

AFGHANISTAN

Fact Sheet

THE AFGHANISTAN RESILIENCE CONSORTIUM (ARC)



Approximately 80 percent of Afghanistan's population relies on the natural resource base to meet its daily needs. However, decades of conflict combined with complex social and economic pressures, such as poverty and displacement, have pushed many to live in disaster-prone areas, often with a degraded natural resource base. Moreover, Afghanistan's dependence on rainfed agriculture, livestock herding, and dryland farming makes it particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. In an effort to reduce these vulnerabilities in a coherent and coordinated manner, the Afghanistan Resilience Consortium (ARC) was created by ActionAid, Afghanaid, Concern Worldwide, Save the Children, and UNEP in 2014. The ARC defines resilience as the ability to bounce back from a natural disaster, as well as the ability to adapt to a changing and increasingly unpredictable environment. In 2015, with support from DFID, the ARC commenced its first project titled "Strengthening the Resilience of Afghanistan's Vulnerable Communities against Natural Disasters (SRACAD)."

ARC Approach:

- Integrate environmental considerations on DRR, climate change, and resilience into national, provincial, and district level planning, programmes, and coordination.
- Raise awareness of ecological and environmental aspects of natural hazards.
- Implement concrete field activities to establish community level early warning systems, reduce negative coping mechanisms, and increase resilience to bounce back from natural disasters.
- Blend capacity building initiatives with a concerted process of establishing government and community ownership over planning, decision making, and implementing activities to build resilience and reduce vulnerabilities to natural disasters and climate change.
- Positively affect policy formulation through the incorporation of lessons learned from field activities into advocacy and knowledge products.

ARC MEMBERS:

Afghanaid: is a UK-registered NGO, founded in 1983 and based in Afghanistan, working in remote and marginalized areas of the country to help Afghans meet their survival and development needs. Afghanaid's core principles include providing basic services to reinforce livelihoods and strengthen emergency assistance, through which it promotes community development, strengthens local governance, and encourages gender equality.

ActionAid: is a UK NGO that works with poor and marginalized communities to help them recognize, promote and secure their basic rights, control their own development, and eradicate poverty and injustice. Since 2002, ActionAid has worked with local communities, government institutions, civil society, and media groups in Afghanistan on major issues of women's rights, food rights, human security, governance, and child protection.

Concern Worldwide: is an Irish NGO that focuses on education, emergencies, health, livelihoods, and HIV and AIDS. Concern has been in Afghanistan since 1998, and the key focus of its work is to ensure that people can support and feed themselves and their families, improving access to water, and em-powering women.

Save the Children: is a UK NGO that aims to improve the lives of children through education, health care, and economic opportunities, as well as providing emergency aid in natural disaster and war. Since 1976, SC has promoted protection, health, and education for children in Afghanistan.

UNEP: is the lead environmental branch of the United Nations, and has been in Afghanistan since 2002 when it conducted a post-conflict environmental assessment. UNEP's current Afghanistan programme focuses on strengthening environmental institutions and policies, eco-DRR, climate change adaptation, and scientific research.

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STRENGTHENING THE RESILIENCE OF AFGHANISTAN'S VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES AGAINST NATURAL DISASTERS (SRACAD)



Afghanistan is highly vulnerable to natural hazards and climate change, due to the country's diverse geography, decades of conflict and environmental mismanagement, and limited institutional capacity to plan for and respond to disasters when they occur. To address these issues and build the resilience of Afghanistan's rural communities, the four-year SRACAD project (2015-2019) combines national and sub-national institutional strengthening and policy planning with the provision of direct disaster risk reduction and humanitarian assistance to more than 400,000 people across 25 disaster prone districts in eight of Afghanistan's most vulnerable provinces.

Implementation Sites:

- **Kabul:** National policies and institutions
- **Badakhshan:** Argo, Kishim, Kohistan, Ragistan & Yawan
- **Bamyan:** Bamyan, Panjab & Yakawlang
- **Balkh:** Kaldar & Shortepah
- **Ghor:** Chaghcharan & Lal wa Sarjangan
- **Jawzjan:** Faizabad, Khowaja Dukoh & Sheberghan
- **Samangan:** Hazrat-e Sultan & Feroz Nakhchir
- **Sar-e Pul:** Sar-e Pul Centre, Gosfandi, Sancharak & Sozmaqala
- **Takhar:** Chah Ab, Chal, Nammakab & Rushtaq

Government Partners:

- Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)
- Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL)
- Ministry of Education (MoEd)
- Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW)
- Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and the Disabled (MoLSAMD)
- Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD)
- National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA)

PROJECT COMPONENTS

1) Institutional Strengthening for Disaster Planning and Response:

Building the capacity of government institutions at the national and sub-national levels for disaster planning and response through technical trainings, re-activation of provincial emergency operations centres (PEOCs), establishment of a disaster database linking ANDMA's head office in Kabul to provincial offices, and setting up of mechanisms for ANDMA to disseminate and integrate database data into disaster planning and response strategies.

2) Community- and School-Based Disaster Preparedness:

Bolstering local-level resilience through community- and school-based disaster preparedness models (CBDP and SBDP), including the development and delivery of DRR curriculum together with MoEd, establishment of community Early Warning Systems (EWS), development of DRR plans for schools and local communities, and distribution of Community Early Response Team (CERT) kits to all target schools and communities.

3) Household Resilience and Disaster Preparedness:

Providing the extreme poor and most vulnerable households with social safety and livelihood support to build their capacity to cope with natural disasters and climate change, including income and livelihood diversification, small-scale mitigation projects, organization of self-help groups, establishment of fodder and grain banks.

4) Research, Advocacy, and Outreach on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Risks:

Researching and disseminating data on environmental and community resilience through action research, policy briefs, seminars, conferences, and communication and educational materials for institutions and the general public.