementation, and follows up on the National Policy for Emergencies. The CPES is the central pole of the strategic process. The other pole includes **local governance and communities**. Clearly, the chain of command of the country's emergency response system prioritizes the preparedness and mobilization of the communities (Civil Protection Teams). Only when needed, the national level steps in. The sector ministries, including the Ministry of Education, are the implementers of the national and sectoral plans in case of emergencies.

5. Waterfield, 2007.

F. Education and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies

In Moldova there is no specific reference to preschool institutions concerning emergency preparedness and response. According to the Ministry of Education, public kindergartens are included in the emergency planning for all schools in the country. Two additional ministries responsible for preparedness and emergency response, with a direct or indirect impact on young children and their families, are the Ministry of Health (Emergency Medicine Department covering the whole country) and the Ministry of Social Protection, Families, and Children, which covers the headquarters and its regional protection institutions (including child-protection institutions). However, the Ministry of Social Protection does not directly cover the communities, families, and children.

Education Focal Point for Emergencies: The Ministry of Education is the focal point for emergencies, responsible for facilitating the preparedness work of the Civil Protection and Emergencies Service (CPES) towards schools in terms of the information chain and implementation of training for students, teachers, and school directors. The MoE's focal point is also the key person for communication and coordination with the CPES.





Emergency plan in the education sector: The MoE has formulated an emergency plan, updated yearly, depending on the circumstances (floods, pandemics). The plan covers the headquarters of the Ministry, its regional offices, and primary and secondary schools, including kindergartens. The main objectives of the plan are *information*, *prevention*, and *the exercise of simulations in schools*. All technical dimensions of the plan are based on input from the CPES, which also endorses the plan yearly (by the end of December). Implementation of the plan is also done with the technical expertise of the CPES. In fact, the CPES is the main agency responsible for the implementation of the plan, while the MoE facilitates and helps with training and information. The CPES provides training for school directors (five days of training per year) and for head teachers (three days of training per year). There are no related materials for children.

Emergency plans at the school/kindergarten level: According to the MoE, schools and kindergartens dispose of some kind of plans for preparedness and response to emergency situations. However, during the short field work for this report, it became clear that plans are mainly for the evacuation of buildings in case of emergencies, and hardly ever go beyond that.

Emergency preparation measures implemented by the Ministry of Education: The preventive and preparedness measures and protocols (including contingency plans) for the ECD/Education sector are planned by the Ministry of Internal Affairs through the CPES. Trainers are provided by the CPES. The Ministry of Education provides the structures and the trainees (school directors, and teachers). Training sessions are in part information activities, but also include training for simulation exercises in schools and kindergartens. The measures are implemented by the Ministry of Education. The focal point for emergencies at the MoE level plays a key role in that process.

School director preparation: Five days of training per year are foreseen by CPES. School directors are invited from the *rayon* Directorate of Education (intermediary level) for training, and receive information about emergencies and how to prepare teachers and students to face disasters. In practice, however, according to school directors of two kindergartens in the urban area (Chisinau), the training is short and involves very poor quality training materials.

Teacher preparation: Three days of training for one head teacher from each school, to provide additional information, are foreseen by CPES. In practice, according to teachers (2009), the training does take place, but no materials are provided to share afterwards with other teachers and students at school.

Student preparation: Under CPES guidelines, students are requested to participate once per year in simulation exercises and to be generally informed by both school directors and the head teacher. In practice, this seems to happen, but as indicated, no materials are provided to the head teacher to distribute at these occasions.



Available materials, kits, etc: The basic material that schools, including kindergartens, have at their disposal is a CPES-prepared wall poster presenting evacuation measures. Additional materials or kits related to specific cases of emergency are scarce and mostly absent at schools. There is no evidence that they have ever been systematically produced by the CPES. The CPES is now requesting technical support to produce updated materials and kits for use at schools.

Parent involvement: No specific information for parents has been made available by the CPES or others, in the framework of community emergency plans. However, parents are considered by all stakeholders to be part of these plans.



Generally, all stakeholders perceive that schools, local communities, and the government are not well-enough prepared for emergencies. All consider that there is a need to update measures and that much more can be done in order to raise schools' and kindergartens' capacity for preparedness and response to emergencies, in close coordination with communities and other relevant decentralized public sector agencies. Most stakeholders also believe that schools should be better integrated in the community plans for emergencies, and better coordinated with the community-level health and social protection sectors, as well as with other sectors. School directors and teachers request better training, updated information, and more and better training materials (posters, short films, kits) for school directors, teachers, and students.

CPES capacity improvement: The CPES expressed the will to reinforce its capacity to learn how to better reach poor and vulnerable children, including teaching prevention and preparedness. The CPES understands that in the case of preschoolers, the most vulnerable children are difficult to reach through the educational system, given that they are generally not enrolled in kindergartens.

The CPES requests external expertise on how to confront this challenge, and is interested in learning from other relevant experiences, especially on preparing relevant information material and kits for this group of children.

Overall, Moldova has a coherent framework of regulations for disaster preparedness and response. However, implementation of the regulatory framework is under-funded, and its statutes are poorly enforced. The lack of coordination within the system prevents the establishment of an integrated early-warning system or the revision of a national emergency plan, and many risk-monitoring and readiness exercises are not carried out.⁶



6. UNDP, 2006.

G. Recommendations

Recommendations refer to both the government and the international organizations ready to support the government in this area.

► Advocacy level, for international organizations

RECOMMENDATION 1

Momentum to include ECD/Education in the country's emergency agenda. Because of the ongoing revision of the National Policy strategy and plan on preparedness and response to emergency situations, this is a great opportunity to make sure that ECD/Education in emergency situations is included. A key role should be attributed to UNICEF as lead of the education cluster.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Focus donor support on outcomes. Donors should build the capacity of the country's agencies and follow up on the implementation of recommendations of valuable assessments and analysis. A good example on how to guarantee that assessments are integrated with capacity-building work is the ongoing work by UNICEF on creating a psychosocial component to the Moldovan Emergency Response.



RECOMMENDATION 3

Use the ECD/Education sector as an entry point to build country capacity on preparedness and response to emergencies at the national level (CPES), sector level MoE, *rayon* level, and, most importantly, at the school and community levels.

► **Operational level, for both government and international organizations**

RECOMMENDATION 4

The MoE and CPES, together with donor support, should perform *an assessment of schools' and kindergartens' needs* of teachers, students, and parents regarding preparedness and response to emergencies. Start from the most vulnerable and poorest communities through a *participatory process*.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Reinforce capacity of CPES and MoE on preparing and delivering a training package with information, training, and modern efficient materials using ICT and media, to school directors (including school directors of kindergartens), teachers, students, parents, and local community emergency teams.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Reinforce capacity and coordination among the sectors' focal points (at central intermediary and local levels) under the direction of the CPES.



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Svetlana Stefanet, Chief, Equitable Access to Quality Services Program

Doina Munteanu, Portofolio Manager, UNDP, Moldova

Annex 1: Coordination with counterparts in Moldova: Inter-sectoral, UN, NGOs, civil society, institutions, etc.

Inter-sectoral: It is not clear if there is any coordination between the Education and other sectors (Health and Social Protection).

Among international organizations, UNICEF is the cluster lead agency: As per the need for the coordination of international organizations and donors, an initiative is underway and UNICEF is taking the lead role in emergency education response. It serves as the **Education Cluster** Lead Agency, as well as for the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Partnership. This improved coordination mechanism effort seems to be at its very first stage. The overall coordination is led by UNDP.

The most recent experience of donor coordination: during the drought of 2007, UNICEF coordinated with four other UN agencies (FAO, UNDP, UNFPA, WFP) to assist the government of Moldova in responding to the consequences of the drought; among the most vulnerable, including young children (135,000 persons in all) were affected.

UNICEF, as part of sector work on education, health, nutrition, and social protection, focuses on young children, although not exclusively. For emergencies, UNICEF uses its own 'Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies' (2004), which provides the core response of UNICEF at all levels of the organization, including its humanitarian response, program commitments and operational commitments.

UNDP, within the framework of its Country Program Action Plan 2007–2011, has an objective disaster preparedness component with the key outcome of helping the government to develop a comprehensive contingency plan for a coherent humanitarian response to emergencies, including paying specific attention to age and gender, without specifically targeting ECD services and young children.

Annex 2: Moldova – Country Profile

Source:	<i>The CIA World Factbook</i> https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/md.html
Location:	Eastern Europe, northeast of Romania
Area:	total: 33,851 sq km country comparison to the world: 139 land: 32,891 sq km water: 960 sq km
Land boundaries:	total: 1,390 km border countries: Romania 450 km, Ukraine 940 km Coastline: 0 km (landlocked) Terrain: rolling steppe, gradual slope south to Black Sea
Population:	4,320,748 (July 2009 est.)
Ethnic groups:	Moldovan/Romanian 78.2%, Ukrainian 8.4%, Russian 5.8%, Gagauz 4.4%, Bulgarian 1.9%, other 1.3% (2004 census) <i>Note:</i> internal disputes with ethnic Slavs in the Transnistrian region
Religions:	Eastern Orthodox 98%, Jewish 1.5%, Baptist and other 0.5% (2000)
Languages:	Moldovan (official, virtually the same as the Romanian language), Russian, Gagauz (a Turkish dialect)
Government type:	republic
Capital's name:	Chisinau

Economy – overview:

Moldova remains one of the poorest countries in Europe despite recent progress from its small economic base. It enjoys a favorable climate and good farmland but has no major mineral deposits. As a result, the economy depends heavily on agriculture, featuring fruits, vegetables, wine, and tobacco. Moldova must import almost all of its energy supplies. Moldova's dependence on Russian energy was underscored at the end of 2005, when a Russian-owned electrical station in Moldova's separatist Transnistria region cut off power to Moldova and Russia's Gazprom cut off natural gas in disputes over pricing, and again in January 2009, during a similar dispute. Russia's decision to ban Moldovan wine and agricultural products, coupled with its decision to double the price Moldova paid for Russian natural gas, slowed GDP growth in 2006–07. However, in 2008 growth exceeded the 6% level Moldova had achieved in 2000–05, boosted by Russia's partial removal of the bans, solid fixed capital investment, and strong domestic demand driven by remittances from abroad. Economic reforms have been slow because of corruption and strong political forces backing government controls. Nevertheless, the government's primary goal of EU integration has resulted in some market-oriented progress. The granting of EU trade preferences and increased exports to Russia will encourage higher growth rates, but the agreements are unlikely to serve as a panacea, given the extent to which export success depends on higher quality standards and other factors. The economy remains vulnerable to higher fuel prices, poor agricultural weather, and the skepticism of foreign investors. Also, the presence of an illegal separatist regime in Moldova's Transnistria region continues to be a drag on the Moldovan economy. The deteriorating global economic crisis did not seriously effect the Moldovan economy in 2008 due to its low exposure

to the international financial system, but a global economic slowdown, particularly in the EU and Russia, could hurt the economy in 2009 as Moldova relies heavily on remittances from Moldovans abroad.

GDP – real growth rate: 7.2% (2008 est.)
 country comparison to the world: 33
 4% (2007 est.)
 4.8% (2006 est.)

Population below poverty line: 29.5% (2005)



Source: CIA World Fact Book.



COUNTRY PROFILE

Early Childhood Development and Education in Emergencies **TAJIKISTAN**

Aigly Zafeirakou, USA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Country Context	98
B. The Context: Characteristics of Young children, Parents'/Caregivers' Situations, and the Preschool System in Tajikistan	100
C. Disaster Risk Analysis	102
D. Government Institutions Responsible for Emergencies and Coordination Mechanisms	104
E. National Policies, Strategies and Ongoing Programs for Emergencies	105
F. Education and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies	106
G. Recommendations	112
H. Reference List	114
Annex 1: Tajikistan – Country Profile	115
Annex 2: List of Materials in Emergency Situations	117
Annex 3: 911 for Early Childhood Development Emergencies	120
Annex 4: Abridged Report on Deployment in Tajikistan	122

***Emergencies (definition):** Emergencies include situations such as natural disasters, violent conflicts, or complex crises that generate a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.*

Kindergarten No. 1, Dushanbe: emergency facilities



A. Country Context

Tajikistan is landlocked, and the poorest country among the Central Asian Republics of the former Soviet Union. It has a population of 7.3 million, and a per capita GDP of US\$702 (2008). The country is rich in natural resources, most importantly water and hydroelectricity potential; it also some minerals (high-quality coal, gold, silver, precious stones and uranium). Only 10% of its territory is suitable for agriculture, and the remaining 90% is covered by mountains varying in height from several hundreds of meters to 6,000–7,000 meters above sea level. Tajikistan suffered a brutal civil war immediately after independence from 1992 to 1997, which inflicted widespread physical damage and heavy human losses of up to 50,000 lives. Peace and stability



were achieved 12 years ago in 1997, through a peace deal between the government and the United Tajik Opposition.¹

The country experienced strong economic growth between 2000 and 2008, averaging about 8% per year. The economy depends heavily on exports of cotton and aluminium, and on remittances of migrants working in Russia; remittances were estimated at US\$2.3 billion (46% of GDP) in 2008.

Despite a decline in poverty between 2003 and 2007 (*Poverty Assessment Report 2009*) attributed to remittances and economic growth, Tajikistan faces difficult challenges arising from its geography and history, its institutional weaknesses, and the global economic crisis. In particular, the proportion of people living on less than US\$2.15 a day was 64% in 2003, but remained at a high of 41% in 2007. Almost 54% of the population was poor at the end of 2007, with more than 17% being extremely so. About 75% of poor, and 72% of extremely poor people live in rural areas. The high poverty rate of those living in rural areas makes them exceptionally susceptible to weather and price shocks. The worldwide food crisis led to a 25.9% inflation rate of food prices in 2007, which slowed to 12.9% in 2008 due to weak demand. The poor continue to be disadvantaged in terms of access to high-quality education services and health care. The global economic crisis has worsened the social situation in the country, threatening to undermine the achievements of the last several years. The crisis is likely to result in lower remittances, and a partial return of migrant workers to the country, putting additional pressure on public services and the labor market. In addition, for the last two years, Tajikistan's economic development has been complicated by deficiencies in macro-economic management, severe energy shortages in winter, and international food price rises.²

Poverty in Tajikistan may be on the rise again due to the reduction in remittances brought about by the global financial crisis, while the poverty and food security situation in the country requires continuous monitoring and potential policy interventions. Social indicators, although improving in the past few years, still remain at a low level, reflecting poor public service delivery, weak governance, persistent energy shortages and low per-capita incomes.

With 67.5% of its population under the age of 29, Tajikistan's youth will be a main force in determining the country's economic future and stability. Thus, Tajikistan remains the poorest and among the most fragile of the countries among the Commonwealth of Independent States,

1. State Committee of Statistics, 2009, *Tajikistan Poverty Assessment*; Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Tajikistan, 2005; www.worldbank/countries/Tajikistan

2. *Ibid.*

and is the only country in the Europe and Central Asia region unlikely to achieve most of its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).³

B. The Context: Characteristics of Young Children, Parents'/ Caregivers' Situations, and the Preschool System in Tajikistan

The most recent information on the general context, the characteristics of young children, and parents' situations in Tajikistan can be found in the *Tajikistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey* (2005); the recent UNICEF/Innocenti *Social Monitor* (2009); the *Child Poverty in Tajikistan* report (2007) and; the *Tajikistan Poverty Assessment* (2009).

Education, high fertility rates, and fewer working women are indicators of poverty in Tajikistan's families; these directly influence children's environment. Families with educated heads of the household are much less at risk of poverty. ***High fertility rates, and the low labor market participation of women are substantial barriers to poverty reduction.***⁴

The number of deaths of children under five years old is nine per 1,000. The nutritional status of children in Tajikistan is a major cause for concern: around 10,000 children are stunted, emaciated or underweight. Levels of acute child malnutrition increased between 2003 and 2005. Children in rural areas and the poorest households are most likely to have had a low birth weight. Children aged 12–23 months are 70% more likely to be underweight than a child aged 6–11 months. This coincides with the period when foods other than breast milk are generally introduced into the diet.⁵ Nearly 10% of children aged 5–14 years are involved in child labor: mainly unpaid or domestic work. As for child discipline, three in every four children in Tajikistan aged 2–14 years have been subject to at least one form of psychological or physical punishment from their mother or caregiver. Finally, 88% of children under 17 live with both parents.⁶

Progress in the education sector is identified, but ***Tajikistan still faces major challenges on improving educational outcomes.*** The quality of school facilities is often very bad, with huge inequalities across regions. The reported lack of qualified

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*





teachers points to institutional challenges. The use of tuition fees or hidden charges in general education represents a significant problem for poor households. Most schools are locally financed and are at the mercy of available funds and the decisions of local governments, which do not report back to the central government.⁷

Early child development (ECD) access and enrolment are among the lowest in the region. Only 10% of children aged 36–59 months are currently attending some form of organized ECD program, generally in public kindergartens.⁸ This varies significantly according to region, with young children in Dushanbe being considerably more likely to be enrolled than children elsewhere in the country. Children from the poorest families, and who may be thought to benefit most from ECD provision in terms of health and education, are most likely to be excluded from it. Just 1% of young children living in the poorest fifth of households (ranked by their ownership of assets), are enrolled in organized early childhood education (mostly public kindergartens) compared with 20% of those in the wealthiest fifth.

7. *Ibid.*

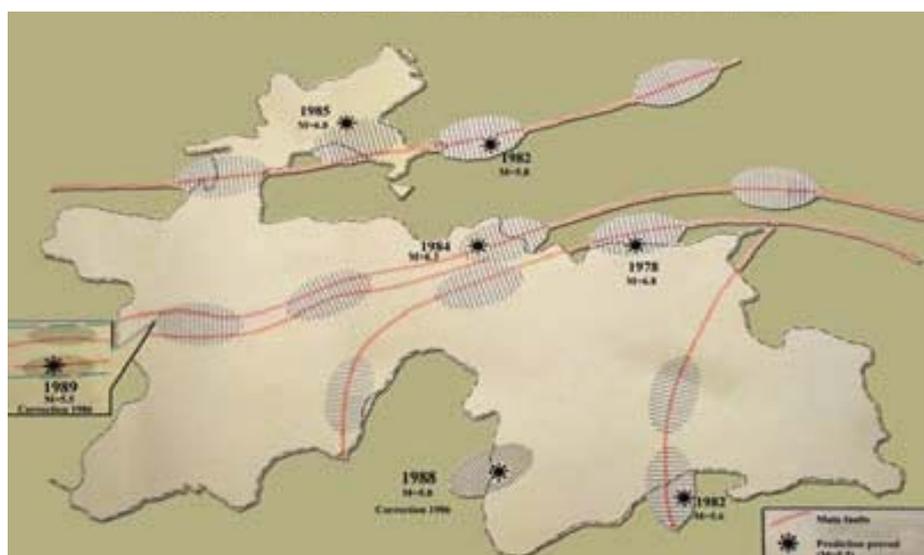
8. UNICEF, MICS, 2005.

The low level of enrolment in ECD means that *a high proportion of children (generally aged seven years old) enter the first grade of primary education unprepared for the school program*. Overall, only around 30% of first graders report having attended any form of early education. This varies from 76% in Dushanbe to just 9% in Khatlon; and from 11% of those from the poorest households to 59% of those living in the wealthiest households.⁹

C. Disaster Risk Analysis

Hazards/threats. Tajikistan faces a wide variety of potential disasters, with some 1,470 areas characterized as catastrophic zones: these face year-round threats, including earthquakes, floods, mudflows, landslides, and avalanches, risks of epidemic, drought and windstorms. Earthquakes represent a threat in most parts of the country, specifically in urban areas, and can cause damage to infrastructure such as reservoir dams, communications, as well as to human lives. Floods and flash floods are also threats to the natural environment and to people. Severe cold and energy shortages tend to disrupt basic services, including hospitals and schools, which happened during the harsh winter of 2007–2008 when the rural population was affected by crop failure and losses of livestock. Areas of Tajikistan are also being mined. This, combined with natural disasters, further exacerbates the situation as regards emergencies. The flow of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) is another source of hazard for Tajikistan.¹⁰

Figure 1: Areas at risk of earthquakes in Tajikistan
(Most probable places for earthquakes' occurrence with $M > 5.5$)



Source: Committee of Emergency Situations (COES).

9. Child Poverty in Tajikistan, 2007.

10. UNICEF, EU–Aid ECHO, 2008.



Vulnerability. The abovementioned hazards and threats have an impact on communities, schools, children and their families, especially in regards to access to basic services (health and education) for the most vulnerable (including rural isolated communities). For instance, in July 2006, a strong earthquake hit the district of Qumsangir in the south of the country. It destroyed nearly 2,600 houses and affected some 21,000 people. Also, during 2006–2007 around 284,000 persons were affected by disasters, with 222 fatalities. Crucial infrastructure was damaged: 54,000 houses; 118 schools; 26 medical facilities; 111 kilometers of power transmission lines; and 13,000 hectares of farmland.¹¹ During the winter of 2008–2009, an estimated 800,000 people required emergency food assistance in Tajikistan to cope with food and energy needs. Young children were among the most in need. In answer to this, UNICEF started to implement a US\$1.4 million program to address the impact of the poor food security situation on children.¹²

In April–May 2009, 26 people were killed and over 3,000 displaced by floods and mudflows in 25 districts in the country. Over 2,000 houses, hospitals, schools and other buildings were destroyed over a period of six weeks. The Tajik government and aid agencies delivered life-saving assistance in the aftermath of the crisis: tents, food, and access to safe water and emergency health care. However, the affected communities continue to struggle to rebuild their homes and livelihoods and to restore infrastructure. Hundreds of families had to live with relatives or in tents. Over 2,000 people needed access to proper housing during winter, when temperatures can fall to as low as -25°C . Supplies of essential medicines and school materials needed to be replenished.

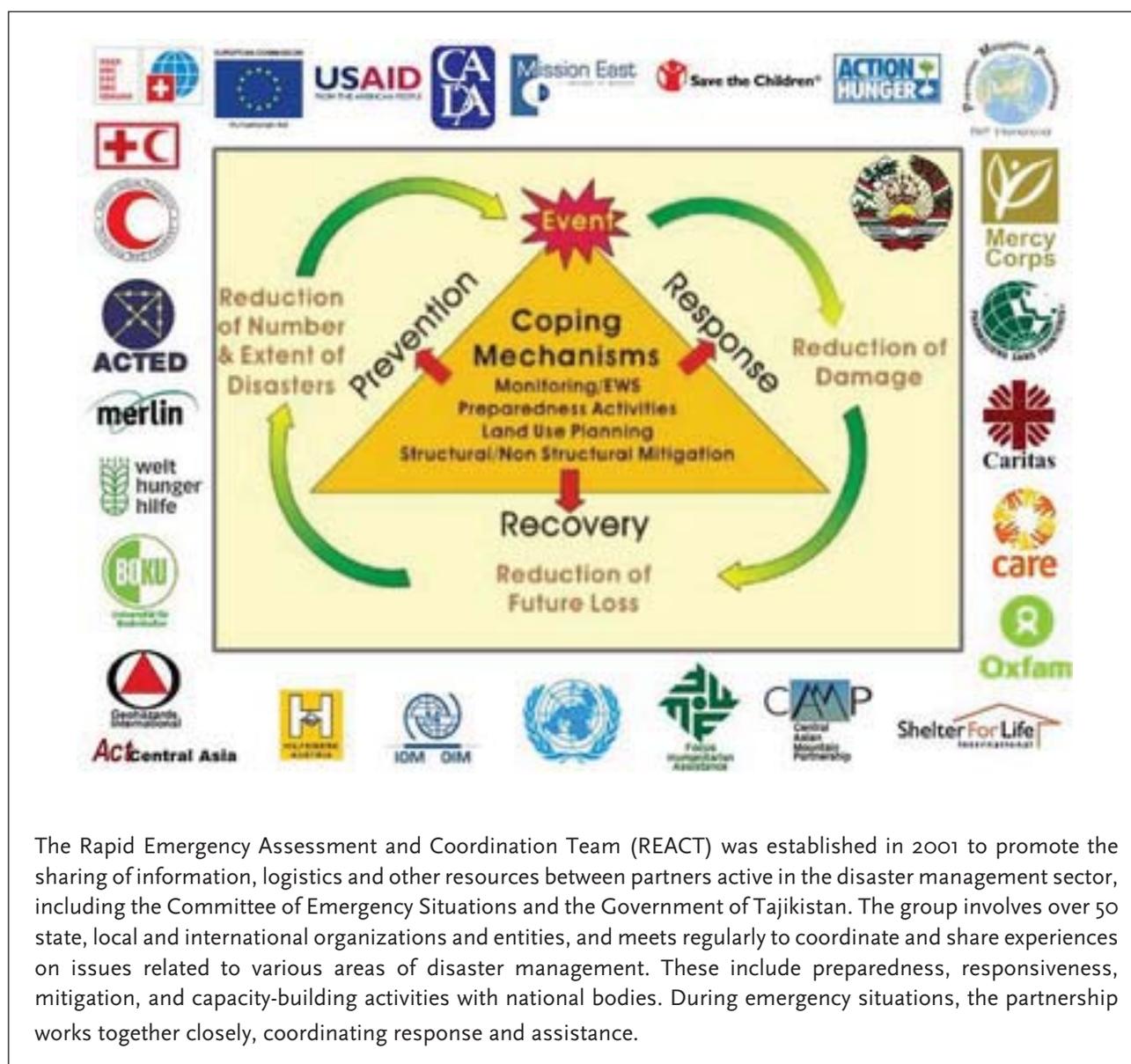
11. UNICEF proposal (2007) *Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction amongst vulnerable communities in Central Asia*.

12. http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/reallives_10873.html

D. Government Institutions Responsible for Emergencies and Coordination Mechanisms

Tajikistan has been benefiting, especially since 2000, from quite a large amount of international technical assistance and intervention in terms of preparedness, relief and response to a variety of disasters. As a result, mechanisms for preparedness and response to emergencies are generally well established. However, this preparedness is limited to medium-scale disasters. The *Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team* (REACT) is the primary mechanism for dealing with emergency preparedness, and disaster management cooperation in the country (see Box 1).

Box 1: Disaster Management in Tajikistan



Source: UN Tajikistan Information Platform, <http://www.untj.org>

While a legal framework is supposed to set the basis for guiding, protecting and monitoring activities before, during and after disasters (Law on Protection of Population and Territories; Law on Natural and Man-made Disasters; Law on Civil Defense; Law on Emergency Rescue Services and the Status of Disasters), **there is no clarification on budget allocation.**

The government, through the **Committee of Emergency Situations (COES)**, has the responsibility of implementing and monitoring programming in disasters in the areas of contingency planning, effective coordination systems, appropriate equipment, training, and public education and awareness programs. In the majority of disaster-prone areas, the **Community Disaster Response Teams are established by the COES at the community level, in cooperation with national and international organizations.** Each of the teams has an action plan to follow in case of emergencies. These teams comprise trained volunteers, and are generally equipped with basic disaster-response tools, warehouses with non-food items, a communications system and means of transport.

E. National Policies, Strategies and Ongoing Programs for Emergencies

The government, through COES, and jointly with the UNDP Disaster Risk Management Program (UNDP/ DRMP), is preparing a **National Disaster Risk Management Strategy and a National Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan to be completed by early 2010.** *The features of United Nations and other international assistance is twofold: (i) to provide necessary humanitarian aid directly to communities; (ii) to support the capacity building of the government, involving the Ministry of Education (MoE) in preparedness and disaster response.*

ECD and the vital needs of young children in emergency cases are not comprehensively reflected in the above strategy and plan. As will be presented in this report's recommendations section, now would be a good time to boost the ECD and child-needs agenda within the national Disaster Risk Strategy and Plan.

According to the ISDR Office in Tajikistan, a strategy for the emergency preparedness of all communities in Tajikistan should comprise **three phases**:¹³

- to create a culture of disaster preparedness among the population;
- to raise the population's awareness on emergency preparedness in order to better focus policy-makers on the issue;
- the government should train the school community – including kindergarten school directors – on what to have or do in emergency situations.

13. Interview with the ISDR Office in Tajikistan, November 2009.

An important ongoing emergency preparedness program in the country is the *Disaster Risk Management Program* ((DRMP), administrated by UNDP. The program aims to support government capacity on implementing policies, coordination mechanisms using information technology for assessment and monitoring, increasing public understanding of risks, and to reduce the impact of natural disasters on vulnerable communities.

F. Education and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies

The Ministry of Education has a focal point for emergencies which works in close cooperation with key UN agencies active in emergencies, in order to receive support for school preparedness and emergency response. This cooperation has been very active in recent years. An impressive number of school materials, the result of various programs (including the REACT partnership), have been made available in the country¹⁴ as part of a public-awareness effort. Under the *Children and Disasters* component *in particular, relevant information materials have been produced (see Annexes).*



14. See Annex: List of Educational Materials on Emergencies in Tajikistan.

The European Union program DIPECHO is the most important donor to education within Tajikistan's emergency activities. Various recipients have received grants to implement activities in the area of emergency preparedness for the schooling community. Selected activities are presented here.

Among the various programs that UNICEF implements to support disaster-preparedness and response, the DIPECHO project is one notable example. The DIPECHO project, *Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction amongst Vulnerable Communities in Central Asia*,

is a disaster preparedness program of the Directorate General for Humanitarian AID (ECHO) concerned with disaster-preparedness in Central Asian countries. The program has been active recently in Central Asia, including Tajikistan. UNICEF Tajikistan received funds from the DIPECHO project for the first time in 2007, to cover 20 disaster-prone districts in the country. UNICEF's objective was to provide equal assistance to children, focusing on school children from 20 districts, as well as government counterparts from educational and emergency bodies. The activity also aimed to build the capacities of the Ministry of Education and the Committee of Emergency Situations in Tajikistan in the field of disaster-risk reduction. The total numbers of beneficiaries covered by DIPECHO activity, implemented by UNICEF in Tajikistan, were as follows:



- total number of direct beneficiaries – 191,560;
- 80,000 people (from 16,000 families) in 20 selected districts;
- 80,000 school children – an average of 160 children each from 500 schools and special-care institutions (11–16 years old);
- 500 schools;
- 1,000 teachers (at least two from each school/institution);
- 30,000 parents of school children;
- 300 community leaders, elders and facilitators;
- 60 local disaster-management teams (three from each district);
- 200 officials from regional and local authorities (concerned with health, education, civil defense, etc.).¹⁵

15. UNICEF Regional Office, Tajikistan.



The *Fostering Disaster-Resilient Communities in Isolated Mountain Environments* project is being directed by FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance, an affiliate of the Aga Khan Development Network. The project's aim is emergency preparedness for schools and students. This is a fifth-cycle project of the Disaster Preparedness component of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office grant (DIPECHO). Completed in 2009, the project's objective was to enable local communities and institutions to better prepare for, mitigate against, and respond to natural disasters. The project was implemented in 41 communities, in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) of Tajikistan, and in four bordering communities in the Badakhshan province of Afghanistan. These activities

included the implementation of 18 structural mitigation projects. For the increased awareness component, more than 5,000 children and educational staff in 23 local schools were targeted. Additional capacity-building activities focused on 120 government staff in particular, to better assess, monitor, and respond to disasters.¹⁶

According to the MoE Focal Point, a country-wide program supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation was implemented by FOCUS in 50 schools, out of the country's 3,800 schools (i.e. about 1.5% of schools). More information is needed to understand if this program was related to that run in the GBAO Oblast (see above). The FOCUS program provided training for teachers and supplied related materials, including various manuals for dealing with earthquakes, and a Tajik/Russian-language film on emergency preparedness. About 65% of the copies of the printed material was distributed among the participating schools. Although these materials were prepared for primary and secondary schools, selected parts could be used and further adapted for kindergartens and preschools.¹⁷ The MoE has expressed interest¹⁸ in becoming more active in the project's implementation, especially at the level of monitoring and evaluation.

International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) Projects for School Communities. In cooperation with the MoE, ISDR has initiated and implemented the following activities related to schools in disaster preparedness and risk reduction in Tajikistan (with DIPECHO IV funding).

- The *School Resilience to Earthquakes Workshop* for school administrators. This focused on discussions with school directors and deputy directors about options on low-cost

16. www.akdn.org/focus

17. Interview with MoE Focal Point.

18. Interview with MoE Focal Point.

or no-cost methods providing safety to teachers and students during earthquakes, and distributing materials developed by CARESI.

- Production, printing and distribution of *the booklet Earthquakes: how to protect yourself from disaster*. It is unclear if distribution was carried out systemically, or if all schools (and those people at the schools) effectively received this booklet.
- ISDR together with UNDP–DRMP is lobbying to introduce *Disaster Risk Reduction onto school curricula*.

ECD in emergencies. According to the Ministry of Education, public kindergartens are included in the emergency planning for all schools in the country. However, it has to be pointed out that less than 10% of children are enrolled in early education institutions, while almost 90% of children are not in early education institutions before grade 1. Infants and toddlers in families are generally not addressed by disaster-preparedness plans.

Emergencies training for ECD service providers and volunteers. In summer 2008, UNICEF conducted a one-month training session for ECD service providers and other volunteers in cooperation with the MoE. Fifty volunteers from eight districts trained for one month on Psychosocial support and



Early Stimulation for Young Children in Emergencies. Many of the volunteers were directors and teachers from public kindergartens. The training, provided in the summer of 2009, aimed to:

- (1) prepare a group of ECD preschool teachers, directors, mothers and interested adolescents to become volunteers for preparing and facilitating stimulation activities for 0–6 year-olds during and after an emergency;
- (2) guide ECD volunteers towards creating a safe environment for young children during emergencies.

This has been one of the few activities in the region to target kindergarten staff for emergency preparedness. More information is needed on the session’s evaluation, follow-up and list of participants in order to build on its experience for future emergency-preparedness projects in Tajikistan, and other countries in the region. However, according to the recommendations of the UNICEF expert who designed and implemented training for ECD staff and stakeholders in Tajikistan (see below), **“the Ministry of Education has to be more proactive and must now make maximum use of all support towards developing emergency preparedness and response plans [EPRP] for schools and psychosocial support training for teachers.** Effective use of EPRPs in schools combined with disaster mitigation programs for and with children and their communities can make a positive change in coping mechanisms for children, as well as for the school system. It will certainly make education in emergencies more assessable for a greater number of children”.¹⁹

Challenges on how to cover young children left out of ECD services (90% of 3–7 year-olds). Tajikistan had made progress in comparison to neighboring countries in terms of education material for emergencies, including emergency instruments in kindergartens (see attached photo in Annex) and some capacity building of human resources (training of kindergarten school directors and other ECD players). Nevertheless, the key issue on boosting ECD in its emergency preparedness and response agenda has to be on how to reach the vast majority of young children aged 3–7, 90% of whom are excluded from any kind of ECD.

Options for reaching young children and their families, especially in rural areas in Tajikistan. Any ECD activity for emergency preparedness and its response should be twofold:

- (1) activities targeting the ECD community (educators and other staff, children) in all kindergartens in the country – this will cover around 10% of young children (aged 3–7);
- (2) activities targeting the 90% of young children excluded from any kind of ECD services.

19. See Annex.

A combination of the below options may be considered.

Option 1

Produce and broadcast TV programs (including cartoons) targeting young children. (Kyrgyzstan has a successful cartoon program used for emergency preparedness).

Option 2

Use human resources at the community and intermediary levels (doctors, nurses and teachers) in providing information on preparedness for emergencies, targeting young children and their families. (This is a suggestion from the Health Emergency Direction, Ministry of Health).²⁰

Option 3

Train volunteer students and support them to reach communities and to bring information and materials to families in these communities, specifically targeting young children (aged 3–7). The activity should be supported by making use of already existing volunteer teams in the country (e.g. the Red Crescent, UN volunteers, etc.).



20. Interview with the Director of Emergencies, Ministry of Health.

G. Recommendations

► Advocacy level

RECOMMENDATION 1

Reinforce the role of the UNICEF country office as co-leader of the education cluster in emergencies (with Save the Children), and advocate for the inclusion of ECD in the country's emergency strategy and plan (to be completed by early 2010). Because of the ongoing finalization of the National Disaster Risk Management Strategy for Tajikistan, there is a great opportunity to make sure that ECD and the age group of young children will be included in the strategy.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Improve coordination among donors and line ministries to enable information-sharing on strategies, plans and activities for emergency preparedness with regards to young children.

RECOMMENDATION 3

A needs assessment of young children and their families, for emergency preparedness and its response, through a participatory process. The MoE and CoES, with external expertise support, should perform a country-wide needs assessment of teachers, students, and parents in schools and kindergartens/community-based centers regarding preparedness and response to emergencies.

► Operational level, for both government and international organizations

RECOMMENDATION 4

Assessment of human resources capacities, and available materials for ECD emergencies. An assessment of existing ECD human resources capacities should be conducted, at the community, regional and national levels, thereby informing activities related to ECD in emergencies that target young children within their home and preschool environment. An additional activity could be to gather and assess all materials (visual aids, video and TV programs, texts) for children, teachers and families on the topic of emergency preparedness and response developed in recent years. The DRR materials should be adapted to the specific needs and rights of young children and care-givers.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Develop a strategy to reach children of preschool age (in or out of kindergartens) as well as infants and toddlers.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Target and plan for the scaling up of ECD in emergency activities/projects, in order to cover the whole country. Start with the most vulnerable and poorest communities, targeting young children. The MoE, together with CoES and UNICEF, will identify which disaster-prone districts are most vulnerable, with or without preschools. For this purpose, the DIPECHO project list may also be used.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Build on existing human resources and materials for emergencies. Reinforce capacity and coordination among the sectors' focal points (at central, intermediary, and local levels) under the direction of the CPES and the MoE, especially the health sector. Coordinate alongside the Ministry of Emergencies and MoE on selecting and adapting a training package on *information, training, and efficient modern materials for school directors of kindergartens, teachers, students, parents and local community emergency teams.*

H. Reference List

Resources

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World Bank www.worldbank/countries/Tajikistan

Tools (see Annex)

Emergency Contacts and Meetings

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Tahmina Rajabova, Step by Step, Program Coordinator, Tajikistan

Khusrav Sharifov, Program Manager, UNDP

Anton Tsyganov, Emergency Assistant, UNICEF Tajikistan, Country Office

Rustam Ubaidulloev, UNICEF, Tajikistan Office

Annex 1: Tajikistan – Country Profile

Source:	<i>The CIA World Factbook</i> https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ti.html
Location:	Central Asia, west of China
Area:	total: 143,100 sq km country comparison to the world: 95 land: 141,510 sq km water: 2,590 sq km
Land boundaries:	total: 3,651 km border countries: Afghanistan 1,206 km, China 414 km, Kyrgyzstan 870 km, Uzbekistan 1,161 km
Coastline:	(landlocked)
Terrain:	Pamir and Alay Mountains dominate landscape; western Fergana Valley in north, Kofarnihon and Vakhsh Valleys in southwest
Population:	7,349,145 (July 2009 est.)
Ethnic groups:	Tajik 79.9%, Uzbek 15.3%, Russian 1.1%, Kyrgyz 1.1%, other 2.6% (2000 census)
Religions:	Sunni Muslim 85%, Shia Muslim 5%, other 10% (2003 est.)
Languages:	Tajik (official), Russian widely used in government and business
Government type:	republic
Capital's name:	Dushanbe

Economy – overview:

Tajikistan has one of the lowest per capita GDPs among the 15 former-Soviet republics. Because of a lack of employment opportunities in Tajikistan, nearly half of the labor force works abroad, primarily in Russia, supporting families in Tajikistan through remittances. The exact number of labor migrants is unknown, but estimated at around 1 million. Less than 7% of the land area is arable. Cotton is the most important crop, but this sector is burdened with debt and obsolete infrastructure. Mineral resources include silver, gold, uranium, and tungsten. Industry consists only of a large aluminum plant, hydropower facilities, and small obsolete factories mostly in light industry and food processing. The civil war (1992–1997) severely damaged the already weak economic infrastructure and caused a sharp decline in industrial and agricultural production. Tajikistan's economic situation remains fragile due to uneven implementation of structural reforms, corruption, weak governance, widespread unemployment, seasonal power shortages, and the external debt burden. A debt restructuring agreement was reached with Russia in December 2002, including a \$250 million write-off of Tajikistan's \$300 million debt. Completion of the Sangtuda I hydropower dam – built with Russian investment – and the Sangtuda II and Rogun dams will add substantially to electricity output. If finished according to Tajik plans, Rogun will be the world's tallest dam. Tajikistan has also received substantial infrastructure development loans from the Chinese government to improve roads and an electricity transmission network. To help increase north-south trade, the US funded a \$36 million bridge which opened in August 2007 and links Tajikistan and Afghanistan. While Tajikistan has experienced steady economic growth since 1997, nearly two-thirds of the population continue to live in poverty. Economic growth reached 10.6%

in 2004, but dropped below 8% in 2005–2008, as the effects of higher oil prices and then the international financial crisis began to register – mainly in the form of lower prices for key commodities and lower remittances from Tajiks working in Russia, due to the declining economic conditions in that country.

GDP – real growth rate: 7.9% (2008 est.)
Country comparison to the world: 23
7.8% (2007 est.)
7% (2006 est.)

Population below poverty line: 60% (2007 est.)



Source: CIA World Fact Book.

Annex 2: List of Materials in Emergency Situations

	Name of book(let)	Brief summary	Pages	Published	Publisher	Donor(s)	Language
1	<i>Safe school in safe territory</i> (written by Gustavo Wilches-Chauks)	This booklet is published within the DIPECHO project and covers topic related to the safety of schools and territories	115	2009	Ministry of Education, Committee on Emergency Situations, CECC	UNICEF, ECHO	Tajik
2	<i>Manual on preparing the schools in emergency situations</i>	This booklet provides assistance to school staff in order to be prepared during emergency situations	76	2005	Focus, Geohazards International, Hayot, MOE, USAID, For the Earth, California Office of Emergency Services	USAID, SDC	Tajik
3	<i>Basics of Emergency Preparedness and Civil Defense</i>	Training manual for primary school teachers	60	2008	ISDR, Committee on Emergency Situations (CES), MOE	ECHO	Tajik
4	<i>Program "On teaching the Basics of Emergency Preparedness and Civil Defense to the grade 2 and 6 students of secondary schools of the Republic of Tajikistan"</i>	This program is developed to teach "The Basics of Emergency Preparedness and Civil Defense" to the students of 2nd and 6th grade in secondary schools of the Republic of Tajikistan	26	2009	CES	UNDP, ISDR, SDC, Swiss Confederation	Tajik, Russian

	Name of book(let)	Brief summary	Pages	Published	Publisher	Donor(s)	Language
5	<i>Minimum education standards in emergency situations, in continuous crises situations and in the first stages of restoration activities</i>	This booklet is recommended for community members and teachers	92	2006	DIPECHO	UNICEF	Tajik
6	<i>Textbook on non-structural risk reduction</i>	The purpose of this booklet is to increase the understanding of risks related to non-structural objects, to show how to identify these risks, to motivate everyone in taking simple measures	36	2005	GeoHazard International, American Red Cross, AHEB, CAR-EST	USAID, SDC	Russian
7	<i>Earthquake: Five steps to risk reduction</i>	Colored pocket booklet with pictures about earthquakes and preparedness for earthquakes. Source of information "ABC-Basic concepts of emergencies"	32	2005	UNDP Kz, ISDR	UNDP Kz, UNISDR	Russian
8	<i>Earthquake: Five steps to risk reduction</i>	Colored pocket booklet with pictures about earthquakes and preparedness for earthquakes. Source of information "ABC-Basic concepts of emergencies"	32	2005	CES, ECHO, UNDP Kz	ISDR	Tajik
9	<i>What should we know about earthquakes? Pocket book about earthquakes for secondary school students</i>	This pocket booklet is designed for higher grade students of secondary schools in the Republic of Tajikistan			CES, ECHO, UNDP Kz, MOE	UNICEF, ECHO	Tajik

	Name of book(let)	Brief summary	Pages	Published	Publisher	Donor(s)	Language
10	<i>Manual for trainers</i>	This manual informs about natural risks and disasters. "ABC of natural risks" (mainly related to earthquakes)	94		MOE, GeoHazards International, Focus, Hayot, AHEB	USAID, SDC	Tajik
11	<i>Earthquakes: How to protect oneself from the elements</i>	This booklet is mainly designed for schoolchildren and is also useful for older children. The main topics of the booklet are earthquakes and their influence on people	80	2008		ECHO, UNESCO, ISDR	Russian
12	<i>Centers in Schools, When? How? Why?</i>	This booklet mainly covers the topics of disaster risk reduction and the safety of school buildings	54		ECHO, MOE, CES, UNICEF	UNICEF	Tajik

Annex 3: Abridged Report on Deployment in Tajikistan

The Process of Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Emergencies Training

The concept of ECD in emergencies is new to the people of the Republic of Tajikistan. In normal situations, structured stimulation activities are almost non-existent for the 0–4 age group, and very few children are exposed to any school-readiness activities before the age of seven. It is against this background – and coming from a completely different culture – that it became necessary to plan strategically; to share ideas judiciously; to foster genuine participation; and to promote culturally appropriate methodologies and materials.

I embarked on the following plan.

A. Collecting data on ECD in the Republic of Tajikistan

1. **Review of documents on ECD in the Republic of Tajikistan:**
 - the *National Strategy for Education Development*;
 - the ECD work program and Annual Report of UNICEF, Dushanbe;
 - strategy papers on ECD policy and standards;
 - reports from consultants tasked with ECD investigation and planning.
2. **Field visits to ECD centers** (only possible in Dushanbe).
3. **Interviews with ECD practitioners**, including those responsible for health, child protection, and key organizations involved in ECD programming in Tajikistan: the Open Society Institute; Step by Step; Save the Children; and Operation Mercy.

Benefits included the following:

- an overview was presented of the status of ECD in Tajikistan;
- understanding was provided of the constraints faced by children, parents, communities, and the government of the Republic of Tajikistan;
- an overview was presented of the donors, the scope of work, and the capabilities of various institutions and organizations;
- the *modus operandi* of ECD schedules and programs were identified in the facilities available.

B. Crafting a response to data findings

1. A concept note was developed for ECD in emergencies.
2. The concept note was shared with the Education Cluster Group for emergencies, namely: GTZ; Save the Children; the Open Society Institute; the Ministry of Education; and the Ministry of Health – Integrated Management of Early Childhood Illnesses (IMCI).

Benefits included the following:

- issues were clarified with organizations working in Tajikistan for many years;
- a vision was refined based on the experiences/perceptions of a diverse team of experts;
- a consensus was gained on proposals and strategies.

C. Assessing the capacity of local ECD practitioners and international NGOs working in ECD in Tajikistan for the next 3–5 years.

Benefits included the following:

- strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats were identified;
- an opportunity was provided to match the organizations'/ministries' skills and capacities to the task;
- a foundation was built for sustainability.

D. Developing and reviewing a program with the UNICEF ECD team and the Education Cluster Group.

Benefits included the following:

- good team work was fostered, and guidance given in what is culturally appropriate;
- the stage was set for ownership, as all presentations were done in Tajik and by Tajiks;
- terms of reference subtly ensured commitment, importance guidance and a clear scope of work;
- the technical resources available were maximized, and the greater effectiveness and efficiency, and the sustainability of the program were catered for.

E. Preparing a Handbook for Facilitators and conducting training in preparation for a larger target group of trainers; developing terms of reference for coordinators and facilitators, and reviewing the same with the group.

Benefits included the following:

- expectations, issues and methodologies were clarified;
- ambiguities were removed, and it was ensured that there was common understanding in the content and presentation of topics;
- ownership was provided for in the preparation and execution of the monitoring plan of the six-day training session, practical sessions in communities, as well as for the assessment tools for facilitators and trainees;
- genuine participation and a model for the conduct of subsequent sessions with larger groups were provided for;
- ministries and organizations were allowed to indicate their confidence, competence, and comfort levels in particular sessions, and to take responsibility for preparing and conducting the identified sessions in the general training;
- encouraging teamwork, as organizations co-facilitated sessions and made use of their own materials;
- giving leverage for inter-sectoral planning;
- highlighting the importance of an integrated approach to ECD.

F. The training

It was important to set ground rules together, and to encourage each party to take responsibility for observing them. It was important to demonstrate democratic principles and to allow for full participation. Time-keeping was essential, not only to maintain the pace of the intensive program, but to show the importance of keeping schedules for children, especially in terms of adequate rest, play and meals, and **respect for time**. An evaluation concluded each day's proceedings: its contents, work ethics, and ideas for change. As many suggestions as were appropriate and realistic were implemented in subsequent sessions.

G. De-briefing

A four-hour debriefing session was held at the end of the community practicum with coordinators and facilitators, primarily to review the process, and to show the way forward. Targets were identified with time-lines (see hand-out notes).

Conclusion and Recommendations

UNICEF and the Education Cluster will continue to battle with the effects of natural disasters on the education system. The goal of the UNICEF-led Education Cluster must be to find ways of sustaining disaster preparedness and mitigation programming in schools and communities.

Securing funds for adequate responses to education in emergencies in Tajikistan will pose some challenges in an environment where opinions vary as to the concept of such responses being a developmental rather than a crisis issue. However, opportunities now exist for making greater impact, with combined efforts made possible through the **identification and implementation of zones of convergence within the Education Cluster**. The examples of insulating schools, window replacement, and disaster-mitigation programs for schools are noteworthy as these involve Save the Children, UNICEF, Little Earth, and UN/ISDR. The imperative is to utilize the current networks (in the Education Cluster; in schools and in the community) to sustain programming through building the capacity to manage activities in emergency preparedness and mitigation. A good example of this strategy is the ECD in emergencies training. **Consolidating the ECD in emergencies program** for replication later is a major recommendation. In this regard, the **Ministry of Health, through its Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) program, has the potential to take a leading role.**



With the compounded crises now facing Tajikistan, the challenge will be to help families keep children in school so as to ensure successful completion of their education. This is particularly worrying with the impending drought season, coupled with poor yields due to a harsh winter, a locust infestation, and rising food prices. These disasters, while seriously threatening the food security of the country, will take on a different dimension for parents and children when, after the long school summer holidays, the stark reality of the impact of rising prices and the provision of lunches and other requirements, are likely to become deterrents to children's access to and completion of their schooling. **One strategy would be to expand inter-agency initiatives into activities which need a more multi-faceted approach, such as the WFP's food for schools program.**

The Ministry of Education has to be more proactive, and **must now make maximum use of all support towards developing emergency preparedness and response plans (EPRP) for schools, and psychosocial support training for teachers.** Effective use of EPRPs in schools, combined with disaster-mitigation programs for and with children and their communities, can make a positive change in coping mechanisms for children, as well as for the school system. It will certainly make education in emergencies more accessible for a greater number of children.

The Way Forward

For ECD practitioners and interested partners, the following are recommended:

- Consolidate the “ECD in Emergencies Training” initiative. More than 40 persons have received basic training, and that should be upgraded to include: alternative forms of discipline; working with children with disabilities; child-protection issues; and child rights, particularly in emergencies.
- Create ECD emergency kits for each district, which are to be stored and kept for distribution and use only during and immediately after emergencies.
- Make the IMCI program the repository for all ECD emergency kits, and take the lead in ECD regarding emergencies programming. The MoE should show greater commitment to the program.
- Utilize a core group of trainers to execute a cascading method so as to expand to other districts.



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www.issa.nl

ISSA is a membership organization that connects professionals and organizations working in Early Childhood Development (ECD). Established in the Netherlands in 1999, ISSA's network today stretches across the globe. While ISSA offers general membership and information sharing to all interested individuals and organizations, ISSA's core members are non governmental organizations, located in 28 countries of Central, Eastern and Southeast Europe and Central Asia.

ISSA's overarching goal is to promote inclusive, quality care and education experiences that create the conditions for all children to become active members of democratic knowledge society. ISSA does this through: raising awareness of the importance of quality care and education; developing resources; disseminating information; advocating; strengthening alliances and building capacity to create conditions where all children thrive.

ISSA's mission is to support professional communities and develop a strong civil society that influences and assists decision makers to:

- provide high quality care and educational services for all children from birth through primary school (birth through 10 years old), with a focus on the poorest and most disadvantaged;
- ensure greater inclusion of family and community participation in children's development and learning; and
- ensure social inclusion and respect for diversity.



www.unicef.org/ceecis

UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children. UNICEF insists that the survival, protection, and development of children are universal development imperatives that are integral to human progress. UNICEF mobilizes political will and material resources to help countries, particularly developing countries, ensure a "first call for children" and to build their capacity to form appropriate policies and deliver services for children and their families. UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged children – victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty, all forms of violence and exploitation, and those with disabilities.

UNICEF responds in emergencies to protect the rights of children. In coordination with United Nations partners and humanitarian agencies, UNICEF makes its unique facilities for rapid response available to its partners to relieve the suffering of children and those who provide their care. UNICEF is non-partisan and its cooperation is free of discrimination. In everything it does, the most disadvantaged children and the countries in greatest need have priority. UNICEF aims, through its country programs, to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social, and economic development of their communities. UNICEF works with all its partners towards the attainment of the sustainable human development goals adopted by the world community and the realization of the vision of peace and social progress enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.



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