

NAC – Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

DRR through preparedness, management and response

Earthquakes, flooding, landslides, avalanches and droughts are endemic in Afghanistan and worsening in intensity and impact as the effects of climate change compound. Afghan communities depend on preventative measures, which reduce the likelihood of disasters and mitigate the impacts when they strike, especially in the face of climate change, which has increased the frequency and severity of disasters. This requires addressing environmental issues head-on, particularly deforestation – which can lead to erosion, landslides and a greater risk of flooding. A coordinated approach between different NAC technical teams helps ensure that the communities we support are taking a long-term approach to environmental sustainability. NAC initiatives focus on a range of issues including: watershed protection, revitalization and management; reforestation; the construction of flooding and erosion protective ‘gabion’ walls; the planting of drought resistant crops; and earthquake resistant construction. NAC combines education with practical interventions in supporting communities and state institutions in their resilience and response capacity.

NAC also does pioneering work with the Afghan government in earthquake risk reduction. We are working in collaboration with the Afghan Geological Survey (AGS), the Geoscience Department of Kabul University and other national and international partners, in establishing seismic measurement stations across, earthquake prone, Northern and Eastern parts of the country and in developing a comprehensive seismic hazard map for Afghanistan.

Communities’ responses to disasters can be better coordinated and more effective when emanating from a central location, and NAC works to ensure that disaster-preparedness and response is also done in schools. Through the establishment of School-based Emergency Response Teams (SERTs), NAC facilitates training of children and teachers in crucial DRR knowledge and skills. Children and teachers are then able to raise awareness and share knowledge with their families and other community members, extending the circle of disaster preparedness and response within their communities. Empowering children as key DRR actors, builds their confidence and increase communities’ resilience in the face of disasters.

Mawlawi Sayed Azam, the principal of a girls’ school in Badakhshan, discussed the benefits of basing DRRM in his school, saying, ‘After working with NAC, we established a child-led SERT for the first time in our school. Members of this team now understand how to assist others during and after a disaster’.

DRR ACHIEVEMENTS

- Construction and equipping 18 disaster response centers in Badakhshan
- 450 Village and School-based Emergency Response Teams established in Badakhshan and Ghazni
- 50 schools provided with first aid and search and rescue equipment
- 6,512 children (1,654 girls) trained in disaster awareness, basic first-aid and search and rescue
- 570 school Shura members received DRRM awareness training
- 109 Village Disaster Management Plans (VDMP) developed in disaster-prone communities in Badakhshan and Ghazni
- 50 permanent shelters constructed for victims of natural disasters in Badakhshan
- Temporary shelter provided for more than 4,400 victims of earthquake and avalanches
- More than 2 million trees planted in reforestation efforts
- 490 meters of gabion protection walls constructed in Ghazni
- Partnership with ANDMA in Badakhshan, including secondment of staff and capacity building

