

30 December 2021



*DRC Humanitarian Mine Action assessment of Battlefield ID- 0299 in Paghman District, December 2021*

## **SAFER: Emergency aid to remote communities in 11 Afghan provinces**

**Multi-purpose cash assistance, shelter repair and clearance of battlefields are among the latest DRC emergency aid efforts launched through a new aid package from the European Union Humanitarian Aid. The project targets isolated and crisis-affected communities across 11 provinces through the Secure, Accessible First-Line Emergency Response (SAFER).**

As humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan deepens and winter sets in placing vulnerable and food insecure people at even further risk, EU Humanitarian Aid has awarded DRC with €5 million to provide urgent and life-saving aid. The partnership with ECHO allows DRC to urgently assist vulnerable and shock-affected people across 11 provinces in Afghanistan through the Secure, Accessible First-line Emergency Response (SAFER) project.

Under the SAFER project, more than 154,000 Afghans will receive emergency aid assistance through a range of immediate interventions. These are all aimed at equipping people to address extreme food insecurity, needs for repair of damaged shelter to withstand harsh seasonal conditions, and humanitarian mine action to clear areas and reduce threats from explosive remnants of war.

The entire country is now affected by a food insecurity ([WFP November 2021](#)) deepening by the day with 98% of the population having insufficient food consumption. More than half of the population are resorting to drastic measures to feed their families and with negative coping strategies placing in particular women and girls at risk.

‘This most recent partnership with EU Humanitarian Aid allows DRC to reach out to vulnerable and shock affected Afghans in some of the most remote, inaccessible, and underserved provinces in Afghanistan. We are pleased to announce that efforts have already begun, and that DRC will now deliver some of the support that people so desperately need,’ says Jared Rowell, Country Director of DRC in Afghanistan.

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### **Further information:**

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The Danish Refugee Council is a leading, international humanitarian displacement organisation, supporting refugees and internally displaced persons during displacement, in exile, when settling and integrating in a new place, or upon return. We provide protection and life-saving humanitarian assistance. We support displaced persons in becoming self-reliant and included into hosting societies - and we work with communities, civil society and responsible authorities to promote protection of rights and peaceful coexistence. Founded in Denmark in 1956, 9,000 staff, 7,500 volunteers.

While active conflict has reduced in recent months, the explosive remnants of war cause long term contamination to the land, placing families, including those on the move, in physical and life-threatening danger. The destruction of shelters and farmland means civilians will struggle to meet basic survival needs.

DRC's Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) team has already confirmed the presence of two battlefields in Paghman and Kabul district. Local authorities have requested DRC to start clearance operations immediately, to make the land safe for the families who live in the area.

Through long-term presence in Afghanistan, DRC has built significant humanitarian mine action survey and national capacity to address the needs for explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), clearance and explosive ordnance risk education across the West, South and Central regions. DRC has operated in Afghanistan since 1999 and is today unique in its ability to provide integrated and complimentary emergency and humanitarian mine action response in Afghanistan.

Through the SAFER project, DRC will also identify and refer beneficiaries to services including specialized protection and early recovery assistance where irrigation system support, drought resistant seed distributions and agricultural inputs are critical and possible through additional funding of DRC.

DRC assessments in December in 12 villages in Obe, a district in western Herat Province, show how recurrent natural hazards – from recurring droughts to flooding – compounded by conflict, have forced many to flee their villages in search of safety, relief and better opportunities as previous livelihoods were destroyed or lost.

For more information, see [DRC | Afghanistan](#) or contact Country Director [Jared.Rowell@drc.ngo](mailto:Jared.Rowell@drc.ngo)



*DRC meets elders in Obe district, Herat Province during a SAFER assessment in December 2021*