



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)  
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

## ***Afghanistan – Complex Emergency***

Situation Report #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2010

April 6, 2010

*Note: The last situation report was dated September 30, 2009*

### **BACKGROUND**

Since 2002, natural disasters and conflict have resulted in population displacement and increased humanitarian needs throughout Afghanistan. Recurring natural disasters in Afghanistan include drought, floods, earthquakes, and avalanches. Damaged infrastructure, lack of basic services, and insufficient disaster response and preparedness mechanisms—due in part to limited government capacity and economic development—compound vulnerabilities in many affected communities.

In addition, frequent population movements contribute to instability, including through the loss of working-age community members to urban areas and through the addition of displaced persons and returnees to communities with scarce resources. Both recurring natural disasters and conflict between armed opposition groups and international forces have generated frequent population displacements in recent years. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) estimated the total internally displaced population at more than 400,000 people as of early 2010, while the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported a population of nearly 300,000 at the end of 2009. Humanitarian organizations highlight that limited access in many areas of the country continues to undermine efforts to effectively monitor displacement and generate comprehensive data.

Despite efforts by humanitarian organizations to facilitate returns to areas of origin in western and northern Afghanistan from displaced person camps in southern Afghanistan, returnees often encounter limited livelihood opportunities and insufficient basic services in home communities. Limited humanitarian access due to deteriorating security since 2007 impedes both successful reintegration in areas of origin and humanitarian assistance provision in areas of displacement.

<b>NUMBERS AT A GLANCE</b>		<b>SOURCE</b>
<b>Internally Displaced Persons in Afghanistan</b>	Approximately 414,000	GIROA – January 2010
	Approximately 297,000	UNHCR – December 2009
<b>Refugees in Neighboring Countries</b>	Approximately 2.6 million	UNHCR – September 2009
<b>Returnees to Afghanistan</b>	Approximately 5.6 million	UNHCR – September 2009

### **FY 2010 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING**

<b>USAID/OFDA Assistance to Afghanistan .....</b>	<b>\$5,853,313</b>
<b>USAID/FFP<sup>1</sup> Assistance to Afghanistan.....</b>	<b>\$37,274,600</b>
<b>State/PRM<sup>2</sup> Assistance to Afghanistan.....</b>	<b>\$37,500,000</b>
<b>Total USAID and State Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan.....</b>	<b>\$80,627,913</b>

### **CURRENT SITUATION**

Conflict in early 2010 in Afghanistan's Helmand Province resulted in the displacement of approximately 27,700 people, many of whom continue to require humanitarian assistance, according to local government authorities. Avalanches and early spring flooding in five of Afghanistan's six regions affected several thousand households in February and generated needs for emergency relief supplies, health services, and shelter assistance. Despite ongoing insecurity and limited access, the international humanitarian community continues to coordinate relief efforts in

response to conflict-related humanitarian needs in the south, relying on non-governmental organization (NGO) implementing partners that work in concert with local entities to reach affected populations. The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) also reported effective coordination between U.N. agencies, NGOs, and the GIROA in preparing for humanitarian needs caused by harsh winter conditions in remote areas. The U.N. has reported that attacks and threats against the U.N. in 2009 prompted agencies to reevaluate program

<sup>1</sup> USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP)

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

priorities and consider reducing nonessential programs or transferring implementation responsibility to NGO partners.

A USAID/OFDA Senior Humanitarian Advisor based in Kabul continues to work with NGO, U.N., and international organization partners, as well as other U.S. Government (USG) offices, to assess humanitarian needs, program additional funding accordingly, and facilitate coordination.

### ***Humanitarian Coordination***

On December 10, 2009, the U.N. released the 2010 Afghanistan Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP), requesting more than \$870 million over 12 months to help address the humanitarian needs of approximately 7 million people affected by conflict and natural disasters. The first coordinated humanitarian appeal since 2001, the 2010 HAP identifies nine priority sectors, represented by U.N. clusters for emergency shelter, food security and agriculture, health, nutrition, protection, common services, education, multi-sector interventions, and water, sanitation, and hygiene.

The humanitarian community based the HAP on both a common vulnerability framework and regional analyses of the social, political, and security contexts and categorized projects according to strategic objectives, including risk reduction. However, USAID/OFDA field staff note that distinguishing between humanitarian needs requiring emergency response, and those requiring long-term interventions, is difficult due to insufficient access to affected areas and needs analysis.

USAID/OFDA has provided \$1.5 million to OCHA to improve humanitarian coordination and information management countrywide. Due to the likelihood of increased conflict in 2010, the advancement of humanitarian coordination and information management remains critical, according to USAID/OFDA field staff.

### ***Humanitarian Access and Security***

Humanitarian access is particularly limited in the southern region of Afghanistan due to the recent escalation in insurgency and counterinsurgency activities. The U.N. currently categorizes more than 40 percent of the country as high-risk for international humanitarian organizations due to a steady increase in security incidents since early 2008. From October to December 2009, the U.N. Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) reported 94 attacks against aid workers, primarily in Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, and Baghlan provinces. More than 33 percent of attacks targeted U.N. staff and convoys.

While the number of monthly attacks targeting aid workers remained consistent throughout 2009, despite the reduction in nonessential humanitarian programming during the 2009 election period, UNDSS

reports fewer monthly security incidents to date in 2010. However, according to OCHA, the attack on the U.N. guesthouse in Kabul in late October 2009 and continued threats against U.N. staff have prompted U.N. agencies to reevaluate security arrangements and demarcate activities as critical or nonessential and prioritize implementation accordingly. The exercise may result in reduced programming or increased reliance on NGO partners, according to OCHA.

On February 19, the U.N. increased the security level in the southern region to Phase IV, resulting in new regulations for U.N. programming and staff, including a limit on the number of international staff based in Kandahar Province, a ban on U.N. presence in Helmand, Zabul, and Nimroz provinces, and a realignment of agency priorities. OCHA notes that agencies were primarily providing lifesaving humanitarian assistance in the south prior to the directive and, therefore, does not anticipate a significant change to or reduction in programming.

### ***Internal Displacement Update***

On January 4, the GIRoA Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) released new displacement data, estimating the total internally displaced population at nearly 414,000 individuals. In December 2009, UNHCR estimated the population at 297,000 people, but noted that the figure comprised primarily protracted caseload from the Taliban era living in displacement camps to which UNHCR implementing partners retain access. The figure likely excludes displaced persons residing in a number of host communities throughout the country and in areas difficult for international agencies to access. The MoRR, however, collected data from all 34 provinces, indicating a more comprehensive count of displaced persons. However, UNHCR highlights the temporary nature of many displacements, as well as the high incidence of secondary and repeated displacements in conflict and disaster-prone areas, as factors leading to conflicting and fluctuating figures.

### ***Population Movements in the South***

From February 12 to 24, the international and national military offensive against armed opposition groups in Nad Ali District, Helmand Province, displaced nearly 4,300 families, or approximately 27,700 individuals, primarily from Marjah town to the provincial capital of Lashkargah, according to UNHCR. While the U.N. does not maintain a presence in Helmand Province, UNHCR seconded staff to the provincial office of the GIRoA MoRR to assist with displaced person registration.

Nearly 1,300 households returned from Lashkargah and Nimroz Province to Marjah between February 25 and March 15, according to UNHCR. Assessments in Marjah indicate significant damage to houses and infrastructure and resulting disruptions to livelihoods. Floods caused by damaged irrigation canals destroyed

farmland and food stocks and resulted in livestock deaths. OCHA reported on February 28 that local representatives in Marjah cautioned against food and non-food-item distributions due to fear among the civilian population of insurgent reprisals. UNHCR continues to coordinate humanitarian agencies in preparation for additional returns to Marjah and to evaluate alternative avenues for providing assistance to affected populations.

The local MoRR office in Helmand reported in late March that the remaining 2,500 displaced families in Lashkargah continue to require food assistance, health care, and safe drinking water. During an interagency mission to Lashkargah on February 28, U.N. and NGO staff requested additional information from local authorities on humanitarian needs among both the displaced population and those persons remaining in the affected area.

U.N. implementing partners had provided assistance to 88 percent of the displaced population in Lashkargah as of February 28, according to UNHCR. U.N. World Food Program (WFP) partners provided one-month food rations, while UNHCR and the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided non-food items from prepositioned stocks in Lashkargah. The U.N. World Health Organization also mobilized emergency health kits and medical supplies. However, OCHA acknowledged that access to health facilities remained limited in both Lashkargah and Marjah.

In advance of the planned international military operation in Kandahar Province, the U.N. reports that the local government has reserved food and non-food assistance for approximately 5,000 families. Aid agencies have expressed concern regarding potential conflict-related displacement, particularly in light of persistent drought in recent years and associated humanitarian needs.

Since FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has supported U.N. and NGO contingency planning for conflict-related displacement, participating in the Kabul-based Internally Displaced Persons Task Force and providing support to organizations for prepositioning and distributing emergency relief supplies in conflict zones. USAID/OFDA also provided nearly \$308,000 in FY 2009 to the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) to conduct trainings for the GIRoA in 2010 on internal displacement protection issues, monitoring mechanisms, and assistance provision.

To date in FY 2010, State/PRM has provided \$37.5 million to UNHCR to assist Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, as well as displaced populations in Afghanistan. State/PRM supports UNHCR-led repatriation programs for refugees to encourage safe and voluntary returns to Afghanistan. Assistance to Afghanistan displaced populations includes

interventions in emergency health, shelter and settlements, and water, sanitation, and hygiene.

### ***Natural Disaster Response and Preparedness***

Heavy rainfall and early snowmelt in February resulted in floods and avalanches in several areas across Afghanistan. A series of avalanches in the Salang Pass of Parwan Province on February 9 killed 160 people, according to the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authorities (ANDMA). Avalanches in Badakhshan and Bamyán provinces killed an additional 20 people and rendered impassable all roads to affected villages in Badakhshan Province. UNICEF, ANDMA, the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), and USAID/OFDA implementing partner the International Organization for Migration (IOM) provided affected individuals in Parwan Province with emergency relief supplies.

February flooding affected at least 1,400 households in Jawzjan, Farah, Herat, Kandahar, and Helmand provinces, according to OCHA. In response to flooding along the Amu Darya River in the northern region, OCHA, local government authorities, NGOs, and other U.N. agencies conducted a joint verification mission to assess humanitarian needs among the 250 affected households and to identify further flood mitigation requirements. Priority needs include food assistance, shelter material, and emergency relief supplies. As of March 29, relief assistance remained delayed due to inaccessible roads and insecurity, according to OCHA.

In Kandahar Province, the Provincial Disaster Management Committee facilitated the distribution of food assistance from WFP, emergency relief supplies from IOM, and medical supplies from the U.N. World Health Organization to 157 flood-affected families. In Helmand Province, where humanitarian access was limited due to the military operation, ARCS distributed relief supplies to more than 100 affected households.

In response to seasonal flood risks and winter emergencies, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$5.8 million in FY 2009 and to date in FY 2010 to NGO partners to replenish and distribute emergency relief supplies in 10 provinces and preposition nine new stockpiles in remote areas in the northern and northeastern regions.

In addition, USAID/OFDA provided \$750,000 in FY 2009 to support community-based programs in 30 hazard-prone villages in Badakhshan and Baghlan provinces. NGO Aga Khan Foundation/Focus worked with communities, local councils, and first responders from March 2009 to March 2010 to implement disaster risk reduction measures and to enhance community preparedness and response mechanisms through trainings and materials transfer. USAID/OFDA's support to OCHA for humanitarian coordination also

contributed to improved humanitarian response and preparedness during the 2009–2010 winter.

### **Agriculture and Food Security**

According to the USAID-funded Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), food security for the Afghan population increased in 2009 due to expanded domestic cereal production and a 50 percent reduction in wheat prices compared to the same period in 2008. Afghanistan produced 6.5 million tons of wheat in 2009—only 200,000 tons less than the national requirement. The GIRA retains 70,000 tons of wheat in the newly created Strategic Grain Reserve for use in food emergencies. The government locally procured the excess wheat from areas with agricultural surpluses in order to support local farmers and to meet emergency food needs among the larger population in the event of domestic shortfalls.

Despite the successful wheat harvest and decreasing prices in some areas, the food security of many households also depends on adequate water availability. Low snowpack levels during the winter and early snowmelt in March will likely reduce the irrigated water supply, upon which up to 80 percent of Afghanistan's wheat crop relies. In order to measure the possible negative consequences of low snowpack and early snowmelt, FEWS NET and WFP planned to conduct a pre-crop assessment during the first two weeks of April. USAID/OFDA field staff note that the assessment results should provide an accurate indication of whether affected populations will require emergency food assistance before the 2011 harvest.

To date in FY 2010, USAID/FFP has provided nearly 35,000 metric tons (MT) of P.L. 480 Title II

emergency food assistance, valued at nearly \$37.3 million, to WFP for distribution to food-insecure populations. In 2009, WFP met the emergency food needs of approximately 4.4 million people affected by conflict and disaster, including 80,000 internally displaced persons and returnees.

In FY 2008, USAID/OFDA provided \$3 million to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization to increase certified wheat seed circulation, which contributed to the improved 2009 wheat harvest. In addition, with nearly \$5 million in additional funding from USAID/OFDA in FY 2009, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) continues to restore assets and livelihoods and improve food security for families in Bamyan, Ghor, and Herat provinces through cash-for-work projects and voucher distributions. Cash-for-work projects largely focus on rehabilitating the agriculture sector, further improving longer-term food security prospects in target communities.

### **USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

Since FY 2009, the USG has provided nearly \$209 million in humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. In FY 2009 and to date in FY 2010, USAID/OFDA has contributed more than \$33 million to support humanitarian programs, bringing total USAID/OFDA assistance since FY 2002 to more than \$193 million. USAID/OFDA assistance includes support for multi-sectoral rapid response mechanisms following natural disasters and conflict; integrated shelter and settlements projects in urban areas; livelihood support in areas affected by drought and rising food prices; disaster risk reduction projects in rural communities; and improved humanitarian coordination and information management systems.

### **FY 2010 USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN**

<b>Implementing Partner</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup></b>			
CRS	Economic Recovery and Market Systems	Bamyan, Ghor, and Herat Provinces	\$2,789,697
NGO Implementing Partner	Rapid Response in Logistics/Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Khost, Herat, Laghman, Loghar, Paktya, and Nangarhar Provinces	\$3,003,886
	Administration		\$59,730
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA</b>			<b>\$5,853,313</b>
<b>USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE</b>			
WFP	34,910 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$37,274,600
<b>TOTAL USAID/FFP</b>			<b>\$37,274,600</b>

<b>STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE</b>			
UNHCR	Health, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Assistance for Afghan Refugees, Returnees, and Displaced Persons; Repatriation Assistance for Afghan Refugees	Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran	\$37,500,000
<b>TOTAL STATE/PRM</b>			<b>\$37,500,000</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN IN FY 2010</b>			<b>\$80,627,913</b>

<sup>1</sup> USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of April 6, 2010.




---

Carol Chan  
Deputy Director  
USAID/OFDA