

ACT Situation Report

Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan – ACT Alliance Assessment Team on the Way to Osh – No. 02/2010

Bishkek, June 22 2010

Current Overview

- According to official statistics today, almost 5000 refugees returned from Uzbekistan to what is left of their homes in Kyrgyzstan. ACT partners on the ground today report that yesterday there were still 20,000-30,000 refugees in the border village of Kyzyl-Kyshtak.
- According to local authorities, around 500.000 people in the area of Osh are still in need of humanitarian aid today.
- At present, according to information provided by partners in the field, affected people in the rayons (districts) of Suzak and Bazar-Korgon in the oblast (municipality) of Jalal-Abad are still not receiving humanitarian aid. Problems persist also in the Osh areas of Dostuk, Beshkapa and in Stalin (where access remains difficult because of shootings). The situation in the center of Osh is improving, however a lack of basic supplies persists in the suburban areas of Osh, such as Geologo-Gorodok.
- Special attention is needed for Jalal-Abad and other smaller cities. While people in villages are able to draw on their own stocks of food, people in cities are completely dependent on aid deliveries, functioning shops and bazaars. Scarcity is fuelling price inflation for basic items.
- As more humanitarian aid slowly reaches the city of Osh, local people are calling for investment in the local infrastructure. They ask that food supplies be purchased from local producers to avoid destroying the local market and to support local livelihood recovery.
- The borders to Uzbekistan were still closed yesterday. At the border with Kazakhstan, cars were queuing at the border for up to six hours.
- Partners report that 10 taxis for group transport and four trolley buses are operational again in the city of Osh.
- Communities are holding reconciliation ceremonies in some districts of Osh with the sharing of food amongst neighbours.
- Despite widespread concerns, the interim government plans to go ahead with the constitutional referendum on Sunday, June 27. Mobile ballot boxes will be used. The communist party of Kyrgyzstan suggests the postponing of the constitutional referendum. Some International NGOs intend to withdraw their staff from Osh on this day. The OSCE has recalled 300 observers who were to monitor the referendum process, due to safety considerations. One hundred accredited observers remain.

Key Issues

- Humanitarian aid is still not reaching all people in need.
- There is a danger that external actors and humanitarian aid might destroy local market infrastructure.
- International trade has to be secured by assuring trans-border transportation, especially towards Kazakhstan.
- Borders are still closed, if there were people who wanted to flee it would be impossible.
- The local news agency AKIpress is publishing pictures of missing people:
<http://fergana.akipress.org/news:85571>

Security Situation

- UN classifies Osh and Jalal-Abad regions as still at critical security level 3.
- Following the visit of Roza Otunbaeva to Osh on June 18, Kyrgyz forces have begun to “clean up” the city of Osh. Since June 19, they have been removing barricades in the streets and collecting small arms from private homes. Yesterday, June 21, between two and 20 people were killed when Kyrgyz military tried to enter the village of Nariman near Osh. The lower figure is the official figure.
- On June 21, the curfew in Osh was reduced by three hours from 9pm to 6am instead of 6pm to 6am.
- On June 20 (between 10-11 pm), gunshots were heard near the ACT office in Bishkek. Police presence on the streets has been heightened and arrests have taken place of potential troublemakers.

Government and International Response**United Nations Coordination**

- INGOs are encouraging UNOCHA to improve coordination among actors with better information sharing of assessment findings, an overall mapping, etc.
- ACT members attended the first general coordination meeting this afternoon called by the UN with INGOs in Bishkek. The humanitarian cluster system has been launched and INGOs asked to provide cluster coordinators with information. These coordination meetings will take place on a regular basis. The next UN coordination meeting is called for tomorrow, June 23, at 16:30 Bishkek time.
- INGOs have been asked to nominate four INGOs to “represent” NGOs in **Humanitarian Country Team** meetings for UN operational coordination.
- A UN web portal to support coordination will be set up at the beginning of next week:
www.un.org.kg
- On June 18, the UN launched a US\$71 million humanitarian appeal to assist more than one million people affected by the ethnic clashes in Kyrgyzstan.

International commitments

- International donor commitments include US\$32 million from the United States and € 600,000 from Belgium.

ACT Alliance ResponseEmergency response mobilization

The ACT Alliance’s Central Asia Forum is using its well-established local network to provide food to people in need in the cities of Osh and Jalal-Abad. Local ACT partners based in the region are buying agricultural products from local farmers to avoid long and dangerous transport routes. In the first response to the crisis since last week they have been able to facilitate the impartial distribution of 20 metric tonnes of rice and vegetables in the city of Osh.

Using local capacities to identify urgent needs and to facilitate direct supplies from local farmers is working well. At the same time, this approach is supporting local producers. ACT will continue developing this mechanism. A first assessment within the ACT network estimates that local farmers can supply up to at least 5000 metric tones of potatoes, rice, flour, vegetables and livestock for slaughter from existing stocks. Local partners were able to quickly pre-finance the mobilization of food resources. A preliminary ACT appeal is being prepared and will be launched within this week.

Besides empowering local partner capacities in southern Kyrgyzstan, ACT is preparing 7000 family relief packages in Bishkek which will be sent to Osh in the course of this week. Each package will include around 15 kgs of dry food rations and kitchen utensils for one family. HelpAge is complementing the packages with the provision of hygiene items. ACT is negotiating with local authorities to ensure safe transportation from Bishkek to Osh. ACT partners will assure impartial and targeted distribution on the ground.

ACT Emergency Personnel Deployment

International humanitarian staff members have been deployed to support the ACT Central Asia Forum team in Bishkek: Dr. Michael Paratharayil (Christian Aid) from June 19th till July 4th and Lisa Henry (DanChurchAid) till June 24th, to be replaced for one month by Sudanshu Singh (DanChurchAid).

Needs Assessment

- ACT Alliance assessment team arrives in Osh at June 23. The team consists of experienced humanitarian managers. The main purpose is to assess the humanitarian situation, to work with the partners to develop a well planned humanitarian programme. A meeting with the official coordinator of humanitarian aid in the affected regions will take place as part of the ACT need assessment mission.
- INGOs Need Assessments conducted so far by: Save the Children, Mercy Corps, Catholic Relief Services, German Interaction have been shared with the other International NGOs. Today, the UN offered to compile all available assessment reports and identify gaps. INGOs Need Assessments coming up: Oxfam on June 22.

ACT Appeal

To date, the ACT Alliance has mobilized over US\$ 400,000 for initial emergency response. A Preliminary ACT Appeal proposal is being submitted to the ACT Secretariat tonight and should be issued by the end of the week. ACT Central Asia Forum will provide stories and photos to accompany the launch of the ACT Appeal.

- ACT Alliance is invited by the UN to join the team to discuss the assessment modalities in conflict affected places.
- ACT Alliance is hosting regular meetings with other INGOs (Eurasia, HelpAge, MSF, Oxfam, Save the children, Catholic Relief Services and others) to share information and coordinate their actions. A joint list of partner organisations in the Jalal-Abad and Osh area was established. The list includes general information on their yearly budgets, ethnic affiliation, their facilities, available transport etc.

Next ACT Situation Report:

Scheduled for June 24 (reporting from the field)

For further information

Fellow ACT members and other international supporters are encouraged to contact the ACT Secretariat for information in the first instance and to minimize overloading of staff in-region focused on the emergency response:

ACT Regional Program Officer, Michelle Yonetani (phone +41 22 791 6035 or mobile phone +41 79 285 2916; myo@actalliance.org)

ACT Assistant Communications Officer, Sandra Cox (phone +41 22 791 6711 or mobile +41 79 681 1868 ; Sandra.cox@actalliance.org)

Otherwise, key contacts for the ACT Central Asia Forum based in the joint DCA/ICCO and Kerkinactie office in Bishkek are:

Tatiana Kotova (tk.russia@dca.dk) and Pepijn Trapman (Pepijn.Trapman@ICCO.nl)

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to Jessie Kgoroadira, ACT Finance Officer (jkg@actalliance.org).

Thank you for your attention.