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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **International NGO Japan Platform (JPF) Signs an MoU with Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) on Disaster Management Collaboration** Building smooth collaborations and excellent working relations among Japanese and Afghan NGOs in response to disasters

On November 25, at the International House of Japan (Minato-ku, Tokyo), Specified Nonprofit Corporation Japan Platform (hereafter referred to as JPF; Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (hereafter referred to as MoU) with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Office of State Minister for Disaster Management (formerly Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority, hereafter referred to as ANDMA) on disaster management collaboration.

Between November 21 and 25, 2016, JPF invited a delegation from Afghanistan headed by Deputy Minister Mohammad Aslam Sayas of ANDMA and consisting of eleven disaster management experts, along with five national staffs of JPF member NGOs working in Afghanistan in the areas of disaster risk reduction (DRR), for a discussion on building a working relationship and enhancing their capacities among DRR specialists, NGOs both in Afghanistan and Japan. The specialists engaged in deep discussion on DRR in Tokyo and shared knowledge on disaster response through listening to the experiences of experts while visiting the International Research Institute of Disaster Science at the Tohoku University and the Disaster-Resilient and Environmentally-Friendly City Promotion Office of the Sendai City Planning Policy Bureau in Sendai and Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture.

On the final day of November 25, JPF and ANDMA signed an MoU in order to promote mutual understanding among JPF, JPF member NGOs, and Afghan who are involved in DRR and emergency assistance, and to enable smooth collaborations when necessary. The contents of this MoU are outlined below.

#### **Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter referred to as MoU) of Afghanistan-Japan Disaster Management Collaboration Visit**

Japan Platform (hereinafter referred to as JPF) and Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (hereinafter referred to as ANDMA) hereby sign a collaborative MoU on the future cooperation regarding Disaster Risk Deduction following the Afghanistan-Japan Disaster Management Collaboration Visit from 20 to 25 November 2016. The MoU shall not be legally binding, however both parties are encouraged to materialize the commitments stated in the MoU with true collaborative spirit.

#### **JPF commits to:**

1. Share the lessons and experience from the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011 and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 with Afghanistan stakeholders through technical assistance.
2. Cooperate with ANDMA and Afghan NGOs for further disaster response as well as joint efforts on DRR related activities and projects in humanitarian operations in Afghanistan through JPF member NGOs.
3. JPF member NGOs are responsible for regular communication with ANDMA and reporting of all DRR activities.
4. Appoint a personnel as a focal point for implementing collaborative initiatives outlined in this MoU.

### **ANDMA commits to:**

1. Cooperate with JPF and its member Japanese NGOs for future disaster response in Afghanistan through necessary facilitation from the authority towards the operations.
2. Further enhance disaster resilience in Afghanistan through mainstreaming DRR in humanitarian operations and strengthening disaster management network in Afghanistan.
3. Appoint a personnel as a focal point for implementing collaborative initiatives outlined in this MoU.

The MoU is valid until either party expresses desire to terminate it. Duly signed in Tokyo Japan on November 25th 2016.

Deputy Minister Mohammad Aslam Sayas of ANDMA noted ANDMA was thankful that they could learn a lot from the experience and knowledge of Japanese disaster prevention and response, and they looked forward to deepening their relationship towards enhancing resilience in Afghanistan." Secretary General Nobuhisa Iida of JPF added, "I believe we were able to share important knowledge on disaster prevention in Afghanistan and Japan, and begin building an excellent working relationship so that NGOs in both countries can collaborate smoothly when needs arise."

In the connection with the MoU, JPF is conducting DRR projects based on these three components.

- (1) **Building the Capacity of Member NGOs:** For enhancement in the quality of assistance implemented in Afghanistan, JPF taking a central role in establishing capacity building opportunities for member NGOs' disaster prevention and mitigation work.
- (2) **Building Working Relations for Collaboration:** For smooth operation of emergency assistance when needs arise, promoting a common awareness and building an excellent working relationship among specialists and other stakeholders.
- (3) **Conducting Local-Level Follow-Up:** For lessons learned in Japan to be put locally in Afghanistan to good account, establishing follow-up opportunities for capacity building involving both local government and NGOs with expectations for DRR activities to become mainstreamed at the local level.

### **JPF's Assistance Efforts in Afghanistan**

After the *Afghanistan and Pakistan Humanitarian Assistance Programme*, a five-year plan began in 2010, concluded in January 2016 (\*), *Afghanistan Humanitarian Assistance 2016 Programme* was launched. Optimizing the knowledge gained and the good relationships with local partners over the past five years, five NGOs are currently implementing one-year humanitarian projects in the four provinces of Kabul, Parwan, Bamyan, and Nangarhar. JPF is delivering assistance not only infrastructure improvements such as school construction and sanitation and hygiene facility development, but also soft components such as hygiene education, teacher training, library activities and promotion of DRR. Based on educational assistance and enhancing community resilience through DRR, the programme aims for protection of vulnerable peoples as women, children, persons with disabilities, and enhancement of their resilience in Afghanistan.

(\* ) Evaluation report is posted on our website at: <http://afpk.japanplatform.org/archives/>

### **About Japan Platform**

In order to deliver fast and effective aid, Japan Platform(JPF) coordinates the efforts of NGOs, the business community, and the government, all of which participate as equal partners. JPF serves as an intermediary support organization providing various types of assistance to member NGOs in Japan that do not have the financial capacity to deliver quick and comprehensive aid on their own. We have conducted aid activities with 46 member NGOs with diverse strengths, and have delivered humanitarian assistance to over 46 nations and regions through about 1200 projects at the total amount of 40 billion yen. We have built our trust by promoting cooperation among supporting corporations and NGOs and by accurately reporting all of our activities. After the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami that struck the Tohoku Region of Japan, over 7 billion yen had been provided for disaster relief. We partnered with more than 150 local organizations working for recovery, and through supporting their community-based activities, we have successfully connected supporters with the people of Tohoku. (All figures as of April 2015)