

Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief & Development

ACBAR was created in August 1988 and has been providing the framework within which NGOs and civil society, the Afghan Government, the UN and bilateral donors can exchange information, share expertise and establish guidelines for a more coordinated, efficient and effective use of resources providing humanitarian and development assistance to the Afghan people. ACBAR's activities have focused heavily on information sharing with its members and to the aid community in general; coordination of activities at the national and regional levels and advocacy on a variety of humanitarian and development issues.

Afghanistan context in 2014

After more than three decades of violent conflict, Afghans are longing for peace. With the current international military mission coming to an end by 2014, the context for peace talks should be changing. However, development achievements are in real danger if resources were to decrease and if peace negotiations exclude Afghan civil society. The reconciliation context is complex and Afghanistan may be defined as ongoing civil war;

- Armed conflict in Afghanistan took an unrelenting toll on Afghan civilians in 2013¹; 8,615 civilian casualties (2,959 civilian deaths and 5,656 injured) in 2013, marking a 7% increase in deaths, 17% increase in injured, and a 14% increase in total civilian casualties compared to 2012.
- Comparing figures from the past ten years, 2013 is on target to be the worst year ever in terms of armed opposition group attacks, military operations impacting civilians, and criminality. The proliferation and fragmentation of AOGs, and the attrition and

non-reliability of state security structures inside Afghanistan, are also of major concern. The epicenter of the fighting, which used to be in the south and east of the country, is spreading to the northern and western regions.

- The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are under-reporting civilian casualties they are causing.
- There is widespread and significant displacement amongst the Afghan population. It is caused mainly by conflict and natural disasters to a certain extent.
- Afghanistan has over 630,000 conflict-induced Internally Displaced People (IDPs)² by the end of 2013, with over 10,000 new IDPs profiled each month. Almost half of the current IDPs have been displaced since 2011.
- Refugee returns are at an all-time low since the beginning of the voluntary repatriation programme in 2002, with only 38,000 refugees returning in 2013. 2.49 million³ Afghan refugees remain registered in Iran (840,000) and Pakistan (1.65 million).
- War wounded casualties are also on the rise in different parts of the country, the increase in Helmand (South) even reaching 110% compared to 2011⁴.
- Humanitarian space is shrinking, as space is contested by all stakeholders GoA, AOGs and criminals.
- Violence inflicted on health workers, hospitals, clinics, ambulances, and patients continues. 2013 was a particularly challenging year with NGO health care projects and staff directly impacted in 111 security incidents.
- 74 percent⁵ of the world's illicit opium production came from Afghanistan, making it the world leader for 2012, SIGAR expressed concern of the possibility of a "Narco-state". More than 700,000 Afghans have no access to drug treatments.

¹ UNAMA Annual report 2013

² UNHCR October 2013 report

³ UNHCR 2012

⁴ NGO August 2013

⁵ The UNODC's 2013 World Drug Report

ECHO HIP 2014 cuts / Impacts

After a two phases approach, ECHO is now in a position to commit all funds foreseen under the HIP2014. However the structural gap between payment credits and commitment credits has not been solved. As a consequence, ECHO is looking at the possibility to reduce its overall budget and have it aligned with payments credits available. Practically speaking this could lead to a significant reduction of ECHO HIPs developed for each and every country all over the world.

ACBAR is presenting the impact of this decision on Afghanistan needs.

HIP for Afghanistan is 28,5M Euros presented the 29th October 2014 to all ECHO partners in Afghanistan.

- Based on 2013 humanitarian needs, ECHO's envisaged response:
 - ▶ **Support Services**
 - facilitation of access through humanitarian air transport
 - Provision of safety & security support to humanitarian agencies
 - ▶ **Coordination**
 - UNOCHA
 - Clusters support
 - ECHO Partners (ex Emergency Response)
 - ▶ **Protection**
 - ▶ **Access and Promotion of Humanitarian principles**
 - ▶ **Life-saving medical support**
 - ▶ **Relief assistance and support to recovery & reintegration**
 - ▶ **Care & maintenance support** for the most vulnerable elements of the Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan, and relief support for any fresh influx of displaced people.

Afghanistan leads in absolute number of attacks; in 2013 NGO were impacted in 229 security incidents.

Over 25,000 security incidents (all actors involved) occurred in Afghanistan in 2013.

Understanding the context is crucial to NGOs as 30 aid workers have been killed and 73 have been injured during the past 12 months in Afghanistan (2013) **while 14 aid workers** have already been killed during in the first 5 months of 2014.

ACBAR is asking DG ECHO Brussels to:

- **Avoid increasing fragility of humanitarian actors working in a situation already very fragile in itself.**
- **Remain fully engaged in committing necessary funds based on needs and in one tranche only to humanitarian actors under the HIP2015.**

Risks of HIP reduction:

- **100,000 beneficiaries lose vital support for each million € ECHO would not commit in Afghanistan.**
- Afghanistan is one of the most complicated countries in the world; elections, withdrawal of IMF, political mandate of the United Nations and implementation of the Tokyo framework combined will shrink and destabilize Non Governmental Organizations.