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FORECAST / Russia
Enhancing Russia's Capacity in Emergency Management
Final Project Report
Submitted by World Learning / Washington, DC
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OVERVIEW:

The project “Enhancing Russia’s Capacity in Emergency Management” directly supported USAID/Russia’s objective of moving the Russian Federation towards being a stable, democratic and reliable partner for the United States in addressing global issues. Furthermore, the Project contributed to the Objective Area “Humanitarian Assistance,” Program Area “Disaster Readiness,” Program Element “Capacity Building, Preparedness, and Planning” Program Sub-element “Planning and Preparedness.” The primary purpose of this project was to support the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Russia in the field of emergency management and disaster response and select elements of the Work Plan for 2009-2010. The project strove to increase the application of international standards and best practices in Russian institutions in disaster response and humanitarian aid (food aid) program management. The project contributed to the following outcomes:

- Increased coordination and information exchange in the field of disaster response and humanitarian operations between the United States and Russia;
- Shared experience and best practices through third country workshops and exercises on disaster response and/or humanitarian affairs;
- Strengthened capacity of disaster response staff to apply UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) guidelines and methodology and improved field- level coordination between disaster response agencies.

To achieve the expected results the following training interventions were implemented:

1. Mid-Planning conference for the Table Top Exercise (TTX) 2010 and Exchange of Best Practices in International Disaster Response
2. Food Aid/Humanitarian Aid Workshop
3. US Training on International Disaster Response
4. A Command Response Table Top Exercise
5. Third-Country Exercise on Humanitarian Aid or Disaster Response Operations

All of the above activities took place, except for the Third-Country Exercise on Humanitarian Aid/Disaster Response Operations. There was also an In-Country activity added, a forum on the coordination of volunteers during emergencies, an event organized in response to the horrific wildfires that decimated much of certain regions within Russia in the summer of 2010.

Mid-Planning Conference (December 7-10, 2009)

The Mid-Planning Conference took place in Moscow on December 7-10, 2009. It focused on exchange of best practices and technical guidance on INSARAG external classification. Those attending included EMERCOM professionals specializing in international search and rescue events from the following EMERCOM departments:

1. Central Air-Mobile Rescue Team
2. International Cooperation Department
3. National Crisis Management Center
4. Fire, Rescue and Civil Defense Forces Department
5. Center for Emergency Psychological Assistance

Seven USG employees from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Agency for International Development attended: Steve Saunders, David Webb, Dewey Perks, Rebecca Ann Bean, Lieutenant Colonel Kimberly Sencindiver, David Wayne Short, and Alexander Eugene Kosyak. With their EMERCOM colleagues, they worked intensively at the four-day event to compare and contrast U.S. and Russia experiences and approaches handling large-scale disasters. The conference participants did the following:

- Reviewed INSARAG external classification and international standards and methodology in disaster response and humanitarian aid (food aid) program management;
- Outlined and developed the format, scenario, tasks, objectives and timeline for the 2010 subsequent meeting, i.e., the Table Top Exercise.

US Training on International Disaster Response (April 18-25, 2010)

This training program brought mid-level staff from EMERCOM Ministry and Air Mobile Rescue Team responsible for coordinating Russia's response to international disasters, and with a technical knowledge of disaster response practices and standards, to the US for a five-day program. All the participants had specialties in cases of international disaster response, including the representatives of Moscow-based EMERCOM international affairs staff and members of EMERCOM's international response staff (e.g. Air Mobile Command, TsentroSpas). The participants were: Alexander Romanov; Alexey Skantsev; Olga Proshina; Ilya Zaslavkiy; Grigory Korolkov; Alexey Kiyashko; Vasily Kovaltsov; and Vadim Nenonen

The training provider for this program was James Lee Witt Associates, a public safety and crisis management consulting firm headquartered in Washington, DC, which offered significant experience in the field of emergency management. Two of its senior staff, Ken Burris, former Chief Operating Officer of FEMA, and Mark Ghilarducci, former Deputy Director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, planned a program that included site visits to FEMA, the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, MD; Fairfax County Fire and Rescue/USVATF1; the American Red Cross; George Washington University's Institute for Crisis, Disaster and Risk Management; and the US Coast Guard Search and Rescue Operations. All meetings either took place on site, or at the offices of James Lee Witt Associates. The site visits, which included those engaged in first response, rescue and humanitarian operations (Fairfax County VATF1, Red Cross, US Coast Guard), those who coordinate those efforts (FEMA), and those who train others (NETC and GWU's Institute for Crisis, Disaster and Risk Management) exposed the participants to a broad range of efforts in the field of emergency management and disaster response.

The participants gave high ratings to the program's usefulness and appreciated the opportunity to have such exchanges for sharing experiences. The participants were particularly pleased with their site visits to Fairfax County USVATF1, during which they were able to visit the Fairfax County warehouse to see and review the US&R equipment cache and got a tour of the US&R training facility in Lorton, VA; to

FEMA, which included briefings on operations and FEMA's approach to search and rescue; to the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, MD; and meeting with the US Coast Guard. Overall, the program allowed them to strengthen old contacts and acquire new ones.

Food Aid/Humanitarian Aid Workshop (May 5-6, 2010)

The workshop aimed primarily to enhance capabilities and field-level coordination of International Food Program administration and management among the organizations involved, bringing together mid-level staff from EMERCOM of Russia and Air Mobile Rescue Team responsible for coordinating Russia's provision of emergency humanitarian assistance in foreign countries, response to international disasters, and with technical knowledge of international operations, practices and standards. All the participants of the two-day workshop were specialists in international disaster response, including representatives of Moscow-based EMERCOM international affairs staff and members of EMERCOM's international response staff (e.g. TsentroSpas).

The 30 participants included representatives from several Russian ministries, including the Ministry for Affairs of Civil Defense, Emergencies and Disaster Relief (EMERCOM), Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Federal Agency for Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo). Specialists in the fields of food and humanitarian aid facilitated discussions on intergovernmental cooperative efforts and included representatives from USAID's Food for Peace office, EMERCOM, US State Department, UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

This workshop was part of a US-Russian cooperation plan for Disaster Response that required the current Russian-American working committee's review of the workshop's outcomes. The participants were encouraged to address key issues including:

- Cooperating with American counterparts: unilateral and bilateral, with the World Food Program and other similar organizations;
- Minimizing costs: these often amount to 30% of Russian contributions during emergency situations and greatly reduces the total amount of assistance;
- Addressing the issue of flour fortification: a main staple provided as assistance to such countries as Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Armenia, Afghanistan and other neighboring countries. The grain is produced on Russian Federation territory, while vitamins which must be added to flour are manufactured in other countries. This leads to great loss of time and money in delivering assistance;
- Sharing plans: EMERCOM plans assistance on both a unilateral and bilateral basis to Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, with planned expansion to Afghanistan, Congo, Guinea and Haiti;
- Launching joint projects: propose to American colleagues initial micro-projects, to understand the procedures and requirements for conducting humanitarian operations, then move on to larger projects in Afghanistan or Central Asian countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, etc.

The workshop helped to put a mechanism in place that will allow the exchange of advanced practices among US, Russia, and multilateral institutions on humanitarian aid, food aid, and disaster response operations; improved future coordination and promoted a mutual understanding of food aid approaches and tactics, as well as helped to develop a plan for conducting a future third-country exercise. It covered in-depth many topics of keen interest to all parties, including logistical issues impacting food and humanitarian aid, including delivery mechanisms; working with local organizations; procurement options; approaches to customs, taxes, and bilateral/multilateral agreements, and

transportation while maintaining quality of goods; exit and transition strategies after complex emergencies; as well as case studies on emergency response in Haiti.

Command Response Table Top Exercise (May 24-26, 2010)

The program's Table-Top Exercise was held in Moscow on May 24-26 and brought representatives from Fairfax County, FEMA, OFDA, and other partners together to identify strengths and weaknesses of US and Russian command response systems. World Learning made travel arrangements and insurance for two Fairfax County participants; PH facilitated the hotel payments for them.

Coordination of Volunteers (November 30-December 2, 2010)

As a follow up to the outbreak of wildfires in Russia in summer of 2010, the Russian Civic Chamber organized an in-country event "Charity in Emergency Situations: Results and Lessons Learned." USAID facilitated the travel of three American experts in disaster response to participate in this All-Russia Forum. The forum brought together 200 participants from NGOs and volunteer groups who were involved in firefighting during the summer of 2010, environmental specialists (ecologists) and local authorities, business representatives and media to discuss mechanisms of cooperation among government, NGOs, businesses, media and volunteers in emergency situations. The forum's purpose was to provide recommendations for government agencies and civil society organizations in preventing emergencies and to develop an adequate emergency response to natural disasters. The forum was conducted on November 30, 2010 at the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation. On December 1-2, follow-up consultations to Russian NGOs and government institutions were arranged to share the US experience in disaster response, and to discuss potential reforms and recommendations for the disaster relief structure in Russia.

The first meeting on December 1 brought together representatives of the Russian Red Cross, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The second meeting with the American experts was organized at St. Demetrius Sisterhood, a local orthodox religious organization under the Moscow Eparchy of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). On December 2, per the Civic Chamber's request, the US experts met with the members of the Civic Chamber to discuss recommendations to the community stakeholders (authorities, Emercom, media, NGO and volunteer groups, etc.) that need to be adopted to avoid future emergencies.

The recommendations and conclusions from all of the Forum participants were summarized and posted on the Civic Chamber web-site in February 2011. They are available at the following link:

[Рекомендации Всероссийского форума «Благотворительность в чрезвычайной ситуации: итоги и уроки».](#)

Third-Country Training Event (Cancelled)

As proposed originally, the Enhancing Russia's Capacity in Emergency Management had planned for a third-country event on Humanitarian Aid or Disaster Response Operations. However, in February, World Learning received a Training Intervention Request Form (TIRF) outlining a proposed activity substantively different from the originally-proposed one: "Interagency Coordinated Preparedness and Integrated Response to an Infectious Disease Outbreak/Epidemic (on the example of polio epidemic in Tajikistan and Central Asia)," to be held jointly by U.S. and Russian experts in April 2011. This event was designed to address the need for follow-up to the epidemic of polio in the Central Asian Region in 2010 and the growing threat of outbreaks of other infectious diseases through a USAID-sponsored joint US-Russian training exercise to benefit Tajik participants, and was intended to strengthen the ability of U.S. and Russian government representatives to cooperate during (and in

anticipation of) infectious disease outbreaks/epidemics and broaden U.S.-Russia cooperation on disaster medicine response. World Learning immediately contacted its sub-contractor in Tajikistan, American Councils, for their feedback.

Once questions and issues began to be clarified, the planning process moved forward, with World Learning contacting Dr. Gregory R. Ciotto, Director, International Center for Disaster Resilience (ICDR), and Chair, Disaster Medicine Section, and Assistant Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, at the request of USAID. Subsequent meetings between American Councils and numerous agencies and organizations, e.g., the Ministry of Health, WHO, USAID/Tajikistan, IFRC, UNICEF, and the Committee on Emergency Situations took place in Tajikistan to discuss suitability of proposed dates, to solicit assistance in identifying key individuals to participate in the training and in making contact with key government officials, and to discuss possible focal areas for the training relevant to health priorities in Tajikistan. USAID/Tajikistan offered its assistance in creating a training program that would be of maximum benefit to Tajikistan and a venue was subsequently secured for the training, and the dates for training set at April 18-22, 2011 in Dushanbe.

In early April, USAID/Tajikistan notified all parties involved in the planning (including USAID/Russia, American Councils, Project Harmony, and World Learning) that the Tajikistan Ministry of Health was unavailable for the training during the last two weeks of April due to the necessity of competing obligations for the Ministry concerning National Polio Immunization Week during the week of April 18, followed by European immunization week and other activities during the week of April 25. It was subsequently decided not to continue with another date under the FORECAST mechanism, but to postpone the training and try to implement it under another mechanism in the near future.

American Councils drafted and submitted a summary report of activities and lessons learned that included recommendations over the definition of program's intended beneficiaries; involving community-level actors or first responders within the trainings as opposed to or in addition to individuals within the central government; and shifting the personnel focus within Tajikistan from health specialist (of whom there is a dearth in Tajikistan) to disaster response specialists.