

# FERGHANA VALLEY: 5 YEAR HUMANITARIAN TRENDS ASSESSMENT

The Ferghana Valley is located at the fertile confluence of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Within the Central Asia region, this area has been identified as particularly vulnerable due to environmental hazards, water stress, ethnic conflict, poverty, urbanization as well as national and regional power plays. Shifts in the Central Asian political sphere and reduced GDPs will weaken national Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policies and coordination. Combined with a trend of decreasing humanitarian aid, this region could become even more vulnerable to shocks.



## KEY FINDINGS



### RETURNING MIGRANTS

Russia's economic slowdown is leading to a return of migrants to the Central Asian region. Remittances are decreasing alongside government investment. Returning migrants are putting pressure on weak services and infrastructure and are contributing to a spike in rates of urbanization, poverty and unemployment, particularly among young segments of the population.



### WANING RUSSIA, RISING CHINA

Russian economic slowdown has led China to increase its economic influence through pipeline and infrastructure development. Nonetheless, Russia's influence in the political and military field is unparalleled. Similar political trends towards suffocation of media and reduced free speech are likely to increase the risk of popular unrest and interethnic violence.



### POOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

Climate change affects food security levels and access to water. A lack of government support for response and regional coordination for DRR impact the population's resilience and economic vulnerability. In situations of conflict undernutrition which is as high as 33% in some nations, is likely to worsen.



### RELIGION AS A POLITICAL THREAT

An attempt to control civil society and dissidence, especially dissenting forms of political Islam, has led more individuals to join IS, bringing with it the risk of returning jihadists. With changing political leadership in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, a religious crackdown could trigger a much larger wave of dissent and protest.



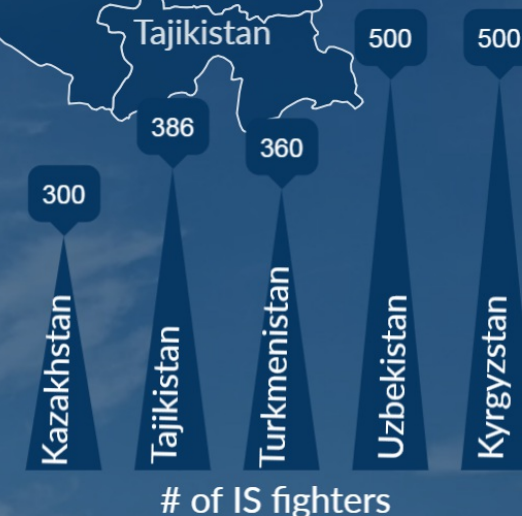
### CONFLICT OVER WATER & LAND

Resource scarcity combined with a lack of infrastructural development and water sharing agreements since the fall of the USSR, have resulted in reduced access to water and land. Competition has increased the risk of conflict regionally, in border regions, and in urban centres as well as in rural areas.



### CHANGING AID LANDSCAPE

There is currently a reduction of Western funding to the region, while intra-regional, bi-lateral and national disaster management is taking precedence. Large INGOs, depending on Western funding are not seen as neutral in this current political climate.



## CONCLUSION

Against a backdrop of global uncertainty and shifting geopolitics, better coordination, disaster preparedness programming, and nimble responses to emergencies could make humanitarian actors hugely impactful in Central Asia — not only in lessening impacts of disasters, but also in encouraging dialogue and self-sufficiency regionally.