

Press Release

Italy Supports Disaster Management in Western Afghanistan

Kabul, Afghanistan, December 14, 2009 – The Government of the Italian Republic is to provide EUR 1.8 million to support the Government of Afghanistan’s disaster management efforts in western Afghanistan, increasing the country’s capacity to cope with natural disasters.

UNOPS has signed an agreement with the Government of the Italian Republic to implement the 18-month Enhancing Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response project.

Afghanistan is prone to natural disasters causing the loss of lives, livelihoods and property. Despite the cyclical occurrence of natural disasters, most of the external assistance to Afghanistan has focused on humanitarian relief, while long-term capacity development for risk and vulnerability reduction has not been adequately addressed.

Recognizing the significant capacity development needs of the existing institutions, the project will assist the Government of Afghanistan, through the Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), in managing natural disaster prevention, preparedness and response in the western provinces of Herat, Farah, and Badghis.

The activities will be carried out in the areas of information management; disaster management strategies development at provincial and district levels; the support to ANDMA Provincial Office in Herat as well as the establishment of satellite offices. The project will also address the critical infrastructure needs, by implementing risk reduction pilot projects in communities that are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters.

Specifically identified as a priority in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), this initiative reflects the commitment of both the Government of Afghanistan and international donors and development agencies to improve the conditions of life for the Afghan people.

“Despite the deteriorating security situation and challenging operating environment for the UN, we will continue to work with our Government partners to address the critical humanitarian and development needs of the people of Afghanistan,” says Bruce McCarron, UNOPS Director.

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