



## **Afghanistan – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 17 December 2015**

### **Information on the work of DACAAR in Kabul.**

A document published on the Dansk Folkehjælp (Danish People's Aid) website, in a section titled "Background", refers to the NGO Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR) as follows:

"Working to improve the lives of the Afghan people since 1984, DACAAR is a non-governmental, humanitarian organization that supports sustainable development in Afghanistan through promoting the ability of local communities to decide upon and manage their own development process. The ultimate authority of DACAAR is the Governing Board, with representation from Danish Refugee Council and Danish People's Aid. In Denmark, a Secretariat (Programme Coordinator and Administrative Desk Officer) is maintained in Copenhagen. In Afghanistan, the organisation employs on average 700 national staff and 10 expatriate advisers in addition to the Director. The main office is in Kabul with six regional offices located respectively in Herat (West), Jalalabad (East), Kabul (Central), Maimana (North-West), Mazar-e-Sharif (North) and Kishem (North-East). The average annual budget is USD 15 million and key donors are Danida, Sida, the Royal Norwegian Embassy and ECHO." (Dansk Folkehjælp (2 May 2013) *Stillingsopslag: Director of DACAAR*)

A document published by the Afghanistan Economic and Infrastructural Development Project states:

"Since 2006, DACAAR has worked exclusively in Afghanistan, focusing on long-term sustainable development of water and sanitation services, particularly in rural communities. With 98% of its approximately 700-strong workforce being Afghan citizens, DACAAR places a premium on Afghan leadership within the organization itself in addition to a focus on Afghan 'ownership' and participation in all levels of its numerous projects. The organization strongly encourages community-based development, having aided Afghan women in creating a number of Women's Resource Centers, and, as a facilitating partner of the Afghan government's National Solidarity Program, working with thousands of Community Development Councils. The Danish organization attempts to respond to the conditions in Afghanistan with innovative approaches, such as utilizing solar-powered water pumps and becoming a strong proponent and aid to farmers in saffron cultivation instead of poppy farming." (Afghanistan Economic and Infrastructural Development Project (undated) *Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR)*)

This document also states:

"DACAAR enjoys a relatively diverse funding pool from numerous sources including the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office, the Danish

International Development Agency, and the World Bank; it has generally been well-financed, allowing for its continued work, which impacts nearly every province in Afghanistan. For instance, during 2009, DACAAR was one of few organizations well-funded under the UN's Humanitarian Action Plan. As a result of DACAAR's water/sanitation development projects alone, which comprise only a portion of its activities, estimates suggest that over 5 million Afghan citizens benefit from DACAAR's nearly forty-thousand water points across the country. The organization possesses strong views on the proper level of integration with international security forces, suggesting that too tight of an association with a military body inherently undermines the success and security of developmental operations; as a result, DACAAR coordinates in terms of information-sharing with Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), but it does not conduct work conjointly with PRTs." (ibid)

The About us section of the Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR) states:

"We are a non-political, non-governmental, non-profit humanitarian/development organization working to improve the lives of the Afghan people since 1984.

We work in rural areas and aim at improving rural livelihoods through sustainable activities that engage Afghan communities to be agents of their own development process.

We employ a holistic approach to all rural development activities in order to ensure long-term viability of projects. Approximately 10 million Afghans across 29 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces have benefited from our humanitarian/developmental activities since DACAAR was established." (Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR) (undated) *About us*)

See also page titled "A Chronological History" on the DACAAR website which states:

"DACAAR started as an organisation in January 1984 when the Sewing Project commenced its operation in a refugee camp in Peshawar, Pakistan. The project provided women with an income generating activity that could be accomplished within the constraints of the Afghan cultural environment and at the same time supported the continuation of traditional Afghan embroidery.

In May 1987, the Sewing Project started activities in a third refugee camp, Barakai, Pakistan. The quality of the embroideries steadily improved during 1987, and despite a growing production, the demand was bigger than the supply during most of the year.

DACAAR took over water supply to refugee camps from UNICEF in July 1986, and 1987 saw a major expansion of activities under the Water Supply Project. Two new projects – the DACAAR Hand Pump Factory and the Access Road Project – were started, and the Water Supply Project increased coverage and maintenance activities.

During 1988, DACAAR worked for Afghan refugees in camps throughout the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Pakistan's Public Health Engineering

Department (PHED) increased construction activities and, consequently, maintenance of piped water schemes under the Water Supply Project continued its expansion.” (Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR) (undated) *DACAAR – A Chronological History*)

The 2014 annual report published by DACAAR, in a paragraph headed “DACAAR’s Approach and Areas of Intervention (Water Sanitation And Hygiene (WASH))”, states:

“DACAAR approach to WASH follows that of the Afghan Government’s Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), combining safe water, proper sanitation and hygiene education. This approach has proved to be highly effective in reducing mortality and morbidity from waterborne diseases, and in enhancing overall quality of life. Through the WASH component, DACAAR ensures availability of safe drinking water through establishment of wells and pipe networking systems and introducing household water treatment technologies. Additionally, it provides communities with support to improve overall sanitation conditions by constructing, maintaining and replicating environmentally friendly and sanitary latrines and by improving hygienic behavior and standards through culturally appropriate hygiene education. Furthermore, DACAAR builds capacity and influences policy at national level through its involvement in various national WASH fora and through capacity building and research undertaken by its Water Expertise and Training Centre and Groundwater monitoring teams.” (Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR) (2015) *DACAAR Annual Report 2014*, p.4)

A paragraph headed “Natural Resources Management (NRM)” states:

“DACAAR’s NRM interventions have proven highly effective in improving rural livelihoods by increasing agricultural productivity and production and as such food self sufficiency and income through application of environmentally sustainable approaches. This is done through building capacity of farmers and providing them with necessary inputs and tools to increase, improve and diversify agriculture and horticulture production on both dry and irrigated land. Other NRM interventions include land stabilization and soil erosion control, and protection, rehabilitation and proper management of common pasture lands, improving livestock and poultry productivity and production, and integrated water management, including rehabilitation of small scale irrigation structures.” (ibid, p.4)

A paragraph headed “Small Scale Enterprise Development (SSED)” states:

“In order to increase income and as such improve rural livelihoods, DACAAR promotes creation of sustainable rural Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the form of Producer Associations (PAs) building their capacity in business management and technical skills and increasing their business competitiveness through supporting them in product quality, market linkages, and in general, promoting their involvement in the value chain. Additionally, DACAAR enhances opportunities for employment and income among the most vulnerable (often rural youth) through the development of their vocational skills and through supporting them in establishing small scale individual businesses.” (ibid, p.4)

A paragraph headed “Women’s Empowerment (WE)” states:

“DACAAR’s Women’s Empowerment interventions aim at increasing rural women’s right and access to opportunities and resources, their ability to make right choices, and their ability to influence decisions in the household, the community and the society as a whole. This includes organising them and building their capacity through their involvement in Women’s Resource Centres (WRCs); increasing their basic education through delivery of literacy courses and raising their awareness of rights and health; and supporting and building the capacity of rural women to develop sustainable and profitable women-led businesses in traditional and non-traditional trades.” (ibid, p.4)

A paragraph headed “National Solidarity Programme (NSP)” states:

“DACAAR is a long-time facilitating partner in the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) implemented by the Government of Afghanistan. Launched in 2003, the NSP aims at promoting inclusive local governance and rural rehabilitation and development. The NSP is recognized as an effective mechanism for community management and delivery of rural infrastructure through establishment of female and male democratic Community Development Councils (CDCs). The NSP aims to strengthen the capacity of the CDCs to identify and prioritise needs, and to plan and implement project to meet those needs with support and oversight from implementing partners.” (ibid, p.4)

A report published by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, in a section titled “Khost & Paktika Update”, states:

“As people began crossing into Afghanistan in mid-June, many settled with host communities, however this stretched already limited water resources and posed a challenge for the hygiene and sanitation infrastructure. DACAAR conducted a WASH assessment in Gurbuz, Lakan, Mandozayi and Tani districts and found that in areas where there are not many refugees, there are less problems in regards to WASH, however in areas where there is no host community or high percentage of refugees as compared to the host population, there are significant limitations of the WASH infrastructure.” (ibid, p.4)

This section of the report also states:

“Overall, open defecation is a consistent problem and there is a severe lack of solid waste management at the same time, latrines are needed almost everywhere. As a result DACAAR began trucking in water to local communities to ensure people had access to safe drinking water while reducing the potential for conflict over scarce water resources. With support from ECHO, DACAAR provided 435 emergency latrines and baths in host communities, distributed 2,284 hygiene kits, provided 9.6 million litres of drinking water in communities, and constructed 30 boreholes and rehabilitated 48 wells. With support from UNICEF DACAAR distributed 728 hygiene kits, has completed 37 out of a planned 40 wells, and is in the process of installing 120 latrines and hand washing facilities. All of these projects are being supported with hygiene awareness education training. Water and sanitation remain urgent priorities, especially as we move into warmer temperatures it will be important to ensure refugees have access to

adequate water and sanitation facilities.” (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (8 April 2015) *Afghanistan: Khost & Paktika Situation Update*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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