

HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY APPEALS FOR US\$393 MILLION IN 2016
TO TARGET 3.5 MILLION AFGHANS IN NEED

(Kabul, 27 January 2016): The humanitarian community in Afghanistan is seeking US\$393 million to meet, through collective and coordinated action in 2016, the acute life-saving needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized Afghans. Support related to food as well as access to health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation will reach an estimated 3.5 million people under the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for Afghanistan.

“I look back with admiration on the tireless efforts that the humanitarian community have made in 2015. However, I have no doubt that we will be called upon to redouble those efforts and deliver ever increasing levels of assistance to those in need of life-saving humanitarian response over the next 12 months,” said the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, Mark Bowden.

From January to November 2015, more than 300,000 people in Afghanistan fled their homes due to conflict, marking a 160 per cent increase compared with the same period in 2014. The country is prone to natural disasters, including floods and earthquakes, such as the powerful earthquake that struck Afghanistan’s north-eastern province of Badakhshan on 26 October 2015 and left an estimated 130,000 people in need of humanitarian assistance.

“Significant achievements were made last year in responding quickly to humanitarian needs and the fact that the 2015 Humanitarian Response Plan is 70 per cent funded [one of the highest levels of response, globally, to a humanitarian appeal] is a mark of the strong commitment donors have to the people of Afghanistan,” said Afghanistan’s Chief Executive, His Excellency Dr. Abdullah Abdullah. “From January to September 2015, life-saving food assistance was provided to 540,000 severely food insecure people; shelter, non-food items or cash were provided to 310,000 people; and 425,000 people received support during emergencies related to water, sanitation and hygiene needs,” he noted.

Despite an expected increase in conflict-driven humanitarian needs in Afghanistan, a tighter focus on life-saving assistance has led to a marginal reduction in the amount requested for 2016. The 2016 HRP is designed to prioritize the most acute life-saving needs of people displaced either by conflict or natural disasters and to provide for life-saving interventions in health and malnutrition.

In 2016, the priorities for the humanitarian community are to address the critical basic needs of people affected by natural disaster or armed conflict, including an estimated 40,000 refugee families from Pakistan currently hosted by Afghan communities and to provide life-saving nutritional support to 1.1 million people, including a quarter of a million children under the age of 5 who suffer severe malnutrition. The HRP also will respond to acute health emergencies, contribute to the protection of civilians from violence and abuse by parties to conflict and improve the quality of data gathering, contextual analysis and coordinated needs assessment to inform humanitarian action and expand humanitarian access.

“Millions of people are adversely affected by conflict and natural disasters in Afghanistan. It is essential that the most vulnerable Afghans receive appropriate life-saving assistance, quickly. If their needs are not

met, Afghans will choose to migrate out of their country as a last resort. The HRP for 2016, launched today, sets out a sharply prioritized strategy to answer the most pressing humanitarian needs first,” said His Excellency Markus Potzel, Germany’s Ambassador to Afghanistan. He added that, "The German Government provided more than US\$17 million in humanitarian assistance to Afghans in 2015 and remains committed to supporting the urgent humanitarian needs of Afghans.”

More than three decades of conflict, coupled with environmental degradation and insufficient investment in disaster risk reduction strategies, have contributed to increasing vulnerability in Afghanistan, which is one of the poorest countries in the world. High levels of poverty, lack of livelihood and income generating opportunities, chronic health problems and the poor state of infrastructure add to the burden of natural disasters.

The 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan for Afghanistan can be found at: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/document/afghanistan-2016-humanitarian-response-plan-november-2015>. The 2016 Humanitarian Needs Overview can be found at: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/document/afghanistan-2016-humanitarian-needs-overview-november-2015>.

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