



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
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) 2003

January 28, 2003

Note: This Situation Report updates previous Central Asia Situation Reports released in FY 2001 and FY 2002. New information is italicized.

BACKGROUND

Two decades of war in Afghanistan, including a decade-long Soviet occupation and ensuing civil strife, left Afghanistan impoverished and mired in an extended humanitarian crisis. A devastating four-year regional drought compounded the crisis, drying up wells, parching agricultural land, killing off livestock, collapsing rural economies, and eventually exhausting the coping mechanisms of many ordinary Afghans, forcing them to leave their homes in search of food and water. International relief agencies, with support from the United States (U.S.), have long been active in providing humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people, even during the restrictive years of the Taliban. The U.S. Agency for International Development’s Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART) began its emergency coordination work in response to the regional drought in June 2001. USAID/OFDA continues to assess the humanitarian needs of vulnerable Afghans, and to monitor the relief programs of its implementing partners.

Afghanistan: Numbers at a Glance

Total population (CIA Factbook) 26,813,057	Internally Displaced (UNHCR)
Old Caseload Refugees as of Dec. 2002 (UNHCR)	Estimated caseload as of December 2002 724,000
Pakistan and Iran 3,500,000	North and west..... 117,000
Refugee Returns Since January 1, 2002 (UNHCR)	Center and east 194,000
Pakistan (vol. assisted since March 1)..... 1,532,000	South..... 413,000
Iran (voluntary assisted since April 9)..... 261,000	Internally Displaced Returns Since Jan. 1, 2002 (IOM)
Central Asian states 10,000	Total as of December 2002 (vol. assisted).... 250,000
	Total since December 2001 (spontaneous)... 400,000

FY 2001 - 2003 U.S. Government Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan* \$742,420,254

CURRENT SITUATION

Overview. *Several political steps were taken in an effort to improve security and promote disarmament; however, the security situation remained tense due to rising criminal activity and has affected humanitarian operations. The number of beneficiaries in urban areas targeted for assistance has expanded due to increased donor funding. Distributions of winter warmth and shelter assistance are underway in all parts of the country. Food distributions to end beneficiaries in inaccessible locations are more than half complete. Heavy snows have blocked some roads in the north, west, and central highlands, hampering humanitarian travel. Plans are being made to assist an additional 1.5 million Afghans return to their homes in 2003. The number of families reported to be newly displaced this winter remains low. The whooping cough crisis, which claimed at least 54 lives in Badakhshan Province, has been contained.*

Political/Military. *The Transitional Islamic Government of Afghanistan (TIGA) and the United Nations (U.N.) announced in early January a plan to disarm and demobilize an estimated 250,000 militiamen through the provision of money, vocational*

training, and employment assistance. The program is expected to get underway by spring or early summer and will occur in parallel with the building of a new national army. On January 7, a new battalion was added to the national army, raising the force size to 1,725. The TIGA has indicated it would like a trained force of 70,000 soldiers within two years.

In another effort to rein in the power of the country’s irregular forces, TIGA President Hamid Karzai in mid-December banned political leaders from taking part in any military activity. President Karzai said the new rule aimed to extend the authority of the civilian administration and to ensure a separation between civilian and military affairs. It is not yet clear whether leaders of the main armed factions will comply with the decree.

Coalition forces, in cooperation with the TIGA, have established the first Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Gardez, Paktia Province to strengthen the presence of the central government, improve security, and facilitate the delivery of reconstruction assistance. Similar teams will be established in other major Afghan cities over the next several months.

Security. *The security situation remained tense in many parts of the country. Although there was no significant factional fighting, humanitarian operations continued to be impacted by pervasive low-level insecurity. In Paktia Province, approximately 72 metric tons (MT) of World Food Program (WFP) wheat was forcefully off-loaded in Waza District by warlord Padshah Khan. WFP dispatched staff to secure the release of the food. In the provinces of Laghman, Kunar, Nuristan, as well as Kahmard District of Bamiyan Province, tension between local commanders and Coalition forces has resulted in the suspension of U.N. missions. In late December, three bombs exploded in the city of Jalalabad, followed by warnings to the humanitarian community that there could be further terrorist attacks. On January 26, a U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) convoy traveling through Nangarhar Province on the road between Jalalabad and Kabul was attacked and two of UNHCR's Afghan security guards were killed. As a result of the attack, UNHCR has temporarily suspended its work in the Sherzad, Hisarak, and Khogyani districts. In the north, U.N. road missions to Sargagh and Ruyee-DuAb districts in Samangan Province were temporarily suspended due to a mine accident that killed five Afghans.*

There has been a steady increase in the number of criminal incidents throughout most of the country. In the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif, three armed men stole a large amount of money and communications equipment from the compound of an international non-governmental organization (NGO) on January 2. An attempted robbery at a U.N. warehouse in Mazar-e-Sharif was also reported, leading the U.N. to prohibit travel in the city after 17:00. In the center and southeast of Afghanistan, including Kabul, crime has continued to escalate. Car jackings have been more frequent along the Kabul to Kandahar road between Ghazni and Qalat in Zabul Province, and Qalat and Saidabad in Wardak Province. Recent incidents have prompted the U.N. to mandate armed escorts for travel along these routes. Also in the southeast, continued insecurity in Khost Province has forced the U.N. to limit its activity and prohibit travel after dark. In the west, it is reported that travel through Shindand, Herat Province remains dangerous, particularly after dark. The U.N. is also restricting travel for missions in parts of Badghis Province experiencing factional tensions.

On December 29, the offices of two local NGOs were slightly damaged after an explosion in Qalat, in Zabul Province. Due to this attack and the series of armed car robberies described above, one local NGO decided to close its office in Zabul town. Another international NGO warned that if security could not be guaranteed in the province, then other aid agencies would be

forced to halt their operations. On January 8, representatives from the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and several NGOs operating in Zabul went on a fact-finding mission and met with the Governor of Zabul. It was agreed that the local government would deploy armed security guards to certain vulnerable areas, photo identity cards would be issued to U.N. and NGO personnel, and contact between humanitarian organizations and local security offices regarding travel arrangements would increase.

Attacks on Coalition forces continued along the eastern border of Pakistan. On December 21, gunmen killed a Coalition soldier in Shkin town in Paktia Province. On December 19, a grenade attack near an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) military hospital in Kabul killed two Afghans, including one aid worker, and injured two French journalists. The attack came just two days after two Coalition soldiers and their interpreter were wounded when a grenade was thrown into their vehicle in Kabul.

Winter Preparation. *The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), in cooperation with UNAMA, the U.N. Joint Logistics Center (UNJLC) and other U.N. agencies, NGOs, and national and provincial authorities, are working to implement a common humanitarian assistance strategy for the winter. The Winter Preparedness Plan aims to address: urban winter issues affecting recently returned refugees; rural winter issues, including improving access and pre-positioning of food and non-food supplies in areas that will become cut-off by heavy snows; the potential for refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs) who returned to their areas of origin but found insufficient assistance to re-displace; the needs of those still displaced by drought or violence; and the special needs of Kuchi nomads. The plan targets roughly two million Afghans at risk.*

UNAMA has increased the number of beneficiary families in central areas that will receive assistance this winter from 23,000 to 66,000 because of additional donor assistance. In Kabul City, 48 percent of 14,000 already identified families are involved in cash-for-work activities. The task force in the north has made providing fuel to clinics and hospitals its highest priority after assisting the urban vulnerable.

UNHCR has stockpiled contingency non-food items, such as tents, stoves, blankets, plastic sheeting, and kerosene, and the distribution of these winter supplies is underway. In the north, over 60 percent of targeted beneficiaries in nine provinces have received UNHCR winter supplies, with the exception of coal. The first deliveries of coal arrived in early January to UNHCR warehouses in the north, northeast, and central areas.

The NGO ACTED will provide 15,000 MT of coal this winter extracted through a USAID-OFDA-funded cash-for-work project, bringing total coal provision to 27,000 MT targeting more than 100,000 vulnerable families. Due to a shortage of supplies in the south, the quantity of kerosene fuel distributed to each family has been reduced in Kandahar Province. Distributions of non-food items are also ongoing in Zabul Province and in the four western provinces of Herat, Badghis, Ghor, and Farah. In the east, distribution of winterization assistance to vulnerable families was scheduled to begin in mid-January.

Work is ongoing by the Ministry of Public Works (MPW), UNJLC, and the U.N. Office of Project Services (UNOPS) to coordinate cash-for-work emergency road repair, snow clearance, and equipment maintenance at base camps and hubs around the country. More than 120 roads have been identified as needing to be repaired and kept open during the winter. The MPW and USAID/OFDA-funded grantee ACTED are keeping the Salang Tunnel and its approaches free of snow. Access to the tunnel is restricted for repairs during night hours.

According to UNJLC, many roads in the northern area have been temporarily blocked by snow and travel has been delayed. The Maimana-Mazar corridor is reported to be in bad condition, with heavy snow and mud making parts of the route impassable. In Faryab Province, the road to Kohistan District was also blocked by snow and there was a landslide in Gorziwan. In neighboring Sar-e-Pul Province, Cheras was reported to be inaccessible. The route from Kunduz to Faizabad, Badakhshan Province is open, with no reports of heavy snow; however, the districts of Ragh and Darwaz remain isolated. UNOPS was trying to open the corridor to Darwaz.

There are reported access problems in the western highlands, including areas of Ghor Province, and between Qala-e-Naw, Jawand and Morghab districts in Badghis Province. The route from Herat to Qala-e-Naw via the Sabzak Pass deteriorated significantly in late December. UNJLC and UNOPS have since secured a proposal for the clearance of the Sabzak Pass that will ensure access for the next three months. In the central highlands, all major mountain passes were reported to be open except for Hajikak Pass on the Bamiyan – Behsud corridor, which was closed temporarily in mid-January due to ice and snow.

WFP has pre-positioned 52,572 metric tons (MT) of food assistance throughout the country in winter inaccessible areas to help meet the needs of 1.3 million rural Afghans. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has pre-positioned an additional 24,667

MT of food in the central highlands, primarily in Ghor Province. Food distributions to end beneficiaries have been completed by ICRC and are 50 percent completed by WFP, with the balance to be distributed by the end of February.

A recent survey by MRRD and three NGOs operating in nine provinces with high concentrations of Kuchi nomads found there was a significant need for food aid. In response, WFP plans to begin a two-month free distribution program for the most vulnerable Kuchi during the winter period. Approximately 8,000 blankets and 1,500 tents will also be distributed.

Food Aid and Agriculture. *WFP reports that it will have sufficient cereals to cover its requirements through March 2003, following the most recent contribution by USAID. After this date, 55,000 MT of cereal and 4,000 MT of vegetable oil, and 500 MT of iodized salt will be needed in new contributions to cover the pre-harvest “hungry season.” Food distributions continue, but winter weather has hampered some distribution efforts.*

According to UNAMA, there are unconfirmed reports that Afghan farmers in a village in Badghis Province have started to consume seeds distributed for winter season cultivation. The Winter Task Force in Herat is attempting to verify this information.

According to the WFP 2002-2003 Vulnerability and Analysis Mapping (VAM) assessment, four million Afghans in rural communities are estimated to face a food deficit during the next 12 months. This figure does not include vulnerable Afghans living in urban areas, returnees, or IDPs. Data from this year’s U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment indicate that more than six million of the most vulnerable Afghans countrywide will continue to require targeted food assistance. In addition to the effects of drought, other persistent factors such as rural indebtedness, loss of productive assets, and lack of purchasing power contribute to high food insecurity.

IDPs and Refugees. *More than 1.8 million Afghan refugees have been assisted in returning home through the joint UNHCR and TIGA voluntary repatriation program that began in March. More than 1.5 million Afghans have voluntarily returned from Pakistan, while more than 261,000 Afghans have chosen to return home from Iran. Recent returns are sharply down due to winter conditions and insecurity in some parts of the country. In December, the pace of returns fell to about 2,000 per week, a drop of more than half when compared to November. UNHCR anticipates a continued decline in returns until spring, when the*

pace should again increase. UNHCR has stated that its biggest challenge is to ensure that factional fighting and insecurity do not uproot refugees that have already returned to Afghanistan.

UNHCR announced plans to assist in the return of 1.2 million refugees and 300,000 IDPs during the coming year. However, UNHCR officials believe an additional 300,000 refugees beyond the 1.2 million are likely to return in 2003. UNHCR warned that such a large number of newly returning refugees could put a severe strain on the country's already weak infrastructure.

The deaths of at least 10 Afghan children in early December in the Spin Boldak IDP camps along the Pakistani border were initially attributed to unusual cold temperatures, but a joint TIGA and U.N. mission to the camp concluded that cold weather was not the only factor and called for a vulnerability assessment of the IDPs, an examination of whether camps are meeting minimum standards of assistance, and the development of middle- and long-term strategies for the Spin Boldak camps.

Since August 2002, UNHCR has been relocating displaced families from the border crossing at Spin Boldak and Chaman to a new, temporary site at Zhare Dasht, west of Kandahar. Approximately 30,000 Afghans have voluntarily moved to Zhare Dasht, but there are still an equal number who are staying along the border because of security concerns or a lack of employment opportunities.

According to the MRRD, approximately 350 IDP families who were repatriated to Badakhshan Province and 250 migrant workers returned to the Baghi Shirkat camp due to the poor living conditions and lack of employment opportunities in their places of origin. In Balkh Province, MRRD reported that 150 families were displaced from Zareh District to Charbolak District. In the west, while some newly displaced families continue to arrive in the camps, the numbers remain relatively low.

Health. On January 26, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that the whooping cough crisis, which claimed at least 54 lives in the Darwaz and Kwahan districts of Badakhshan Province, has been contained. However, according to WHO, the final death toll could still rise since the outbreak's full effects are still unknown. In early January, U.N. and Afghan health officials had warned that the respiratory disease threatened 40,000 infants and young children, but an emergency team comprised of officials from WHO, the Afghan Ministry of Health, and the Aga Khan Development Network were deployed to the area and distributed medicine and vaccination equipment to

control the outbreak. Logistical and communications constraints hampered access to the mountainous area.

In mid-December, there were five deaths in Maslakh camp and two in Shaidayee camp from acute respiratory infection; however, UNAMA reported that morbidity rates in both IDP camps are under control.

The Afghan Ministry of Health, UNICEF, and WHO launched a three-day, nation-wide polio immunization program on December 15 to vaccinate approximately 5.9 million children under five years of age. Children six months to five years old also received Vitamin A drops to help them fight disease and infection and prevent night blindness. In 2002, there were eight reported cases of polio, a significant drop from 27 cases reported two years earlier.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Background. On October 4, 2001, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Christina B. Rocca redeclared a complex humanitarian disaster in Afghanistan for FY 2002. To date, FY 2001 and FY 2002 USG humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan has been provided by USAID/OFDA, Food for Peace (USAID/FFP), Democracy & Governance (USAID/DG), Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM), State's Humanitarian Demining Program (State/HDP), State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (State/INL), the Department of Defense (DOD), and the CDC.

New Actions. USAID/FFP provided WFP with 30,000 MT of P.L. 480 Title II wheat, valued at \$13,700,000.

USAID/OFDA Assistance

USAID/OFDA is providing \$2,000,000 to ACTED for the provision of winter fuel and stoves to 30,000 vulnerable families in the northern provinces.

USAID/OFDA is providing \$1,781,000 to International Medical Corps (IMC) in support of health care for 250,000 Afghans in Badghis and Herat provinces.

USAID/OFDA is also providing \$3,856,405 to IMC for health, water, and irrigation assistance for 130,000 Afghans in Bamiyan and Khost provinces.

USAID/OFDA is providing \$314,167 to Shelter for Life (SFL) in support of cash-for-work emergency road rehabilitation in Kunduz and Takhar provinces.

USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN

USG AGENCY	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	REGION	AMOUNT
AFGHANISTAN - COMPLEX EMERGENCY FY 2003				
USAID/OFDA				
ACTED		Winter heating assistance	Mazar, Parwan, Takhar, Baghlan	\$2,000,000
Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF)		Urban shelter and winterization	Kabul	\$2,083,388
International Medical Corps (IMC)		Clinics, mobile health teams	Badghis, Herat	\$1,781,000
IMC		Health, water, and irrigation	Bamiyan, Khost	\$3,856,405
Shelter for Life (SFL)		Urban shelter and winterization	Faizabad, Herat, Kunduz	\$608,614
SFL		Shelter reconstruction (Nahrin)	Baghlan	\$212,868
SFL		Winter heating assistance	West, Southeast	\$664,274
SFL		Emergency road rehabilitation	Kunduz, Takhar	\$314,167
UN Office of Project Services (UNOPS)		Emergency road repair and snow clearance	Countrywide	\$1,000,000
World Vision		Emergency shelter winterization	Badghis	\$400,000
Total FY 2003 USAID/OFDA				\$12,920,716
USAID/FFP				
WFP		30,000 MT Wheat		\$13,700,000
Total FY 2003 USAID/FFP				\$13,700,000
Total FY 2003 USG Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan.....				\$26,620,716
AFGHANISTAN - COMPLEX EMERGENCY FY 2001-2002			FY 2001	FY 2002
USAID/OFDA			\$12,485,791	\$113,345,576
USAID/FFP			\$31,200,000	\$159,472,700
USAID/OTI			-----	\$24,348,951
USAID/DG			\$310,000	-----
STATE/HDP			\$2,800,000	\$7,000,000
STATE/PRM			\$31,088,659	\$137,715,401
STATE/INL			\$1,500,000	-----
USDA			\$104,300,000	\$38,651,516
DOD			-----	\$50,897,769
CDC			\$569,525	-----
Total USG Assistance by Fiscal Year			\$184,253,975	\$531,431,913
FY 2001/ 2002 / 2003 SUMMARY				
Total USG Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan for FY 2001*				\$184,367,625
Total USG Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan for FY 2002*				\$531,431,913
Total USG Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan for FY 2003				\$26,620,716
Total USG Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan for FY 2001-2003				\$742,420,254

*Note: Detailed breakdowns of FY01 and FY02 assistance are available in previous Central Asia Situation Reports.



Bernd McConnell, Director

USAID/OFDA USAID/OFDA situation reports and fact sheets can be obtained from the USAID web site at http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/situation.html