



PRESS RELEASE - International Disaster Risk Reduction Day October 13th:

Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction saves lives, protects assets and builds resilience

In a country like Afghanistan it is especially important to highlight the Disaster Risk Reduction Day. Since January 2017 more than 50,000 Afghans have been affected by natural disasters. In average more than 200,000 Afghans are affected by natural disasters, every year.

More than three decades of conflict, coupled with environmental degradation and limited investment in disaster risk reduction has reduced Afghan's resilience to natural disasters and their ability to recover after the onset of a crisis. This demonstrates the need of improved DRR strategies and increased funding for DRR in Afghanistan to strengthen resilience and reduce poverty.

Afghanistan has committed to the global Sendai Framework for states on disaster risk reduction. The framework covers different DRR aspects from reduction of mortality and economic loss to early warning systems and national and local DRR strategies. This is a very important commitment for Afghanistan, a country prone to many natural disasters such as earthquakes, flooding, drought, landslides, and avalanches.

ANDMA and the Afghan government are actively working on preparing a roadmap for the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Afghanistan. At the same time it is imperative to note the gaps in national level Disaster Management uncovered by the authorities and also through a recent World Bank study, including lack of local DRR strategies, early warning systems, gaps in capacities and lacking financial resources.

In light of this it is crucial that national authorities, international donors, and organizations working on DRR in Afghanistan invest in Disaster Risk Reduction. This requires funding for local initiatives, capacity building and effective plans – from community to national level.

Different actors have tried to calculate potential savings of DRR investments compared to costs for emergency response. The UN Environment Program has stated that each USD invested in DRR will later save 47 USD in emergency response, a more moderate estimate from ECHO (international donor) estimates savings of 4-7 Euro in emergency response per Euro invested in DRR. Even the most moderate estimate demonstrates the importance of investing in Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee is working on Disaster Risk Reduction with school children, teachers, local communities, district and provincial authorities. We contribute to scientific research that can inform DRR strategies, policies and mitigation measures. We work to mitigate the risks of disasters, build resilience and to improve local communities' response capacities for coping with disasters when they strike.

We train women and school children in first aid and evacuation, we support farmers in climate change adaptation and we support local authorities with Disaster Risk Management –all with the intent to safeguard lives, property and infrastructure.

Kabul, 12th October 2017,

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PICTURES (examples)

Illustrative pictures in higher resolution can be provided on demand.

All pictures used should be accredited to NAC as presented below.

PICTURES:

DRR – community first-aid training, Photo: NAC



DRR – search and rescue training, Photo: NAC



Land slide Risk Assessment in Badakhshan, Photo: NAC



Disaster Response in Badakhshan (2014), Photo: NAC

