

OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

AFGHANISTAN: SPRING FLOODS

14 April 2005

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

Appeal No. 05EA005; Operations Update no. 1; Period covered: 31 March to 10 April 2005; Appeal coverage: 4.9%; ([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List, also available on the website](#)).

Appeal history:

- Launched on 31 March 2005 for CHF 2,235,000 (USD 1,925,894 or EUR 1,451,770) for 6 months to assist 70,000 beneficiaries.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 200,000.

Outstanding needs: CHF 2,125,950 (USD 1,831,925 or EUR 1,380,935)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Afghanistan Annual Appeal 05AA045, Severe Winter Appeal 05EA003

Operational Summary: An extremely severe winter hit Afghanistan between mid-January and end of March 2005, prompting the launch of an emergency appeal (05EA003). As a result, destructive floods are expected to affect most of the country due to melting snow and heavy rain falls.

The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) together with the Federation and the ICRC has been proactive in preparing a contingency plan prior to the beginning of the floods. The plan is to preposition non-food items for 70,000 beneficiaries in the five main regions of Kabul, Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar and Herat. Distributions will be implemented as needed, following assessment reports from the ARCS branches. Basic health services, sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion sessions will also be provided to the beneficiaries.

The ARCS has been tasked to take on the responsibility of the coordination for non-food items distributions throughout the country, in addition to its implementation role through its disaster management department.

In order to maintain certain continuity in its support to the national society, the Federation has decided, through the implementation of this emergency appeal, to carry over the capacity building of the ARCS in disaster management as well as in logistics.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In Afghanistan: Afghanistan Red Crescent Society: Fatima Gailani (Secretary General), phone: +93 79 38 55 33 (mobile)
- In Afghanistan: Afghanistan Federation Delegation contact (Jamila Ibrohim, Head of Delegation, email: hod.kabuldel@wireless.ifrc.org, phone: +882 168 980 2643 (Sat phone) or +93 70 278 372 and +92 300 850 6861 (mobile)
- In Geneva: Asia and Pacific Department, Jagan Chapagain, email: jagan.chapagain@ifrc.org, phone: +41 22 7304316, fax +41 22 733 0395

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.

Background

Since mid-January 2005, Afghanistan has been hit by one of its most severe winters in decades, killing hundreds throughout the country and leaving thousands of homeless and destitute people in great need of humanitarian assistance. The Afghanistan Severe Winter Appeal (05EA003) was launched on 21 February 2005 as the Afghanistan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), with support provided by the Federation and its partner national societies, responded to the crisis by assisting more than 17,000 individuals in Kabul city.

As a preventive measure, the ARCS, the ICRC and the Federation are in the process of pre-positioning relief items for 2,000 families in each region. The ARCS headquarters has been tasked by the government to take over the responsibility of the coordination of the non-food distributions throughout the country. Response is being provided as needed to the most affected populations, based on assessments carried out by ARCS branches. The main areas of assistance are relief, basic health and sanitation, and capacity building of the national society.

The implementation of this emergency appeal is based on a Movement contingency plan and it cannot be foreseen where and when the floods are going to strike. Therefore, most of the activities to be carried out during the first phase are mainly for preparedness.

Operational developments

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

Overall objective: To alleviate the suffering of the populations affected by the floods, provide immediate assistance to 10,000 targeted families and to improve the capacity of the ARCS in disaster management and logistics.

Specific objective 1: To pre-position non-food items for 10,000 families at the five regional ARCS branches (Kabul, Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar and Herat), organize continuous assessments of the situation, carry out distributions accordingly and procure goods for replenishment.

Progress/Achievements

During the period under review, the ARCS, the Federation and the ICRC have continued organizing regular planning and information sharing meetings in regard to the pre-positioning of the relief items in the regions. An ICRC Rubb hall will be transported from Kabul to Jalalabad and the Federation will provide expertise for the installation of the facility and take this opportunity to train some ARCS staff members. The ICRC has made available another Rubb hall in Kandahar and will proceed with the installation; other warehousing facilities in all regions are under assessment and best options are being explored.

In the meantime, the Federation's logistics department is collecting information regarding the procurement of relief goods locally, from neighbouring countries or from overseas. Priority should be given to local procurement in order to reduce the costs and have a positive impact on the devastated local economy.

Impact

At this stage of the operation, it is difficult to provide measurable impact on this specific activity since mainly preparatory work has been carried out.

Constraints

Most of the constraints reside in the complexity of coordinating three different organizations with their specific mandates and internal cultures. The poor communication systems within the ARCS also constitutes an obstacle, especially when it comes to information sharing.

Specific Objective 2: To carry out first aid activities and provide primary health care as an immediate response to the crisis

Progress/Achievements

Since the launch of the emergency appeal, the CBFA volunteers have been mobilized and sensitized to the eventuality of their deployment in the affected areas at the moment when the floods start in the regions. The coordination is being managed through the ARCS regional health officers at branch level with the other stakeholders. In the meantime, the emergency mobile units (EMU) have been put on alert in order to be rapidly deployed when needed.

Impact

As with the previous activity, it is difficult to measure the impact at this stage of the operation, except for the sensitization of the populations at risk implemented by the ARCS health staff in the regions.

Constraints

One of the main constraints remains in the lack of efficient communication means, resulting in difficulties to gather accurate information, especially in relation to the provision of activity reports. Another great concern is the deterioration of the security situation throughout the whole country, materialized by the resumption of anti-government activities.

Specific Objective 3: To provide basic sanitation facilities when appropriate and carry out hygiene promotion sessions to the beneficiaries at community levels

Progress/Achievements

The coordination of this activity with the local authorities and the other stakeholders is ongoing in every region.

The procurement process for the hygiene kits to be distributed in support of the hygiene promotion sessions has been initiated while the hygiene promotion material is already available and is now to be dispatched to the regions.

So far, no need for provision of sanitation facilities has been reported.

Impact

No impact can be measured since most of the accomplishment resides in coordination activities.

Constraints

The main constraint is the lack of water and sanitation expertise within the ARCS and the vast area of possible intervention, coupled with the security constraints which complicate the access to some remote areas.

Specific Objective 4: To improve the capacity of the ARCS in coordination, disaster preparedness and response and strengthen its logistics capacity

Progress/Achievements

A regional disaster response team member has been called to provide specific support to the ARCS in its new coordinating responsibilities as well as in the data collection and dispatch. He should arrive in Kabul on 14 April and is a permanent member of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society.

The Federation's disaster management department is providing continued technical support to its counterparts and colleagues from ARCS at both headquarters and regional levels. The same occurs with the development of the logistics capacity of the national society, as it was initiated during the implementation of the severe winter emergency appeal. The recently appointed logistics officer from ARCS is still working within the Federation delegation's premises and gains expertise and confidence through this experience.

In regard to the upgrade of the vehicle fleet and mechanic workshop of the ARCS, a bilateral memorandum of understanding has been drafted defining the roles, responsibilities and duties of both parties and frames the activities to be carried out. In total, 17 trucks, six land cruisers and the workshop facilities will be repaired during the appeal period.

Impact

The impact is easier to measure in regard to this activity, especially considering that most of it is a continuation of what has been initiated within the first emergency appeal. The ARCS now has a logistics department and its structure is being built and reinforced along the implementation of this operation.

Constraints

The main constraint resides in the poor communication system available within the national society, the recent establishment of its logistics structure as well as the heaviness of the existing bureaucracy.

Federation coordination

The Federation is maintaining close links with the government who is the body in charge of the overall operation and with the traditional UN partners, NGO and international organizations. In addition, local embassies are being visited by the head of delegation as well as the main institutional donors.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – principles and initiatives

As mentioned above, the response to this emergency crisis is being organized from a Movement perspective where the Afghan Red Crescent, the ICRC and the Federation are closely cooperating, sharing the available material, human and financial resources.

Dissemination of Red Cross principles and humanitarian values will be provided during the response phase through ARCS volunteers as well as of mine awareness, with the risks of mines being considerably augmented by the flooding water.

National society capacity building

The capacity building of the national society is an important activity of the present appeal, concentrating in strengthening its capacity in disaster management and logistics. As for the implementation of the Severe Winter Appeal (05EA003), most of the Federation's delegation has mobilized its resources in order to provide substantial support to the ARCS at every level, including organizational development.

Communications – advocacy and public information

The Afghan Red Crescent Society benefits from a better public image in Afghanistan due to its great involvement in the emergency response but this is also owed to the recent change of senior management in the national society. Advocacy of the national society's role and performance is being carried out by the head of delegation and there is high media coverage of the implementation of the severe winter emergency appeal, providing a high profile to the Afghan Red Crescent Society.

[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page.](#)

Afghanistan - floods

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 05EA005

PLEDGES RECEIVED

13/04/2005

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
-------	----------	----------	------	-----------	------	---------

CASH

						TOTAL COVERAGE
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				2,235,000		4.9%
BRITISH - RC		50,000	GBP	109,050	31.03.05	RELIEF NEEDS AND OPERATIONAL NEEDS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				109,050	CHF	4.9%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	