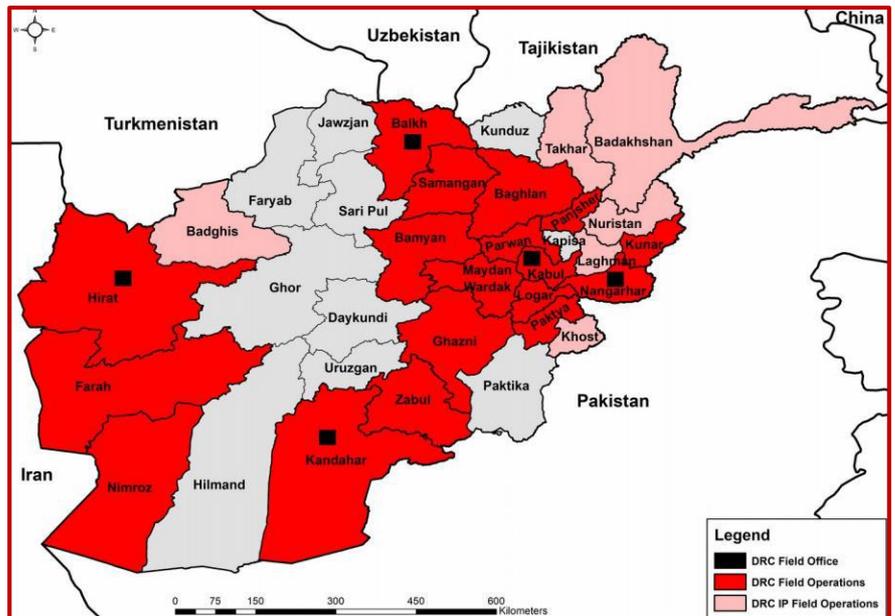




Photo Credit: Haroon Honari for DRC

Danish Refugee Council Afghanistan Programme Fact Sheet - July 2019

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) assists refugees and internally displaced persons across the globe. DRC provides emergency aid, fights for the rights of those displaced, and strengthens their opportunities for a brighter future. DRC works around the world in conflict-affected areas, along displacement routes, and in the countries where refugees settle. In cooperation with local communities, DRC strives for responsible and sustainable solutions. It works toward successful integration and – whenever possible – for the fulfillment of the wish to return home.



DRC has been present in Afghanistan in various forms since the 1990s. In 2018, DRC Afghanistan reached over 650,000 individuals with direct assistance in 18 provinces through programming interventions in the areas of Protection, Emergency Response, Mine Clearance & Risk Education (RE), Armed Violence Reduction (AVR) and Livelihoods. This support has been provided by a team of over 1,000 staff operating from main offices in Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Jalalabad and Mazar-e-Sharif and a larger number of sub-office and mobile facilities in other provinces across the country.

DRC takes a regional approach to Afghan displacement, seeking to link the work of DRC and partners in countries across the displacement axis. DRC's strategy is in line with the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) endorsed by UNHCR and the Afghan, Iranian and Pakistan Governments, as well as the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) signed up to by Afghanistan. DRC leads the Afghanistan Displacement Solutions Platform (ADSP), a coalition of NGOs aiming to address the risks for displaced populations through evidence-based solutions, as well as the Asia Mixed Migration Centre (MMC Asia) that collects and publishes data on drivers of movements to help inform policy decisions regionally and globally. At all levels, DRC works to ensure that displaced people enjoy the rights of protection and life opportunities offered under all conventions and laws that apply to them.



Protection

Communities are often the first line of protection for people affected by crisis. DRC works with communities and individuals to understand the risks they face and provide them with tailored assistance that helps them collectively and individual access their rights. Protection assistance is imbedded into community structures, provided at static Multi-Service community centres, or through mobile teams operating in hard-to-reach areas. Common types of assistance includes information services, psychosocial support and legal assistance with regards to documentation/registration.



Emergency

DRC is one of the primary humanitarian actors in Afghanistan, as well as being the largest partner of the ECHO-funded Emergency Response Mechanism. In 2018, DRC reached over 8,000 unique households with shelter and other assistance as part of the drought response in the west and over 20,000 conflict-affected unique IDP households with multi-purpose cash assistance through its emergency work. With a robust operational capacity spread across the country, DRC also provides emergency logistics services, to UNHCR and other UN agencies, including transport, vehicle maintenance and refuelling services and warehousing.



Mine Action

Afghanistan is one of the world's countries most affected by Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). DRC delivers a full package of services through its mine action unit Danish Demining Group (DDG), including non-technical and technical survey, mine clearance, battle area clearance, and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), as well as Risk Education (RE). DDG has a unique people-centered approach among the Mine Action agencies in Afghanistan, with a major emphasis on RE, responding to EOD hotline calls, and linking Mine Action with DRC's livelihood and other interventions as part of a truly integrated approach. DDG is also the first humanitarian mine action organization in Afghanistan who trained and deployed female deminers.



Livelihoods

IDPs and Returnees often find themselves without the rights skills or connections to re-establish their livelihoods in their new environment. DRC's solutions range from short-term emergency livelihood assistance through interventions such as provision of agricultural inputs, animal re-stocking and cash-for-work, through to longer-term solutions that might involve working with the private sector to develop skills and opportunities through vocational training, job placements, and market development. This approach has been proven to successfully integrate IDPs and returnees back into existing market systems.

Armed Violence Reduction



Afghanistan has been challenged by conflict for many years, which has affected conflict mitigation and mediation structures at all levels of the population. DRC seeks to consider this through all aspects of its programme cycle, through its unique AVR programming run by DDG. DRC Programme teams are

assisted to conduct conflict analysis as part of contextual analyses in different operational areas, assisting in access negotiations and adding community-based activities within and alongside DRC's normal programming to help support local level conflict mediation and mitigation.

A story from the field



Between 2018 and 2019, DRC trained 100 youth leaders under Youth Empowerment & Safety (YES) program for Armed Violence Reduction in Kabul and Herat with funds from the

Conflict, Stability and Security Fund by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Early during the project, DRC held an orientation on the planned activities which saw more than 300 youth take part, from which only 100 youth were selected to represent returnee, IDP, as well as host communities. The selected youth were then engaged in DRC's Youth Empowerment & Safety module through several rounds of training. Following the training, the youth successfully implemented campaigns on six different subjects including research on illegal migration, a biking competition on reducing illegal migration, a futsal competition with four girl's teams, an advocacy event for more coordination with the youth directorate, as well as a conference briefing the relevant line departments about these campaigns. The objective of YES training was to support youth strengthening their analytical abilities, building confidence on their potential to contribute to their own futures and to their communities, but also to guarantee a safe space for discussion and sharing.

Tahira is a 24-year old youth leader, who took part to the YES programme in Kabul and was interviewed by the DRC Armed Violence Reduction team. "When I finished school, I was longing to gain a position in my community, and it was this hope which led me to succeed in obtaining a university degree in English literature.

Following my graduation, I have been doing internships for several organization and my plan was to migrate with my family to the United States”.

Tahira has always been an active civil society member in her community and, one day, she received a phone call from a colleague inviting her to join the “YES” programme carried out by DRC. She felt really encouraged and joined the training with enthusiasm. Tahira gave all herself to turn this training into a learning and life-changing opportunity for herself. Throughout the training, she changed her mind about moving to the US

and decided to remain in Afghanistan and contribute to enhance youths’ capacity to find solutions to the problems and build peace in their country. She meets youth leaders every day and encourages them to take the ownership of their own lives and contribute to bring change.

Now, I feel the YES programme is a part of my life and it is pushing me toward reaching my life goals and achieving my dreams. My message to the others is to study hard and to never lose hope. Study hard, work harder and build your own country by yourself”

The Danish Refugee Council’s work in Afghanistan is made possible with the support of:



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For Further Information, please contact:

Ed Hughes, Country Director, DRC Afghanistan ed.hughes@drc.ngo