



THIRTY  
YEARS  
PICTURES

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Established in 1984, DACAAR is an apolitical, non-governmental, non-profit development organisation that supports vulnerable people in rural areas of Afghanistan achieve improved livelihood through community driven interventions and sustainable activities. It operates according to its current competence or thematic areas of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), Natural Resources Management (NRM), Women Empowerment (WE), and Small Scale Enterprise Development (SSED). In addition to these, DACAAR is a partner in the National Solidarity Programme (NSP).

DACAAR's interventions primarily target returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and their host communities with particular focus on the most vulnerable such as female, disabled and youth headed households. DACAAR's interventions have benefited more than eight million Afghans across 29 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces since its establishment.

DACAAR's main office is located in Kabul. Projects are currently implemented in 10 provinces of Afghanistan through six regional offices located in; East (Jalalabad), Central (Kabul), North-east (Taloqan), North (Mazar), North-west (Maimana) and West (Herat).



## 1984-1987



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.



# 1988



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.

The Hand Pump Factory was planned to have begun production in 1987, but the equipment from Denmark was held up by the Customs Authority in Karachi and did not arrive in Swabi until April 1988. The production started in June but load-shedding presented an ongoing challenge and targets were not achieved.

The most significant change in the organisation came in late autumn when DACAAR expanded with a Rehabilitation Programme in addition to the Refugee Programme. The purpose of the Rehabilitation Programme was solely cross-border reconstruction work inside Afghanistan. As a consequence of the expansion of DACAAR activities, the total number of permanently employed staff increased from 290 in the beginning of the year to nearly 400 by the end of the year.





# 1989



Following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in February 1989, international and voluntary agencies hoped refugees would start returning. But the Soviet Union continued to heavily support the Kabul Regime and fierce fighting continued throughout 1989, which resulted in more refugees moving to Pakistan. Some camps in the NWFP expanded and new camps were established to shelter an estimated 70,000 to 90,000 new refugees.

Clean water is essential for survival. With the Hand Pump Factory, DACAAR became a reliable producer of the technologically appropriate “Afridev” hand pump, which was installed on shallow wells and tube wells throughout the Water Supply Project.

1989 also saw the start of the Rehabilitation Programme in Afghanistan. With introductory help from other agencies working cross-border, DACAAR managed to start work at four different locations inside Afghanistan. This was only possible after long negotiations with all stakeholders inside Afghanistan, including commanders and shuras as well as ethnic and religious groups.



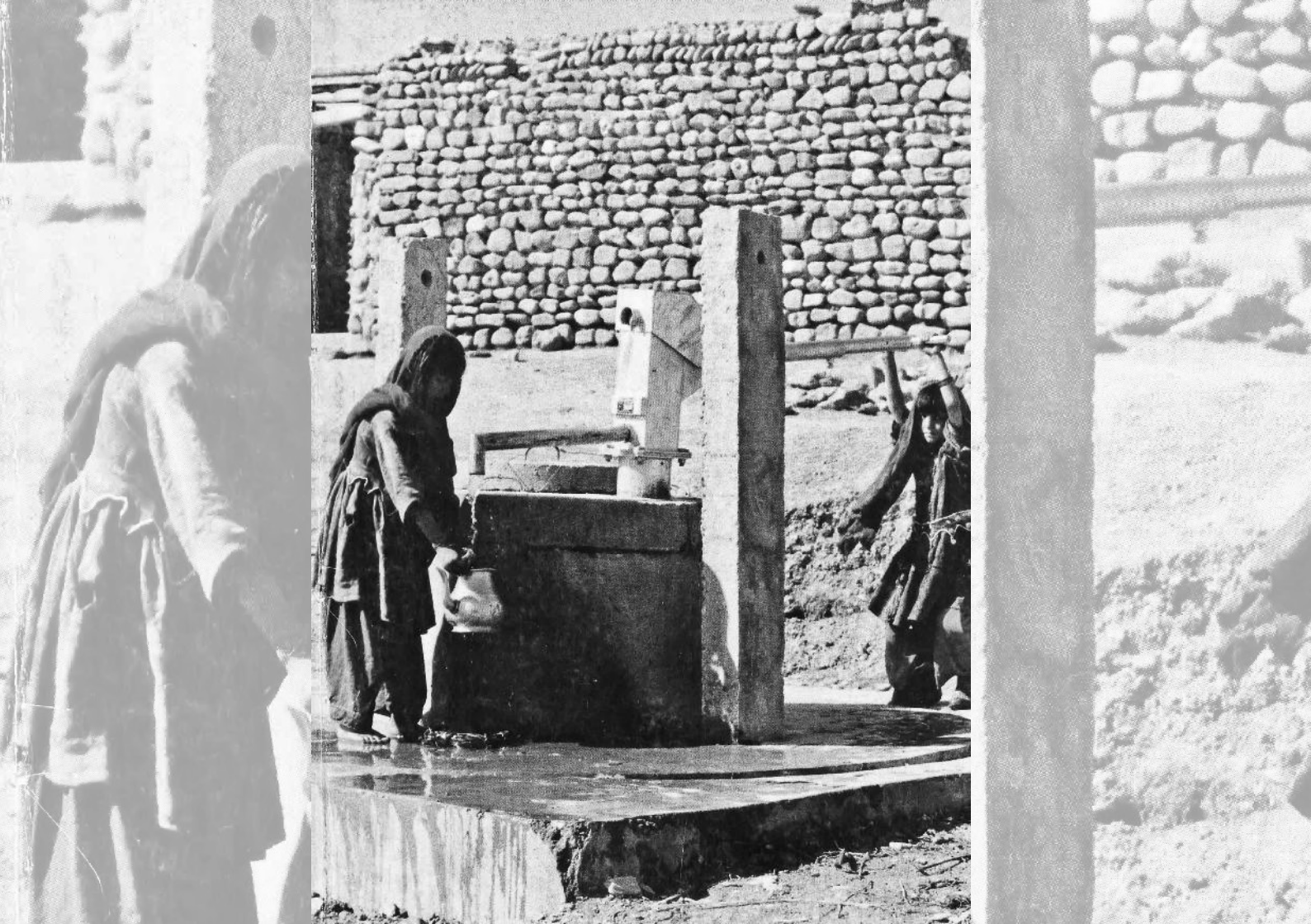
# 1990



1990 saw a major change in DACAAR's structure. The Refugee Programme and Rehabilitation Programme had initially operated as independent entities; now the organisation was restructured based on the engineering disciplines: Agriculture, Roads, Irrigation, Water Supply, Construction and Training. The new structure enabled expansion and improved cost control of all projects.

As the number of new refugee arrivals declined, more attention was paid to consolidation of the projects in Pakistan. The activities of the Access Road Project were reduced as the need for new roads to refugee camps went down. However, DACAAR successfully managed to transfer the redundant staff to other projects inside Afghanistan. The Water Supply Project continued to serve more than one million refugees.

The rehabilitation programme in Afghanistan successfully balanced a number of conflicting interests. On one hand, DACAAR was under increasing pressure from within Afghanistan and from the UN to drastically expand in order to meet the needs in the country and the relative lack of operational resources in the aid community. On the other hand, the organisation needed to consolidate its administration, structure and methodology in the new operational environment.



# 1991



It was hoped that in 1991 the repatriation of Afghan refugees would gain momentum. The prospect of a political settlement seemed brighter as Pakistan expressed clear support for the UN peace plan. But some major Afghan groups were not ready to sit down and sort out their differences and some areas of Afghanistan saw fighting between mujahedin and Government or internally between different groups of mujahedin.

Donors were increasingly reluctant to continue paying for an ongoing refugee programme without seeing any real progress in repatriation. In line with UNHCR policy the Access Road Project was closed during 1991; the Water Supply Project was refocused on maintenance rather than construction; and the income generating School Uniform Project was closed as DACAAR was unable to secure alternative funding.

The Rehabilitation Programme was further expanded, though slightly below budget because major activities were hampered for security reasons. This was especially the case in Kunar Province, where DACAAR decided on a complete pull-out until the necessary security guarantees could be given by the political factions in the area.



# 1992



In April 1992 the Najbullah government in Kabul collapsed and a political umbrella was created to help effect the change in power. Relief and joy swept through the Afghan community; it was generally believed that the refugees could return in safety and that all of Afghanistan would now be accessible to assistance from the UN and NGOs. But there was never a mutual understanding between the mujahedin parties and the fighting continued.

In spite of this, with marginal assistance available and bleak prospects for the recovery of Afghanistan, more than a million refugees returned and pressures accelerated on agencies providing relief and rehabilitation assistance. As donors became reluctant to continue assistance under dangerous conditions, the gap widened between what was expected, and what was actually available to returning refugees. In this situation DACAAR continued operations in Afghanistan at maximum capacity.

The Sewing Project was evaluated for potential self- sufficiency. The war had changed the traditional dynamics in Afghan culture as more and more women – in refugee camps and inside Afghanistan – became the sole economic support of their household. In order to keep women working, DACAAR must maintain the strictest conditions of “Purdah” providing an entirely separate project area, full time child care and transport to and from work. This adds to the price of the product, making marketing to high end customers willing to pay for its high quality a priority.





# 1993



Fights for power accelerated in Kabul and in February four UN staff members were assassinated in Nangarhar Province. The killings created a dilemma for all organisations involved in aid to Afghanistan. Millions of people were in need of immediate help and support for rehabilitation but, at the same time, it was becoming increasingly dangerous to work in Afghanistan.

In spite of the ongoing conflict, harassment of personnel, and theft and armed attacks by bandits, DACAAR's activities in Afghanistan increased in 1993. This was partly due to the start-up of a branch office in Herat for Rehabilitation Programme West. Peaceful conditions in Herat and the surrounding provinces allowed the completion of some of the largest civil engineering projects ever accomplished by DACAAR including rehabilitation of schools, roads, canals and irrigation systems.

In Pakistan, the Hand Pump Factory Manager introduced Kabul Pumps on the market. The Kabul pump has been developed at the factory; it is simpler than the "Afridev" pump and 65% cheaper. In addition, its moving parts are identical with those of the "Afridev" pump facilitating local community maintenance and spare part distribution.



# 1994



1994 did not bring Afghanistan any closer to lasting peace as fighting intensified in and around Kabul. More than 1 million people fled the city and became internally displaced (IDPs) within Afghanistan. Over half of these lived in camps, private homes and public buildings in Jalalabad. In spite of this, 1994 also saw around 330,000 refugees returning from Pakistan and Iran while only 76,000 fled the country in the same period.

DACAAR established emergency water supplies in four IDP camps around Jalalabad. In Rehabilitation Programme West activities increased in all sectors and continued to be structured around providing safe drinking water, building schools, repairing irrigation systems and roads, and agricultural initiatives such as plant nurseries, seed multiplication and training in new farming methods. Assistance is directed not only at returning refugees and IDPs but also included those who remained in their villages.

In Pakistan, the management of both the Sewing Project and the Hand Pump Factory was successfully transferred to Afghan managers. This was a significant step in the long process toward making these projects more independent from DACAAR and, ultimately, self-sustainable.



# 1995



The political situation in Afghanistan became even more complicated with the spread of the Taliban movement that by the end of 1995 commanded the Southern third of Afghanistan. The voluntary repatriation of refugees nevertheless continued with almost 250,000 arriving from Pakistan and Iran. These figures justified DACAAR's continued and increasing efforts to improve living conditions in Afghanistan despite the absence of a generally accepted central government.

The Engineering Advisory and Monitoring Group acted as the donors' guarantee to ensure that their money was spent as intended. This group has been strengthened in 1995 in order to cope with the increased demand, resulting from DACAAR's growth over the past years. To increase local ownership, extensive community involvement was a precondition for assistance where ever possible. This was also in line with the new three-year programme, based on a Danida external review that outlines a gradual transition towards development activities.

DACAAR's involvement in water supply of the refugee camps in Pakistan was decreasing in accordance with UNHCR policy. Minor maintenance was handed over handed over local Water Management Committees in each camp. DACAAR only remained in charge of large-scale installations and maintenance activities.



# 1996



The Taliban movement continued its expansion into the Eastern provinces and moving into Kabul in September 1996. Fighting between the Taliban and elements of the former government continued and major front lines were established North and West of Kabul and in Badghis in Western Afghanistan. Consequently, refugee return declined to just under 130,000 people while 40,000 new refugees moved to Pakistan in the last quarter of the year. DACAAR continued its involvement in the water supply for the refugee camps in Pakistan.

DACAAR's emphasis on political neutrality, local involvement in needs identification and operational flexibility was central to its implementation strategy in the volatile conditions that existed in Afghanistan. For example, flexible response to Taliban policies regarding women staff in Programme West, Herat province, ensured that local women employees could continue working and enabled Water Supply and Health Education projects to reach women in rural areas.

The inclusion of Health Education in Water Supply was part of the move from rehabilitation towards development. Other new activities included integrated agricultural development with a focus on environmental sustainability. Also within the framework of programme sustainability, DACAAR initiated farmer led wheat seed multiplication and privatised all construction carpentry works in the West Programme.





# 1997



During 1997, the civil war continued with fighting between the Taliban movement and the Northern Alliance. In face of the unstable political and military situation the rate of refugee return was low and new refugees, mainly from Kabul, also moved to Pakistan.

Relative peace by Afghanistan standards prevailed in 17 Taliban controlled provinces where programme implementation continued. However, with reference to DACAAR's basic principle of children's equal rights to education, Programme East's building section suspended the construction of schools in response to the Taliban policy on girls' education and female employment. Important groundwork for sustainability in water supply was done through computerizing GPS and maintenance data on all wells installed. In addition to rehabilitation and development activities, DACAAR was an active participant in the UN led strategic framework process for Afghanistan.

In Pakistan, DACAAR supplied drinking water to the newly arrived refugees and continued its water supply project in the old refugee camps. The Sewing Project became independent under its new name The Sewing Centre and the Hand Pump Factory continued to be economically self-sustainable in a vibrant market where four other companies were producing pumps as a result of skills transfer from DACAAR.



# 1998



The struggle for full control of Afghanistan between the Taliban movement and the Northern Alliance continued in 1998. The US bombed Osama bin Laden's base in Eastern Afghanistan and, in the aftermath, protesters killed a UN officer. The UN and international NGOs suspended activities in Afghanistan and most expatriate staff left the country. All of this had little or no effect on DACAAR's programme of rural development, which proved that it was possible to achieve sustainable results at village and district level in Afghanistan despite the lack of peace or a central government.

DACAAR took the pride to be one of the pioneers in long-term community development in Afghanistan and was active in developing The Principled Common Programming and Strategic Framework with the UN, donors and other NGOs. This emphasised that, although Afghanistan remained in need of emergency assistance at regular intervals, the long-term solution to the protracted emergency lied in sustained interventions to secure livelihoods through food security, clean water, health services and education.

Internally, DACAAR combined two sections into an Integrated Agriculture Development (IAD) programme and opened field management units in four areas as a basis for its long-term, community based approach to development. School construction resumed in areas where girls' education was supported, and UNICEF and DACAAR began work on standardization of Water and Environmental Sanitation (WES) interventions. In Pakistan, The Sewing Centre established sales centres in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi.



Fighting between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance North of Kabul and along the Northern borders of the country produced more bloodshed, destruction of towns and villages, and a new wave of internally displaced people in 1999. In spite of this, returning refugees and their neighbours were endeavouring to slowly rebuild their lives and to reconstruct their villages and farms in the comparative peace in other areas of the country.

To meet the needs of the population DACAAR continued its transformation from a rehabilitation and relief-centred organisation towards long term community-based development. This change required major adjustments in the structure of DACAAR's administration and decision-making processes, gradually moving from a centralised, vertical structure towards an organisation which is geared towards working closely with the community.

DACAAR's IAD programme expanded activities in seven project areas in the provinces of Laghman, Ghanzi, Paktia, Herat and Badghis and intensified staff training in the use of participatory approaches to rural agriculture development. However, water supply continued to be the biggest area of operation. This year, DACAAR revised the hygiene education that is an integral part of water supply activities and successfully introduced the use of related couples as a method of providing hygiene training in a culturally accepted manner.



# 2000



The peace process failed to make any progress in 2000 and fighting intensified in the Northern, Central and Western parts of the country. In addition, a devastating drought brought new suffering to the people of Afghanistan and corresponding challenges to the aid community. More than half a million people were displaced in Herat, Kabul and across the borders into Iran and Pakistan.

The drought destroyed fragile coping mechanisms in rural communities and temporarily undermined many of the achievements of the rehabilitation and development efforts of the past decade. As a result, resources had to be moved away from regular programmes and into a comprehensive relief effort.

The IAD organised FOODAC (Food for Asset Creation) activities in drought affected areas to help communities remain in their villages; and Water Supply began well-deepening in response to the drought. The Water Supply programme in refugee camps in Pakistan was also expanded significantly to cater for newly arrived Afghans.





# 2001



In 2001 Afghanistan went through yet another complete and fundamental change to the political and military situation. Triggered by the terrorist attacks on 11 September, the US initiated attacks on the Taliban and the Al Qaida network- eventually leading to the establishment of an Interim Authority, bringing hope that peace may finally become a reality after years of turmoil and conflict.

The challenges faced by the assistance community in Afghanistan during the last quarter of 2001 were enormous, and DACAAR was no exception. Three offices had to be evacuated altogether; movements of staff and equipment were severely hampered; vehicles, communication equipment and other assets were lost; and communication between offices broke down for extended periods of time. In spite of all this, DACAAR field staff managed to keep projects and programmes going – with a focus on crucial humanitarian assistance.

Apart from food distribution, communities were also provided with assistance towards deepening of wells that had run dry as a result of the ongoing drought. In addition, the Water Supply programme managed to establish some 3,100 new Water points during 2001. In total, 473,000 Afghans benefited from new water points and 582,000 benefited from well deepening interventions. This marked the highest number of people ever reached by the programme in a single year.



By June 2002 a transitional government was in place in Afghanistan that, together with the ministries, gradually resumed its responsibilities. This was an important step towards normalisation in the country. However, security continued to be a major concern; there was increasing factional fighting in many parts of Afghanistan, arising crime rate, and a build-up of new Taliban and Al-Qaeda cells in the southern and South Eastern regions.

Throughout the year, DACAAR allocated substantial resources to improved co-operation with Afghan authorities at all levels. In the rural water supply sector DACAAR continued to play a leading role in strategy development and in the sector of rural community development DACAAR was approved as an implementing partner for the National Solidarity Programme.

2002 was a historical year as it finally became possible to move the Main Office and the office of Area East from Peshawar, Pakistan, to Kabul. Another significant change was the fact that the employment and involvement of women in the programmes once again became legal, although still difficult. Under the Taliban regime, DACAAR involved women in sectors where circumstances would allow, for example in health education, but it was only now that DACAAR could start hiring women on a larger scale.



# 2003



During 2003, DACAAR met with a host of challenges from the new political and aid environment in Afghanistan. Security deteriorated and DACAAR was directly targeted on several occasions. This included the tragic attack on one of our water supply teams in Ghazni Province on 8 September, where four colleagues were brutally assassinated by Taliban. Overall, The Water Supply Programme had to suspend activities in many areas and relocate staff to safer places.

The number of aid agencies in Afghanistan had increased dramatically. Many of the newcomers focused on short term emergency activities, which for the most part meant free handouts of food and no requirement for communities to contribute labour or materials to the projects. This was a major challenge to DACAAR's long-term development strategy.

At the same time, DACAAR strengthened ties with the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), which is responsible for both water and sanitation and rural development. This included further development of the DACAAR water and sanitation database, which was to be adopted, when possible, be adopted as a national database.



In 2004, DACAAR marked 20 years of continued commitment to the support of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the rehabilitation of Afghanistan. The year started with approval of the new constitution. From then on, security deteriorated further as Taliban and al-Qaeda tried to derail the political process leading up to the presidential election in October. DACAAR was directly affected on several occasions and both the Water and Sanitation Programme and the Rural Development Programme had to suspend activities in some areas for shorter periods of time.

DACAAR also felt the consequences of the new funding policies of many donors where more funds were channelled through the Afghan government and its line ministries. In response to the funding shortage, DACAAR was forced to restructure the organisation and reduce the number of permanent staff significantly.

In Pakistan, the tripartite agreement between UNHCR and the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan put a timeframe of voluntary repatriation for Afghan refugees by March 2006. With its mandate there coming to an end, DACAAR started to phase out its activities. The Water supply in refugee camps was scaled back and, after 17 years of production, the Hand Pump Factory was handed over to the Pakistani NGO WESnet.





In 2005, DACAAR's Rural Development Programme became increasingly intertwined with the Afghan Government's flagship National Solidarity Programme (NSP). NSP aims at organising and strengthening civil society in Afghanistan through community based and participatory development activities, whilst at the same time rebuilding the government's influence and credibility in rural areas.

DACAAR was involved in the design of NSP and has been one of the facilitating partners from the start, complementing the NSPs infrastructure projects with activities such as extension services and creation of producers' associations and women's resource centres. Consequently, DACAAR's activities in rural development reached close to the scale of those in water and sanitation.

The original Sewing Centre project was moved to Kabul and transferred into a new NGO named "Zardozi". Also with a focus on income generation, DACAAR started the new microfinance programme MADRAC funded by MISFA through MRRD. To provide an alternative to opium growing, DACAAR continued developing saffron as a suitable cash crop. In Pakistan, two mobile water supply teams were sent to the North in response of the earthquake on 8 October.



In 2006, instability and war continued to hamper the efforts to bring development to the Afghan people. The overall security situation continued to worsen as Taliban responded to NATO's expansion into the southern provinces. DACAAR was attacked directly on two occasions and security problems were the biggest challenge in implementing planned activities.

The process of consultation towards a full Poverty Reduction Strategy for Afghanistan started towards the end of 2006. DACAAR is contributed to the discussions through a number of forums and was also getting increasingly involved in building national capacity through training of Afghan institutions government, private and NGOs. In 2006, this included training 460 water and sanitation engineers from across Afghanistan.

DACAAR continued to empower rural communities to take responsibility for development activities; in the government led NSP as well as in other projects.

In Pakistan, having completed the assistance programme in earthquake affected areas, DACAAR closed its office in Peshawar, which marked the end of 22 years of serving Afghan refugees in the country.



Further deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan forced DACAAR to scale down and withdraw in some areas. Insecurity also created over 100,000 IDPs contributing to the large number of vulnerable people in need of support. Together with the recent waves of refugees returning to Afghanistan this had a substantial impact on DACAAR's work with increased activities in returnee and IDP settlements, particularly in the provision of safe water and basic sanitation.

DACAAR's focus in providing support for Afghanistan's rural communities continued to be sustainable development and capacity building. Within water supply, this meant moving away from construction to focus more on monitoring, hygiene education, and providing technical advice to the Government of Afghanistan and other organizations as well as private companies working in the sector.

DACAAR assisted rural Afghan women to establish four new Women's Resource Centres. Five of the old Centres became fully independent financially and operationally. DACAAR also supported the establishment of the first women's saffron producers' association – a pioneering move as part of our alternative livelihoods efforts. MADRAC was converted into an independent, registered microfinance company. During 2007 MADRAC increased the number of branches, clients and volume of loans with a repayment rate exceeding 95 percent.



2008 witnessed the highest level of violence in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban. For DACAAR, the key to working in an unstable security environment has always been to maintain a close relationship with local communities. In addition, DACAAR employed a security coordinator, who continuously compiled security updates and implemented security as a cross cutting theme throughout the organization in order to tackle and prevent security incidents.

Nevertheless, both individually and collectively DACAAR staff remained optimistic about the future of Afghanistan. While a significant number of staff members continued to work at DACAAR for many years, others have moved into the government sector to become active participants in state building.

DACAAR continued to provide emergency assistance such as water tankering to returnee and IDP camps in addition to its ongoing projects in water supply and rural development. The introduction of a gender unit constitutes a significant development in DACAAR's efforts to promote gender mainstreaming both internally and externally. In addition, renewed emphasis was placed on project monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness, sustainability and long term impact of projects.





During and after the presidential elections in August 2009, attacks on government, national and international NGOs increased, making the months of August and September the deadliest on record. But the security situation was not the only challenge to DACAAR's activities in Afghanistan. Another challenge was the growing problem of both surface and ground water contamination revealed by DACAAR's monitoring.

In response to Afghanistan's unique challenges related to access to safe water, DACAAR is committed to creating innovative solutions. In 2009, solar-powered pipe schemes were introduced to enable water access in areas where hand pumps are unable to reach deep seated aquifers. In places where surface water is the only option, or where ground water is contaminated by arsenic and heavy metals, DACAAR introduced bio-sand filters as a new household water treatment technology.

Long term sustainable solutions for ground water contamination lie in integrated development approaches that include preservation and improvement of catchments areas. DACAAR continued to adapt to these new challenges and our efforts were well-received and appreciated by the government of Afghanistan who acknowledged the verity of the situation.



Despite a continually worsening security situation, DACAAR reached more than 2 million beneficiaries in 2010 with emphasis on vulnerable populations in rural areas. Capacity in natural resources management was strengthened among communities in semi-arid areas with the introduction of new techniques and approaches to increase agricultural production. To enhance rural livelihoods for the vulnerable landless DACAAR also prioritised small scale enterprise development and vocational training.

DACAAR established a Water Expertise and Training Centre (WETC), as a hub for knowledge management and research as well as for training and technical support to government agencies, NGOs and the private sector. Through the WETC, DACAAR effectively used its extensive experience to accelerate capacity building. The WETC also includes a modern Drinking Water Quality Testing Laboratory that serves both DACAAR and the Afghan WASH sector as a whole.

DACAAR also continued to develop internally, providing 742 counts of training to staff. As Afghans constitute about 98 percent of DACAAR staff, organizational development is seen as a contribution to the wider development of Afghanistan. To strengthen representation of women in management positions, five female staff was introduced to a ten-month leadership training programme. The number of female staff in DACAAR reached twelve percent.



Ongoing conflict and instability in 2011 continued to narrow the humanitarian space and hamper DACAAR's ability to deliver assistance to Afghanistan's most vulnerable and remote communities. Additionally, as with all conflict and post conflict nations, Afghanistan was still in the process of building necessary capacity to embark on a sustainable development process.

DACAAR continued to support these efforts as a facilitating partner in the NSP. In ten out of the 12 provinces where DACAAR was working this year, activities included capacity building of Community Development Councils (CDCs). Rural Afghan communities with more than half a million community members were empowered to manage their own development process through training in project implementation, accounting, procurement, participatory monitoring, CDC by-laws and good governance.

Living conditions were extremely harsh in rural Afghanistan with frequent droughts and limited access to water sources for irrigation. DACAAR helped communities manage their natural resources and reduce their vulnerabilities throughout the annual cycle. This included protecting arable land from moving sands and in 2011 DACAAR published three guidelines on sand stabilisation and cultivation of resistant plants.



Over the past decade, Afghanistan has put in place a legal and institutional framework that promoted women's rights and education. Cultural norms, poverty and insecurity, however, still hampered their participation in political, social and economic spheres. Since 2004, DACAAR has empowered rural women through Women's Resource Centres (WRCs) that provides a safe, enabling environment to learn, develop leadership skills, and start up income generating activities. An evaluation of this approach showed automatic transfer of capacities built in WRCs to women CDCs, which ensured women's participation in the development process at community level.

A new Strategic Programme Framework for 2013-2016 was finalised in 2012 to set DACAAR's strategic direction for the next four years. The merging of the two former programmes was consolidated with a thematic focus in four areas: Water, Sanitation & Hygiene; Natural Resources Management; Women's Empowerment; and Small Scale Enterprise Development. The aim was to improve learning and synergies across sectors in order to increase programme quality.

DACAAR also implemented a new organisational structure that was fine-tuned throughout the year to raise the overall efficiency of the organisation. The Director became the only expatriate in a line management position and all four departments (Fundraising & Communications; Programme; Finance & Administration; and Human Resources) were headed by Afghans.





In anticipation of the completion of the security transition and the withdrawal of International combat forces from Afghanistan, and the uncertainties surrounding the upcoming presidential elections and political transition (both events planned for 2014), has caused economic growth to slow down considerably during 2013 with the non-agriculture sectors particularly impacted. On the more positive side, agricultural output reached record levels for a second consecutive year due to favorable weather conditions, with cereals production increasing 2.7% over the bumper crop of 2012.

Citing the sharp rise in insecurity, DACAAR continued to strengthen its safety and security systems, policies, procedures and premises to ensure safety of staff and projects. Despite these, staff turnover continued to affect the organisation particularly in the remote target areas.

On 1st January 2013, DACAAR embarked on yet another important journey by launching its Strategic Programme Framework 2013-2016. In June, a group of DACAAR Senior staff traveled to Europe to present the SPF to key donors; Danida, RNE, SIDA, and ECHO. Moreover, as a result of discussions in the WASH Cluster, DACAAR was elected as a Co-lead for the Cluster together with UNICEF and MRRD and was endorsed by the HCT. This will enable DACAAR to use its long-term experience and expertise in WASH to help enhance coordination and build capacity among relevant stakeholders.



# 2014



2014 is the ultimate year of hopes, fears and uncertainties for Afghanistan. Political uncertainty is at its highest with the two rounds of presidential elections marred by allegations of fraud and a long and arduous political battle between the two main contenders endangering first-ever (in the history of the country) peaceful transition of power from one elected president to another. The political stalemate is having a high toll on the livelihoods of Afghans as the economy continues to falter and the security situation continues to deteriorate. A reasonable political settlement is urgently needed to ensure peaceful political transition, renewed efforts for national reconciliation and to re-ignite stalled economic activity.

For DACAAR, 2014 is the ultimate year of festivities as we celebrate 30 years of our existence as an organisation and our contributions to the rehabilitation and development of Afghanistan. It is the time to look back and reflect on what we have done well and what we could have done better. It is also a chance to look ahead, and renew our commitment and continue to stand side by side with the people of Afghanistan regardless of what the future holds and to renew our desire to continue to instill trickles of hope in the hearts of the thousands of Afghan women, girls, men and boys that we work with.

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