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

Afghanistan – Complex Emergency

Situation Report #3, Fiscal Year (FY) 2009

September 30, 2009

Note: The last situation report was dated August 19, 2009.

BACKGROUND

Natural disasters and conflict often converge to undermine progress towards early recovery in many Afghan communities. In other locations, repeated shocks and insufficient response and preparedness mechanisms result in perpetual emergency conditions. In both cases, population movements aggravate community vulnerabilities and contribute to instability, whether through the loss of working-age community members as rural-to-urban migration increases or through the addition of displaced persons and returnees despite scarce resources. According to the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), between 250,000 and 260,000 internally displaced persons reside throughout the country. Growing numbers of displaced individuals are returning to areas of origin in the western and northern regions to encounter limited livelihood opportunities and insufficient basic services. Inconsistent humanitarian access due to deteriorating security since 2007 has compounded humanitarian needs. The capacity of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) to provide basic services and infrastructure also remains limited.

On October 20, 2008, U.S. Ambassador William B. Wood re-declared a disaster due to the effects of armed conflict and natural disasters in Afghanistan. To date in FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$27 million in humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, bringing total USAID/OFDA assistance since FY 2002 to more than \$187 million. USAID/OFDA assistance includes the provision of emergency relief supplies to natural disaster- and conflict-affected Afghans; disaster risk reduction projects that build resilience to future shocks in rural communities; integrated shelter and settlements projects that address urban growth risks and meet humanitarian needs among a growing and vulnerable urban population; and capacity building efforts within Kabul Municipality.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
Internally Displaced Persons in Afghanistan	Approximately 250,000–260,000	UNHCR – July 2009
Refugees in Neighboring Countries	2,833,128	UNHCR – January 2009
Returnees to Afghanistan	Approximately 4.3 million ¹	UNHCR – July 2009

FY 2009 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

USAID/OFDA Assistance to Afghanistan	\$27,262,298
USAID/FFP² Assistance to Afghanistan.....	\$59,509,800
State/PRM³ Assistance to Afghanistan.....	\$41,500,000
Total USAID and State Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan.....	\$128,272,098

CURRENT SITUATION

Since August 20 presidential and parliamentary elections, the number of attacks by insurgents on civilian targets decreased. However, the humanitarian community has expressed concern about an increase in violence and concomitant decrease in humanitarian access if results require runoff elections.

many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) limited movements and suspended non-essential programs during the period. According to the independent Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, armed groups carried out 98 attacks against humanitarian staff from January 1 to September 15.

In the weeks before and after the election, attacks targeting humanitarian organizations remained constant compared to previous months and reporting periods, as

Security continues to deteriorate in northern and northeastern regions due to increased insurgent and counterinsurgency activities. In August, the U.N.

¹ The number of UNHCR-assisted returns to Afghanistan between 2002 and 2008.

² USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP)

³ U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported small-scale displacements in the area due to conflict but insufficient access to respond to resulting humanitarian needs. August floods in eastern, northern, and northeastern provinces generated humanitarian needs and some displacement in Jalalabad city, Nangarhar Province. Communities along the Amu Darya River in the north and northeast continue to require rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance.

From January to July, a USAID/OFDA Senior Humanitarian Advisor based in Kabul worked with non-governmental partners and a number of U.S. Government offices to assess humanitarian needs, program additional funding accordingly, facilitate coordination and information sharing among humanitarian agencies, and monitor program progress. In early October, USAID/OFDA plans to establish a long-term presence in Afghanistan.

Displacement and Return Trends

During the months of August and September 2009, conflict spread from southern Afghanistan to areas in eastern and northern Afghanistan, further impeding humanitarian access and resulting in small-scale population displacements. OCHA received reports of insurgent activity in Bargi Matal, Nuristan Province, that displaced approximately 160 families, or 960 individuals. Insurgents control the area and denied access to humanitarian organizations. In response, U.N. agencies developed a rapid assessment questionnaire for NGO staff and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) members who may gain access to the area.

The security situation in historically stable northeastern Afghanistan also continues to deteriorate. On August 5, counterinsurgency operations by Afghan security forces resulted in the displacement of 200 families, or 1,200 individuals, in an area of Baghlan Province, according to OCHA. The Afghan Red Crescent Society reportedly responded to resulting humanitarian needs. Overall, humanitarian access in the region continues to diminish as a result of increasing insecurity and poor road conditions as winter commences.

In August, a joint GIROA-U.N. World Food Program (WFP) assessment identified nearly 300 families recently displaced from Shahrak District, Ghor Province, to an area in Herat Province. As of September 14, humanitarian organizations planned to deliver food and emergency relief supplies to the families when security in the area improved.

Limited access due to difficult terrain and insecurity continues to prevent precise counting of displaced persons, particularly in the south where the majority of displaced persons reside. As of July 6, UNHCR estimated the total displaced population at between

250,000 and 260,000 individuals. Whereas one year ago, the UNHCR-led Internally Displaced Persons Profile identified between 50 and 70 percent of the total displaced population as protracted caseload from the Taliban era, UNHCR now cites 30 percent of the displaced population as old caseload and 48 percent as persons displaced in the last year. As the status of 22 percent remains unknown, the new figures may not indicate a substantial increase in new displacement, nor an increase in the return rate to areas of origin. Nevertheless, U.N. agencies continue to advance contingency planning to prepare for potential conflict-induced displacement and improve current humanitarian responses.

Repatriation assistance continues for Afghan refugees arriving from Iran and Pakistan. In recent weeks, UNHCR has focused on erecting transit camps and providing services in desolate areas of northern Afghanistan. In August and September, more than 1,500 Afghans previously residing in Iran arrived in Sari Pul Province, but the prevalence of damaged and destroyed houses in villages of origin prevented returns and precipitated needs for temporary solutions. UNHCR expects approximately 220,000 Afghan refugees to return to Afghanistan by the end of 2009. The recent conflict in Pakistan and resulting UNHCR program suspensions contributed to low return rates in the first half of 2009 compared to the same period in 2008.

In FY 2009, USAID/OFDA supported conflict contingency planning, participating in the Kabul-based Internally Displaced Persons Task Force and providing support to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to preposition emergency relief supplies in Kandahar Province for distribution to displaced persons. In addition, with a \$300,000 grant from USAID/OFDA, one NGO partner will conduct internal displacement protection trainings for relevant GIROA ministries in support of nascent government efforts to improve identification of and assistance to internally displaced individuals.

In FY 2009, State/PRM has provided more than \$38.4 million to UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to assist Afghan refugees in Pakistan and conflict-affected and displaced populations in Afghanistan. State/PRM programmed an additional \$3.1 million to support NGO-run returnee reintegration interventions, as well as basic service provision for refugees and host communities in Pakistan. State/PRM-funded projects prioritize shelter, protection, health, livelihoods, and water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions.

Floods and Winter: Relief Supplies, Preparedness, and Risk Reduction

On August 31, flash floods in Jalalabad city, Nangarhar Province, killed four people and destroyed or damaged more than 500 homes, 900 latrines, and several water

sources, according to the Afghan Red Crescent Society. OCHA assisted the Nangarhar Provincial Disaster Management Committee in coordinating an overall effective response, which involved two U.N. agencies, IOM, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, and the local office of the GIRA Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. Affected individuals received emergency relief supplies and health kits, as well as shelter and food assistance.

August flooding in northern and northeastern regions primarily affected Balkh and Jawzjan provinces. OCHA also reported damage to roads, irrigation canals, and agricultural lands in remote parts of Badakhshan and Baghlan provinces, noting difficulty accessing affected populations. Assessments of affected areas, particularly along the Amu Darya River, revealed additional mitigation and rehabilitation needs.

In response to spring and summer flooding, USAID/OFDA provided ACTED, IOM, and FOCUS with more than \$4.8 million to replenish and distribute emergency relief supplies in 10 provinces and reposition 9 new stockpiles in the most remote, flood-prone areas in northern and northeastern regions, including areas in Badakhshan and Baghlan provinces. IOM also responded to the August 31 floods in Jalalabad city by providing 4,000 blankets to affected individuals.

In an effort to reduce risks from future floods and other natural disasters, USAID/OFDA provided \$750,000 in FY 2009 to support community-based programs in 30 of the most hazard-prone villages in Badakhshan and Baghlan provinces. USAID/OFDA partners work with local councils and first responders to institute disaster risk reduction measures, such as fortified river banks and other structural improvements, and enhance preparedness mechanisms through trainings and materials transfer.

As flood waters recede and winter rapidly approaches, USAID/OFDA partners continue to use current funds to reposition winter kits and shelter materials in communities vulnerable to winter emergencies. According to OCHA, heavy snowfall could isolate 25 percent of all districts. With nearly \$5 million in additional funding from USAID/OFDA in FY 2009, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) will continue to implement cash-for-work projects in Bamyan, Ghor, and Herat provinces to clear snow from critical transit routes. Projects also improve food security during the winter months by helping communities maintain access to markets and by providing additional income to families for the purchase of food and other supplies.

Shelter and Settlements

From 2001 to 2009, approximately 60 percent of Afghanistan's growth occurred in urban areas. On August 31, the International Crisis Group released a report on returning Afghan refugees that discusses the

consequences of rapid growth and urbanization fueled by internal displacement, refugee returns, and migration. In Kabul, rapid growth and limited government capacity contribute to humanitarian needs for shelter, income, and basic services. In addition, as informal settlements proliferate, disaster risks increase, particularly from earthquakes and floods.

Kabul has experienced the most significant growth in the last seven years, with the population tripling in size to more than 4.5 million people. In response to attendant humanitarian needs, USAID/OFDA NGO partners implemented the Kabul Area Shelter and Settlements (KASS) project in 2006 to benefit 26,000 people through seismic-resistant shelter provision and service upgrades. Since FY 2008, USAID/OFDA has provided nearly \$14 million to implement the second phase of the KASS project, including \$1 million provided in FY 2009 to expand the program into a new district. Scheduled for completion in early 2010, phase II of KASS aims to provide 10,000 vulnerable households with viable, seismic-resistant structures, while benefiting 82,000 people in total.

USAID/OFDA also supports community risk reduction and preparedness through a two-part program implemented by Shelter For Life (SFL). One component aims to develop seismic mitigation infrastructures in several target communities. Through trainings, demonstrations, media messaging, and mock drills, the program improves seismic awareness and preparedness among approximately 1 million people in Kabul. Under the second component, implementing staff train construction teams to use cost-effective, seismic-resistant materials and building designs.

At present, Kabul Municipality lacks the resources to meet humanitarian needs among displaced persons and other vulnerable groups, while also planning for future growth and reducing associated risks. In response, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$1.7 million to SFL in FY 2009 to help build the urban recovery capacity of Kabul Municipality through technology transfer and technical assistance. USAID/OFDA also funds IOM in support of a full-time urban planning advisor who works directly with Kabul Municipality officials and staff.

Rapid growth and urbanization have increasingly affected other Afghan cities, including Herat and Jalalabad. In July 2009, OCHA noted significant reintegration challenges facing returnees to Jalalabad. As a result of growth, insufficient infrastructure, and poor urban planning, growing numbers of returnees reside in spontaneous and unprotected settlements. Recognizing the growing similarities between Kabul and Jalalabad, USAID/OFDA provided one NGO partner with more than \$4.9 million in FY 2009 to begin implementing an integrated shelter and settlements project—much like KASS—in Jalalabad.

FY 2009 USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
ACTED	Economic Recovery and Market Systems; Logistics/Relief Supplies; Natural and Technological Risks; Shelter and Settlements; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Kabul Municipality and Kunduz and Takhar Provinces	\$2,448,271
CRS	Economic Recovery and Market Systems	Bamyan, Ghor, and Herat Provinces	\$10,146,572
FOCUS	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management; Logistics/Relief Commodities; Natural and Technological Risks	Badakhshan and Baghlan Provinces	\$951,150
IOM	Logistics/Relief Commodities; Natural and Technological Risks; Shelter and Settlements	Badakhshan, Balkh, Bamyan, Herat, Jawzjan, Kandahar, Kunduz, Nangarhar, and Paktya Provinces; Kabul Municipality	\$3,904,524
NGO Implementing Partner	Shelter and Settlements	Nangarhar Province	\$4,910,729
NGO Implementing Partner	Protection	Countrywide	\$307,825
NGO Implementing Partner	Agriculture and Food Security under KASS Project	Kabul Municipality	\$102,881
SFL	Natural and Technological Risks	Kabul Municipality	\$2,501,180
OCHA	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	Countrywide	\$1,500,000
United Methodist Committee on Relief	Logistics/Relief Commodities	Kabul Province	\$203,898
	Administration		\$285,268
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$27,262,298
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE²			
WFP	62,190 metric tons (MT) of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$59,509,800
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$59,509,800

STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE			
UNHCR and ICRC	Health, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Assistance to Refugees and Conflict-Affected and Displaced Persons	Countrywide	\$38,400,000
Various NGO Implementing Partners	Health, Livelihoods Recovery, Shelter and Settlements, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Assistance to Refugees and Returnees	Balkh, Baghlan, Takhar, and Kunduz Provinces	\$3,100,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM			\$41,500,000
TOTAL USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN IN FY 2009			\$128,272,098

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 30, 2009.

² USAID/FFP funding represents the estimated value of emergency food assistance and does not include the provision of 8,190 MT of P.L. 480 Title II development food assistance, valued at \$13.5 million, to support health and livelihoods activities in Ghor Province.