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Information bulletin

Afghanistan: Heavy snowfall and avalanches

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Information bulletin n° 1	Glide n° AV-2017-00013-AFG
Date of issue: 13 February 2017	Date of disaster: 4 – 7 February 2017
Host National Society: Afghan Red Crescent Society	Point of contact: Mr. Abdulrahman Kalantary <i>Director, Disaster Management, Afghan Red Crescent Society</i>
Categorization of disaster ¹ : Yellow	

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has analysed that DREF Operation will be launched soon.

The situation

Heavy snowfall and a large number of avalanche were reported in different parts of Afghanistan between 4-7 February 2017. Around 22 out of 34 provinces [reported](#) to have been affected. Provinces with casualties and significant damage to homes and livelihoods included Badakhshan, Balkh, Faryab, Samangan, Saripul, Herat, Badghis, Nangarhar, Paktia, Khost, Helmand, Kandahar, Bamiyan, Daykundi, Parwan and Kapisa. In one incident of avalanche in Afsay Village, Barg-e-Matal District (Nuristan Province) claimed at least 57 lives with at least 33 injured.



The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) deployed assessment team immediately after the avalanches, (Photo: ARCS)

Many areas of the country are still inaccessible due to heavy snowfall, making it difficult to obtain a full picture of the impact of the disasters and total number of affected families. However as per initial report of Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) around 2,617 families (15,702 individuals) have been affected.

¹ Based on the IFRC Secretariat's Operational Response Framework. This categorization implies that the response intervention is within the capacity of the National Society of an affected country to manage with resources available in-country. If requested, the IFRC Country Office may provide any necessary technical or management support to the National Society, and if required, the IFRC Regional Office may support the mobilization of regional disaster response tools, with Geneva supporting the allocation of Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF).

It is estimated that up to three meters of snow have fallen in different parts of Afghanistan and 17 avalanches were reported within a span of three nights. Initial assessments indicate that limited food supplies in local markets have caused an inflation in prices. Worse yet, the continued wind storms and frozen ground have made it a challenge for affected communities to erect tents and build temporary shelters.

Action by the authorities

Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authorities (ANDMA) and Provincial Disaster Management Committees (PMDCs) are active and are coordinating the overall response with in-country humanitarian partners in delivering assistance. Government authorities have begun distributions of AFN 50,000 (approx. USD 748) to each family that has lost a family member and AFN 20,000 (approx. USD 300) to those who sustained injuries. So far, approximately 25 families have received cash assistance in Nuristan Province.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) has mobilized their staff and volunteers in the affected areas to conduct assessments and to distribute relief items like blankets, tents, kitchen set, tarpaulin sheets, jerry canes and hygiene kits. Yet many districts and villages remain inaccessible and have been completely blocked by the snow. ARCS health teams also started providing health services to the passengers stuck in on the way due to heavy snowfall. IFRC Country Office providing regular technical and management support to the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) for the ongoing response operation.

The summary of ARCS response to snowfall and avalanche affected families by 12 February 2017 is given below:

Provinces	Families Assisted	Tents	Hygiene Kit	Jerry canes	Kitchen Set	Blankets (7X1family)	Tarpaulin sheet	Others
Kandahar	31	0	0	0	0	185	0	
Parwan	6	6	0	12	3	36	6	
Ghazni	41	0	0	0	0	250	0	Provided health services to 50 passengers
Noorestan	70	0	0	0	0	400	20	30 items medicines
Herat	6	5	0	0	5	30	5	
Nangarhar	85	8	85	85	85	510	85	
Lagman	23	3	23	23	0	161	23	23 PSS kits
Konar	30	6	30	30	30	180	30	30 PSS kits
Total	292	28	138	150	123	1,752	169	

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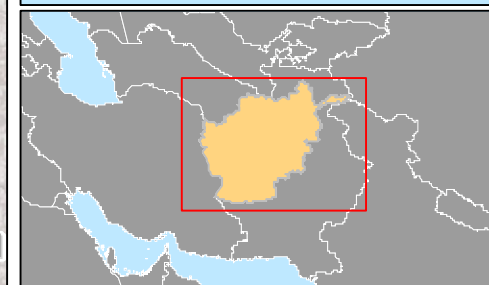
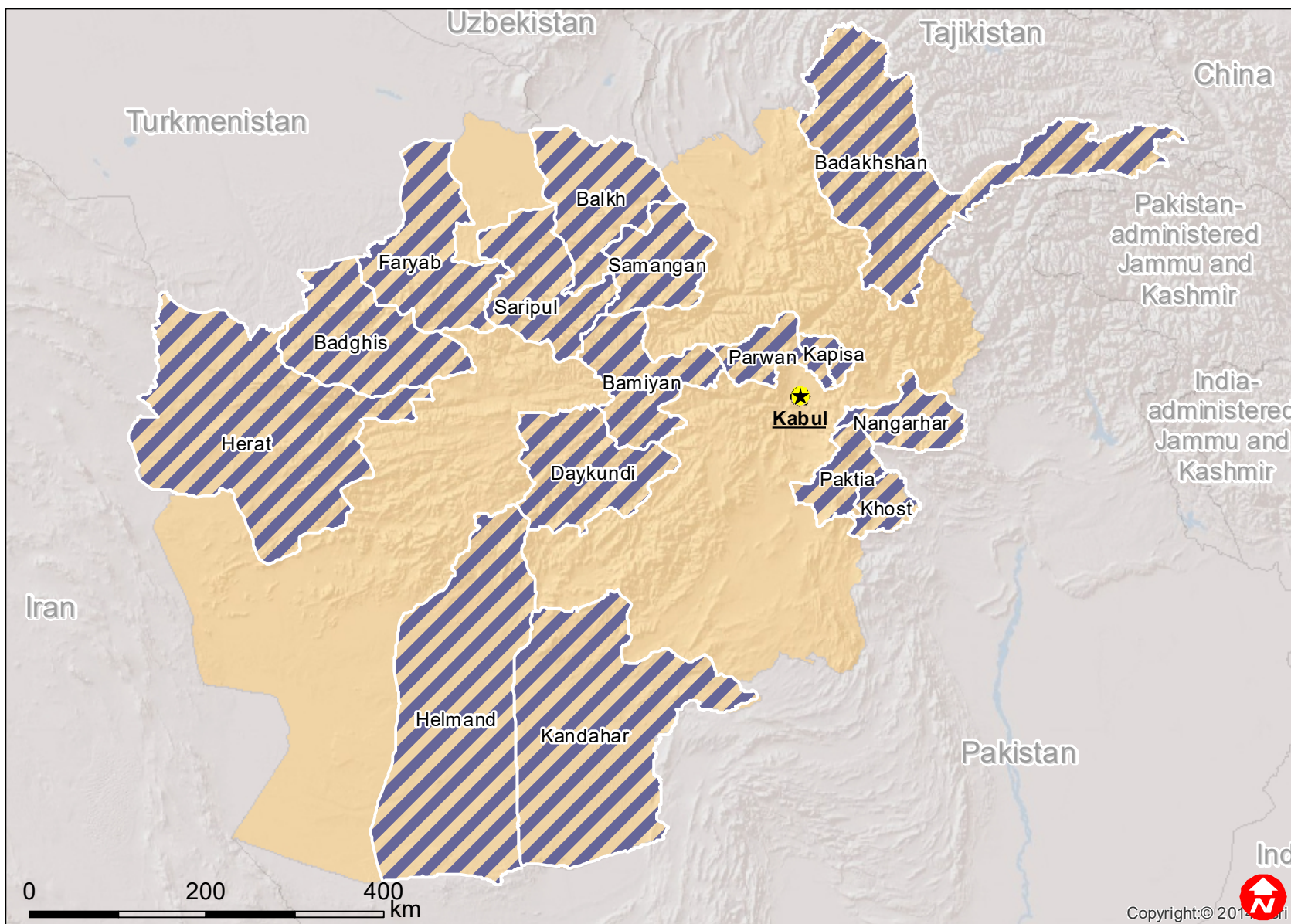



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 Affected provinces with casualties and significant damages