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Humanitarian Assistance Continues after 7.2-Magnitude Earthquake in GBAO

20 January, 2016 – Dushanbe, Tajikistan

On 20 January 2016, UNDP's Disaster Risk Management Programme through OCHA's Emergency Cash Grant completed delivery of 297 tonnes of coal to earthquake-affected population of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) of Tajikistan. Provision of coal to most vulnerable households was delivered by UNDP DRMP in two batches: 97 tonnes distributed on 27-28 December 2015 and 200 tonnes distributed on 16-20 January 2016

Occurred earthquake made it difficult for local population to provide sufficient heating for their homes due to rock-fall which blocked many roads in the region as well as lack of resources to purchase coal. Earthquake affected population reside in the isolated mountainous region of GBAO where temperatures are the lowest and the snowfall is the heaviest in comparison with the rest of the country, subsequently coal was one of the main priorities for emergency assistance identified by the humanitarian community. It must be noted that coal is not only an alternative source of heating but it is also considered as one of the main sources for cooking because trees are scarce in GBAO.



This disaster related gap was addressed by UNDP's Disaster Risk Management Programme which assisted 271 households in Rushan, Shughnan and Vanj districts of GBAO region. Each family received approximately one ton of coal which is expected to satisfy heating needs of each household for the period of three months. Out of the 297 tons of coal delivered to GBAO, 28 tons are held in local Hukumat's reserve stocks for a further distribution in Basid and Bartang jamoats of Rushan district.



One of the beneficiaries, Kurbonjonov Salim (53), said: *"I felt so desperate that I almost decided to cut down two trees from my garden to provide heat for my house and firewood for cooking. I'm very thankful for receiving coal which will help my family to cope through winter season"*. Alayorov Abdul (33), whose family of six people is temporary sheltered in one of the rooms of School №9 of Rushan district said: *"Heating is one of the main issues for my family so I'm very happy that we received coal to help us heat our stove in the room. Now I'm confident about my family being warm"*.

The Murghab Earthquake occurred on 07 December 2015 with a 7.2-Magnitude on the Richter scale. The epicenter was 95 km west of Murgab and 10 km north of Lake Sarez. The earthquakes' main impact was limited to Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) of Tajikistan, affecting five out of six districts; Rushan, Shughnan, Vanj, Roshtqala and Murghab. More than 132,000 people reside in disaster affected districts out of which 4,000 people are in need of assistance and 652 people displaced.

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