

ARC and ACBAR merged concept note for WHS side event

Event title: Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction, Resilience and Emergency Response in Afghanistan

Summary:

The events unfolding in Afghanistan, and the recent flow of Afghans across the Mediterranean to Europe, calls for an urgent attention to the humanitarian, social and economic needs of the Afghan people. Afghanistan remains one of the poorest countries in the world despite sustained flow of aid over the last 15 years. Millions of Afghans live in severe poverty and struggle to meet their basic needs. Armed conflict continues to take an increasing toll on Afghan civilians.

Earthquakes, cycles of drought and flooding, compounded by environmental mismanagement and extreme winters, have resulted in widespread degradation of Afghanistan's natural resources. The long-term interplay of these factors, alongside conflict, have stymied capacity to implement environmental policies, plan for natural disasters and deliver humanitarian responses. Eighty percent of Afghanistan's population relies on natural resources to meet their daily needs. Socio-economic pressures such as unemployment, poverty, and migration have rendered Afghans more vulnerable, forcing them to live in disaster-prone areas.

Snow and glaciers of the Hindu Kush Mountains are the main source of freshwater, providing the basis for livelihoods. Research indicates that the region's temperatures are rising faster than the global average; resulting in less snow and faster melting: leading in turn to flooding, landslides and erosion of productive land. In consequence, Afghanistan's rural economy and the development and the resilience of the people who depend on it is gravely impacted.

This complex and challenging humanitarian situation and the reduction in international aid require the humanitarian community to devise more innovative and sustainable solutions. Towards this end Afghanistan National Disaster Management Agency (ANDMA), Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR), Afghanistan Resilience Consortium (ARC), UNOCHA, and others are building frameworks for effective collaboration in reducing risks and managing humanitarian responses.

- ANDMA is the principal Afghan Government institution mandated to coordinate and manage all aspects related to disaster mitigation, preparedness, and response through its national and provincial offices.
- ACBAR brings together 151 national and international NGOs, building capacity and providing a framework for NGOs, UN agencies, Afghan Government, and donor community to exchange information, share expertise and establish guidelines for a more coordinated, efficient and effective use of resources.
- ARC, supported by DFID, is a consortium of Afghanaid, Action Aid, Save the Children, Concern Worldwide and the UN Environment Programme working together to build national, sub-national and local capacity to mitigate the risk of disasters (DRR), adapt to climate change and enhance resilience for the most vulnerable people in the most disaster prone parts of the country.
- UNOCHA coordinates humanitarian assistance in the complex environment in Afghanistan where military, political and security objectives pose challenges to the implementation of humanitarian principles and assistance. It supports a decisive and strategic Humanitarian Country Team, leads and supports inter-cluster coordination and identifies and develops flexible coordinated solutions.

Objectives:

Reflect on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, present accomplishments and address the need for coherence in collaborative action and capacity development to adapt to climate change; apply disaster risk reduction approaches, build resilience and coordinate disaster responses.

This objective contributes to core responsibility #4: ‘Change people’s lives - From delivering aid to ending need’. The experiences discussed will exemplify how community-based DRR, climate change adaptation and community resilience put “people at the centre”, while disaster preparedness and management experiences will highlight building partnerships with civil society and committing actors to be “as local as possible and as international as necessary”.

Agenda:

The panelists working in Afghanistan will give short presentations based on their work. A facilitated panel discussion and a question and answers session will follow.

Planned outline for the 90-minute event.

Hour/Minutes	Topics addressed	Person
00.00-00.04	Introduction and welcome	Charles Davy
00.05-00.13	Understanding the history, socio-political context and current status of Afghanistan conflict	HE Wais Barmak
00.14-00.22	Understanding vulnerabilities of Afghan communities to natural disasters and Climate Change	Andrew Scanlon
00.23-00.31	Helping Afghanistan’s vulnerable communities develop their community based disaster preparedness plans	Asuntha Charles
00.22-00.40	Contextualizing comprehensive school safety frameworks and school based disaster preparedness plans in Afghanistan	Ana Maria Locsin
00.41-00.49	Developing micro watersheds through participatory natural resource management in Afghanistan	Fraidoon Amiri
00.50-00.58	Coordination among national authorities, UN agencies and international community for effective humanitarian action in times of conflict	Mark Bowden
00.59-01.07	Strengthening partnership of the civil society and inclusion of local actors for effective humanitarian response	Fiona Gall
01.08-01.26	Questions and Answers	Charles Davy
01.27-01.30	Vote of Thanks	Fiona Gall

Rapporteur: Guru Charan Naik, gnaik@afghanaid.org.uk

Room size: small (50-100)

Additional information:

We plan to have a signage and distribute event program

Panelists/organizers:Panelists:

1. HE Wais Barmak, State Minister for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs
2. Dr. Andrew Scanlon, Country Manager, United Nations Environment Programme
3. Ms. Asuntha Charles, Country Director, Action Aid Afghanistan

4. Ms. Ana Maria Locsin, Country Director, Save the Children Afghanistan
5. Mr. Fraidoon Amiri, Humanitarian Coordinator, Concern Worldwide Afghanistan
6. Mr. Mark Bowden, Humanitarian Coordinator, UNOCHA Afghanistan
7. Mrs. Fiona Gall, Director, ACBAR

Moderator: Charles Davy, Managing Director, Afghanaid

On-site organizer: Karima Izri-Birke

Focal point for this merged event:

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