

Ardzagank (phase II): Support to the decentralized disaster response structure

Context and problem statement

Located in one of the most active sections of the Alpine-Himalayan and Balkan-Carpathian seismic belts, the southern Caucasus region is in high to very high risk zones for damages by earthquakes. The severe earthquake of 1988 claimed about 25'000 deaths, caused 15'000 injured and 517'000 homeless people. Moreover on a smaller scale, there are floods, mudflows and landslides occurring in the mountainous parts of the country.

The Government of Armenia, signatory country of the Hyogo Framework for Action, has committed to take action to reduce its disaster risks and to become more resilient to natural disasters.

Since 2002 SDC is engaged in disaster risk reduction (DRR) projects in Armenia, mainly supporting decentralized rescue capacities of the country. Further, in 2008 SDC chose Armenia together with Georgia as one of seven pilot areas to develop, implement and assess a specific DRR programme.

Key results and insights from previous phases

For the first phase of "Ardzagank" (pilot model 2004-06) the project was implemented in two districts of Armenia, covering the country's most populated and the most remote regions. Fire-fighters and volunteers were trained and equipped as rescuers. This pilot model, including an external review and feedback workshop with the project stakeholders allowed to test and further develop project modalities for the nationwide up-scaling of the following phase ("Ardzagank" project, phase II).

Overall goals

Ardzagank means reaction, response, echo. The project gives support to the decentralized disaster response structure by strengthening the capacities of the rescue system at the local level (district).

Strategy and approach

Professional rescuers are indispensable; they have the appropriate training and are equipped with the necessary equipment for urban search and rescue (USAR)-missions. However, due to their centralized organization, travel distance and logistics they cannot always reach the scene by time.

Therefore the project "Ardzagank" focus on local capacities, by training and equipping local rescuers (fire-fighters and volunteers) for quick deployment in case of any disaster. This can be a big scale event such as an earthquake but includes also small-scale emergencies such as floods, landslides, traffic accidents or mountain accidents.

Project area
Duration
Budget
Partner

Nation wide
2006 - 2010
CHF 1'809'000
Armenian Rescue Service



Training exercise on a rubble field (polygone), which was constructed and equipped under the project.

Outcomes of the phase

Fire fighters/rescuers are able to search and rescue victims in case of disaster all over the country.

- The response capacities are decentralized and due to shorter travel distances victims benefit from a quick response.
- The way fire fighters/rescuers are trained and how the training progress is evaluated in tests have significantly improved.

Key outputs of the phase

By the end of the project in 2010:

- 62 rescue groups are ready for quick deployment in case of a disaster, i.e.
- 2200 fire fighter/rescuers and 200 volunteer rescuers were trained.
- 248 trainers for fire fighter/rescuers trained (one per shift and fire station).
- A training centre with rubble field was built.

- 16 competition/Test performed.
- 62 containers with basic rescue equipment delivered (one per fire station).
- In 2009 the Lori rescue team ran 15 rescue missions.

Target group

Direct target group: rescuers composed of fire-fighters and volunteers.
Beneficiaries: local population



USAR training exercise for rescuers / fire fighters.

Partners

Armenian Rescue Service (under the Ministry of Emergency Situations)
Crisis Management Academy
Lore Rescue Team

Contact and Information

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