

**GOVERNMENT AND HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS IN KYRGYZSTAN
BETTER PREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES**

(Bishkek, 25 November 2016): humanitarian partners wrapped up a day-long simulation exercise that immersed them into a major response operation in the event of a devastating earthquake.

The main goal of the simulation exercise was to understand how well the humanitarian community in Kyrgyzstan is prepared to work together in helping the country recover and people get back to normalcy following major emergencies.

The exercise brought together more than 70 representatives of international and national humanitarian organizations, including Government, UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement.

Remarkably, the Government of Kyrgyzstan was represented by several line ministries, in addition to the Ministry of emergency situations. “It is very important to carry out such activities, so that people could practice their roles, and realize that disaster can happen at any moment and needs to be ready for it.” said Jyldyz Toktorbaeva, Head of International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The simulation exercise was designed based on international guidelines and best practices. Participants were given a disaster scenario and were asked to respond to the disaster relying on their experience, knowledge and expertise. Within less than 10 hours, simulation exercise participants reenacted the first 10 days of a humanitarian response operation.

“This simulation exercise tested our readiness to emergencies. Participants improve their understanding of each other’s roles in emergency response and become better prepared to future emergencies. They would know better how to ensure effective assistance for people in need on initial phase of emergency” stressed Alexander Avanesov, UN Resident Coordinator.

Kyrgyzstan is no stranger to seasonal disasters, counting up between 200 and 300 mudflows, flooding and mudslide events every year. The country is classified as the most seismically dangerous in Central Asia, with the last earthquake occurring just a year ago in the province of Osh.

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OCHA press releases are available at www.reliefweb.int or www.unocha.org/rocca

While the exercise was organized by OCHA regional office for the Caucasus, Central Asia and Ukraine, the control team included regional representatives from major humanitarian agencies and donors – ECHO, IFRC, IOM, WFP and UN OCHA. This exercise was supported by DRCU, IOM and UN OCHA.

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