

TAJIKISTAN: EARTHQUAKE

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The Disaster

Between 0300 and 0400 on the morning of 31 October an earthquake registering 4 to 5.5 on the Richter scale struck the two villages of Navobod and Puchcock in the Farkhar rayon located in the southern Khatlon oblast of the Republic of Tajikistan. While the quake was felt in the capital Dushanbe, it was not immediately clear where the epicenter was. Initial reports were slow to come in to the capital and while it appears that relief agencies took twenty-four hours to respond, the Ministry of Emergencies has responded quickly in mounting an assessment of the affected area. There remains some question of accuracy concerning information that has now been received, which depends on varying sources of information.

On 2 November, the President of the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan (RCST) together with the Federation's Disaster Preparation (DP) Field Officer and the RCST's DP Manager undertook an assessment of the affected area, meeting with the chairman of the Peasants Association, members of the Hukamat, and Chairman of the Jamoat who briefed them on the situation. Their findings were as follows:

- there are no deaths reported, but minor injuries and abrasions to an unknown number of citizens.
- 172 heavily damaged houses.
- 415 houses with superficial damage.
- 1,548 people needing temporary or permanent shelter.

Many people fear returning to partially damaged structures in case of after shocks which may result in a complete collapse of the buildings. So far there have been on average eight after shocks per day since the original quake. Furthermore, the school has suffered superficial damage, the medical clinic is considered to be temporarily inoperable due to superficial damage, and the community center has limited damage but is serving as one of the main shelters for women and children until the danger has passed.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

Responding to the situation, the RCST, with Federation support, have delivered the following relief items to the area:

- 200 plastic sheets suitable for shelter and/or ground sheets;
- 400 blankets;
- 200 picks and shovels;
- 40 bales of second hand clothes (20 for men, 10 for women., 5 for girls, and 10 for boys);

- 200 hygiene kits comprised of soap, chlorine powder, towels and toilet paper.

Distribution monitoring will be followed-up shortly. There are indications that other organisations, including the government have also responded to the needs.

Needs

Further details on needs will be communicated as soon as possible.

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