



Humanitarian

Project “Ardzagank”: Support to the Decentralised Disaster Response Structure in Armenia



Background

The Caucasus region is located within one of the most active sections of the Alpine-Himalayan and Balkan-Carpathian seismic belts, causing Armenia to be particularly prone to almost all natural disaster types (except oceanic ones). 1988 earthquake, by far the largest disaster in recent Armenian history, caused extensive death and damage. About 25'000 were killed and 15'000 were injured by the earthquake. In addition 517'000 people were made homeless. Apart from the earthquakes, frequent events of landslides and floods occur on a smaller scale.

Spreading the knowledge among as many members of the decentralised forces as possible is a contribution to increase the chance of rescuing victims. Education of the general public in the basic first aid practices and rescue skills is too ambitious for the present situation in Armenia. Therefore, concentration on a smaller part of the population is necessary. The fire brigades are already organised in a clear structure and are regularly paid.

Volunteer rescuers are motivated, and in case of a disaster they are already near (like neighbours), and can become active if they are trained.

General Information

Project region:
Armenia

Project duration:
2006 – 2010

Total budget:
SDC: **CHF 1'809'000**

Project partner:
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Objectives

The goal of the project is the strengthening of the decentralised rescue system in Armenia. This is done through supporting the efforts by the national response structure, including Armenian Rescue Service (ARS), Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) and other organisations, to improve its decentralised response capacity for managing natural disasters. It is also done by fostering the community-based voluntary approach as a complementary element in a coordinated decentralised rescue structure.

Expected results and activities

To strengthen the response structure in the districts by intensifying training and supplying material.

To spread rescue know-how on the local level through organisation of appropriate courses to give basic training to a considerable number of rescuers, fire fighters and volunteers of ARCS and other organisations.