

PROGRAMME 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

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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.

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In Brief

Appeal No. 05AA045; Programme Update no. 1, Period covered: 01 January to 31 March, 2005; Appeal coverage: 25.5%; Outstanding needs: CHF 6,743,506 (USD 5,306,465 or EUR 4,378,075).
(click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List (also available on the website).

Appeal target: CHF 9,055,022 (USD 7,575,389 or EUR 5,863,397)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: [Severe winter emergency appeal 05EA003](#);
[Spring floods emergency appeal 05EA005](#).

Programme summary:

The appointment of the new president of the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) in January 2005 has provided motivation and clarity of strategic vision for the national society. This momentum will be maintained through the Federation's active support of the ARCS restructuring and capacity building efforts.

Two emergency appeals were launched during this quarter – one to assist the internally displaced people affected by the severe winter conditions in Kabul ([05EA003](#)) and the second in preparation for and response to the flooding caused by heavy snowfall and spring rains ([05EA005](#)). The two operations have considerably stretched ARCS' already limited capacity, which has impacted on the implementation of the annual disaster response programme activities. All other programmes with secured funding were implemented as planned, notably the ARCS clinics and emergency mobile health units, as well as youth project activities. The revision of the national society's constitution is ongoing, as well as the membership development process in pilot branches.

Firm pledges received to date are yet to reach the level required for the first operating budget of CHF 5.4 million. However, continuous support was announced from long-term ARCS partners, such as the British, Finnish, German, Spanish, and Swedish Red Cross, as well as a number of other donors. Overall, programme spending is on target, but there is still much to do to streamline the delegation and reduce core costs. Funding is still urgently required for the humanitarian values programme, and the community-based first aid (CBFA) and clinics elements of the health programme.

The main focus for this year is on the organizational development of the national society, disaster management capacity building and a review of the clinics towards a more sustainable approach to health programming. A re-focusing of the humanitarian values programme with a clearer focus on reducing discrimination will be undertaken later in the year.



Afghanistan Red Crescent Society has trained over 17,000 volunteers, including 800 women, in community-based first aid in 25 out of 34 provinces in the country.

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Operational developments

While international attention has been focused on the tsunami-affected countries, the needs in Afghanistan are as great as ever and further exacerbated by large numbers of returnees in the last few years. Kabul alone is now home to nearly four million people, with infrastructure hugely overstretched. The population as a whole has great expectations from the government to improve the living conditions and basic services such as health, employment, housing, education, water and electricity, following the presidential elections last October.

In the first quarter of the year, much of the country experienced severe weather conditions, with heavy snowfall, low temperatures and then rains, which significantly increased the hardships of the population. As a result, ARCS and the International Federation launched two emergency appeals within this reporting period, one in February (05EA003 http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?05/05EA003.pdf), in response to severe winter and the second one in March in response to flooding (05EA005 http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?05/05EA005.pdf). Both appeals have been well supported and the activities have been implemented as planned, although this additional workload inevitably put a strain on the national society's limited capacity. However, at the same time, the operations were used as an opportunity to further strengthen ARCS, especially in the area of logistics and disaster management.

The parliamentary elections, which were originally planned to be held at the same time as the presidential elections – in October 2004 – have been postponed several times for various reasons, mainly related to difficulties in logistical planning, registration process, defining district boundaries and security issues. The elections are now scheduled for 18 September, pending the security situation in the country at that time.

A new ARCS president/secretary general was appointed in January. She has expressed her commitment to improving the national society's profile, impact and self-reliance. Plans are underway to restructure the national society and to separate the governance and management functions, starting with the appointment of a new secretary general in the next quarter.

The annual appeal for 2005 has a budget of CHF 9 million. An operating budget of CHF 5.4 million was approved, and a second operating budget will be submitted in the next quarter. The current level of funding is not expected to increase, reflecting the challenges of securing financial support for ARCS programmes. An ongoing reduction in the core costs will help to alleviate the funding difficulties and allow more funds to be channelled to programme support as the year progresses, but this will not become apparent in the reporting until the third quarter.

The number of security incidents was higher than in the same period last year – a combination of activities of the various anti-government groups and a significant increase in the level of armed and violent criminality. Although the Federation delegation's staff members have been experiencing difficulties in accessing many areas for security reasons, ARCS's activities are proceeding much as planned, within the current financial limits and in the knowledge that some important pledges are due in the next quarter. There are clear concerns as to how to secure sufficient funding to cover the appeal for this year.

Health and care

Background:

The ARCS integrated primary health programme has been serving an important humanitarian role and helping to maintain ARCS' profile across the country. It consists of four components:

- 50 basic health centres;
- 10 emergency mobile units;
- community-based first aid with 17,000 volunteers; and
- environmental health project

In 2005, priority has been put on adjusting basic health centres to conform to the basic package for health services introduced by the government of Afghanistan, while addressing the issue of sustainability of the health facilities. Also, the environmental project has shifted its focus from construction activities towards hygiene education. Funding constraints are impeding the consolidation of the community-based first aid programme component, which was planned for this year.

Overall goal: Vulnerability to health hazards and emergencies in Afghanistan is further reduced.

Programme objective: The capacity of ARCS to improve the status of vulnerable people and response effectively to disaster through health interventions in Afghanistan is increased.

Progress/Achievements

Expected result 1: ARCS has the capacity to provide more effective, integrated and sustained health services including HIV/AIDS awareness through its clinics to reduce morbidity and mortality among vulnerable people.

ARCS is running 50 clinics throughout Afghanistan. As part of efforts to conform to the basic package for health services, the process of reviewing and restructuring the ARCS clinics has been ongoing since the second half of 2003. Following a sustainability study, carried out in the second quarter of 2004, as well as close consultations with the ministry of public health, the profile of clinics has been revised and they were to become *basic health centres* as part of the basic package for health services.

The Federation's South Asia regional health team visited Afghanistan in January to review the clinics programme, and a detailed plan of action was agreed upon in order to build project sustainability. The plan of action is to be implemented over a two-year period, starting in mid-2005. The key steps are as follows:

- a) *Determine the demand for the clinics*, through discussions with the ministry of health, mapping of all clinics with performance-based partnership agreements, and a joint assessment with the ministry of public health of all available health facilities in the area, which are part of both the basic health package services and performance-based partnership agreements.
- b) *Assess local capacities for community participation* in the ARCS clinics, through a community survey.
- c) *Pilot community involvement* by selecting one clinic based on a socio-economic survey.
- d) *Review ARCS's capacity to support community involvement*.
- e) *Build community capacities* by training a selected group from the community in planning and management of the clinic.
- f) *Develop a long-term vision and strategic planning* for sustainability of the clinics, based on previous surveys and evaluations and participation of key stakeholders, including the community itself.

ARCS signed a memorandum of understanding with the ministry of public health on the coordination of health services provided on the basis of the national health policy. The process of adjusting ARCS clinics in line with health reforms has been initiated. All clinics will adopt the basic health centre concept, and the clinics' staff will be reduced in the next quarter of the year. In the coming months, further adjustment to the clinic activities will be undertaken so that all ARCS clinics will comply with the requirements for basic health centres under the basic package for health services. Also, ARCS has begun sharing its clinic data with the ministry of health, which is a new development in the cooperation between ARCS and the ministry of public health.

The 50 ARCS clinics supported by the Federation continue the provision of health services. All offer consultation and treatment, health education and provision of essential drugs. Immunization services to children and women of

child-bearing age are provided in 42 clinics, while antenatal and postnatal care and child growth monitoring is provided in 35 clinics. Family planning services are offered in 33 clinics.

During this quarter, 200 reproductive health kits were received from the German Red Cross and distributed to the five sub-delegations, thus resolving previous acute shortages. The reproductive health kits are issued to clinics on a monthly basis, alongside basic medical kits (also provided by the German Red Cross). Such a distribution system ensures needs-based supplying of clinics and prevents misuse of material.

During the first quarter, some 220,000 patients with common diseases were treated in ARCS clinics. The table below gives a breakdown of services provided, as well as cumulative numbers of people receiving assistance in the first three months of the year:

Categories	January	February	March	Total
<i>Patients seen</i>	72,645	69,575	77,646	219,866
Laboratory tests	2,632	4,812	3,675	11,119
Group health education	60,880	56,531	62,930	180,341
Individual health education	14,042	13,145	13,821	55,050
Antenatal visits	4,308	4,536	4,443	13,287
Postnatal visits	977	980	1,282	3,239
Children growth monitoring	4,538	4,863	4,633	14,034
BCG	3,314	3,104	5,248	11,666
DPT and polio	3,783	4,091	5,864	13,738
DPT and polio (3 rd dose)	6,592	3,952	5,454	15,998
Measles	4,619	3,555	5,695	13,869
Tetanus (women)	9,794	9,507	1,1824	31,125
Family planning clients	1,725	2,402	2,199	6,326
TBA deliveries	1,080	1,166	1,285	3,531
TBA home visits	2,828	2,545	2,514	7,887

ARCS clinic staff volunteers participated in the national immunization days for polio eradication conducted in January and March. A total of 34,173 children were vaccinated.

The tuberculosis control programme has started in 10 ARCS clinics in Kabul with the training of nurses in the directly observed treatment short course (DOTS). These 10 clinics will be known as active tuberculosis treatment centres.

In February, the ARCS health department carried out a health survey of internally displaced persons and returnees in the Kabul camps, with the main focus being on children under five and women of child-bearing age. The survey showed that 389 children under five and 756 women were living in these camps. Their overall health condition was poor. Some 125 women had sexually transmitted diseases, 16 were believed to have tuberculosis and 84 children had not received any vaccinations.

ARCS and the Federation health officers attended all health coordination meetings at regional and central level. They included monthly meetings at the ministry of health, the consultative group on health and nutrition, as well as the task force meetings which covered health emergency preparedness and response, health management information system, expanded programme on immunization and communicable diseases. ARCS clinics staff members are also invited to participate in the training offered by the ministry of health and other organizations.

In the third quarter of the year, ARCS and the Federation will carry out a baseline survey on the socio-economic conditions of life of the communities located in the catchment areas of the clinics. The survey will be done as part of the process to move some of the ARCS clinics from the cities to more rural areas. Particular attention is given to this process, in order to ensure appropriate placement of clinics and, subsequently, the most effective and needs-driven health service to the population.

The pilot project, aiming at encouraging community participation in the management and running of the clinics, which originally targeted 10 clinics, will take place in the coming months; however, the target will be reduced to five clinics in Kabul. The reason for this reduction lies in the intention to draw lessons from this first phase of the project implementation and apply them in the following phase, in new clinics.

Expected result 2: ARCS has the capacity to respond to emergency health needs of people affected by disease outbreaks and/or natural disasters in all regions of Afghanistan, and provide mobile clinic services in disadvantaged areas.

There are five emergency mobile units, one each in Herat, Jalalabad, Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif and Kandahar. Each unit has two teams of five persons. Training of teams was conducted over the past two years with a refresher training course planned for August this year.

During the first quarter, the ARCS Kabul mobile teams were engaged in assisting internally displaced persons and returnees in Kabul as part of the severe winter emergency operation. For details, please refer to operational updates on the emergency appeal [05EA003](#).

Mobile teams treated over 12,000 patients in remote areas who have no other access to primary health care facilities. They also provided health education to people individually or in group sessions.

Seasonal diseases were the main health problems in most of the provinces. Outbreaks of pertussis occurred in Pule-Khomri and Cheghcheran provinces. The regional mobile teams provided assistance to some 100 children; however, 20 children were reported to have died of pertussis and measles.

Progress on the development of health emergency preparedness and response guidelines has been slow. These delays have also pushed back the planned training of 100 nurses and emergency mobile unit and community-based first aid volunteers.

The ARCS and Federation health management teams coordinated regularly with the health emergency preparedness and response directorate of the ministry of public health and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Expected result 3: ARCS's capacity is increased to deliver community-based first aid and related public education, and to take part in immunization campaigns and disaster response operations through a network of community-based volunteers.

The programme is now active in 25 out of 34 provinces of Afghanistan, with a total of 17,126 volunteers, of which 794 are women. Since August 2004, community-based first aid trainers were unable to conduct any training activities due to funding constraints. In an effort to increase sustainability, the community-based first aid staff and volunteers endeavoured to mobilize communities to contribute towards supporting the groups of volunteers in their localities. So far, reports on volunteers' activities have mainly been based on informal meetings with team leaders and volunteers. Proper monitoring and supervision will start in the coming six months. The plan for this year was to expand the training programme into a further three provinces (Paktika, Kunduz, and Bamyan), but funding remains a key challenge.

Expected result 4: ARCS's capacity is increased to promote environmental health by linking all components of the health programme (community-based first aid, basic health centres and emergency response).

The environmental health project in 2005 focuses on hygiene promotion, with limited construction activities.

Preparations for a baseline survey for the project in Mazar-i-Sharif and Kabul are underway. A total of 50 volunteers in Kabul, of which 20 were women, were trained for the survey. The survey will collect information on the size of the population in targeted areas, their current hygiene knowledge, and availability of water and sanitation facilities in the community prior to the start-up of the project. The results of the survey will help identify project priorities. A similar survey will be conducted upon completion of the project, with the aim to measure its impact against the baseline data.

A site was selected in Kabul for the construction of 100 latrines, following consultations with the ministry of rural development and rehabilitation. The community members formed committees responsible for the safety of

volunteers, helping in the construction and conducting hygiene promotion in their respective areas. Pre- and post-construction surveys will be carried out to evaluate the impact of the project.

House-to-house hygiene promotion will commence in the second quarter of the year in Kabul, Herat and Kandahar. Construction of 1,000 latrines in Mazar-i-Sharif is planned for the third quarter of the year, using the same method as above. However, it is dependant on the available funding, as well as the security situation at the time of implementation. Similarly, construction of 50 water points, 22 water wells and 50 incinerators are still planned for this year, however, limited funding continues to be the major constraint. The planned construction of ventilated pit latrines for ARCS clinics will be changed and flush toilets will be built instead, which is also subject to funding and security.

Outputs

Many of the ARCS clinics are the only provider of health care for vulnerable people. Health education – particularly nutritional education, antenatal and traditional birth attendant services – are vital, in view of the existing high maternal and infant mortality rates and chronic malnutrition in children. Regular growth monitoring of children is done in hospitals, and advice on nutrition provided. Malnourished children are provided immediate care and referred to therapeutic feeding centres where available. With the alarmingly high prevalence of chronic malnutrition, the synergy of monitoring, nutritional education and integrated management of childhood illness initiatives are receiving an increasing importance in all ARCS clinics.

In the clinics, children are immunized against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, measles and tuberculosis. Tetanus vaccine is offered to all women of child-bearing age, as it protects them as well as their unborn child in case of pregnancy. The expanded immunization programme has been extended to 44 ARCS clinics, which will ensure that the national society plays a greater role in the increasing immunization coverage.

Family planning is given high importance in the clinics, through advice on timing the pregnancies so as to ensure full recuperation of women in between pregnancies. Many women are now attending antenatal support and advice but postnatal attendance remains low. Clinic staff has been urged to stress the importance of postnatal attendance during their visits.

The mobile teams work in the remote areas where they provide health services to the most vulnerable people who cannot otherwise have any access to health services in their areas. Community-based first aid volunteers cooperate with the emergency mobile teams and together make their villagers utilize the mobile teams in the most effective way.

Constraints

Due to security constraints, all provinces have been inaccessible to the Federation staff, apart from the main urban areas, making it very difficult for on-site supervision and training. Only the city clinics have been monitored.

There is a chronic lack of qualified women staff at the clinics. So far, trained traditional birth attendants have helped fill this gap; however, there is still a need for well qualified midwives to be trained as traditional birth attendant supervisors, especially in rural areas. Similarly, malnourished children in more remote areas have no access to referral centres, again due to the lack of qualified staff members outside regional centres.

Low incentives and cultural constraints remain the main challenges for the mobile health units, in view of their work in highly remote areas of the country.

Due to a critical funding situation, there has been no progress on the community-based first aid programme component, in terms of training of volunteers and monitoring and supervising their activities in communities. Likewise, a poor funding situation is the main constraint for the implementation of the environmental health programme component.

Disaster management

Background

In response to the effects of severe winter conditions and spring floods which claimed over 200 lives, the Federation launched two emergency appeals on 21 February and 31 March respectively, to assist the affected populations and build up contingency stocks for the recurring floods in the spring months. In view of ARCS' heavy engagement in the two operations, most disaster management activities planned in the annual appeal have not yet been implemented.

In addition to the emergency operations, limited funding to date has impeded the disaster management programme implementation. However, with ICRC's support various activities were conducted in provinces affected by armed conflict. The earmarked funds provided by the Finnish Red Cross last year and carried forward into 2005 contributed positively to the commencement of basic community-based disaster preparedness activities, as well as conducting vulnerability and capacity assessments in high risk provinces.

In spite of the difficulties, the Federation continues to support the national society's efforts to build its disaster response capacity. Further funding is sought for the implementation of key objectives, such as the establishment and training of the ARCS national disaster response team, community and school awareness programme, and the development of disaster preparedness plan, amongst other objectives mentioned in the annual appeal.

Overall goal: Vulnerability of communities in targeted areas of Afghanistan to natural and man-made disasters is reduced.

Programme objective: Reduce impact of disasters in vulnerable communities in disaster-prone areas by strengthening their disaster preparedness and raising community awareness through well structured ARCS disaster management at all levels.

Progress/achievements

Expected result 1: ARCS's capacities in terms of human resources, material resources, systems and procedures are improved at all levels.

While most activities planned for the first quarter did not materialize for the reasons mentioned above, efforts were made wherever possible to improve ARCS disaster management capacity.

As part of the national society contingency planning for the spring floods disaster, ARCS, with the Federation's support, had pre-positioned non-food items for 2000 families in five regional warehouses (Jalalabad, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and Kabul), allowing ARCS provincial branches to quickly distribute relief items to the most affected communities.

The Federation handed over to the ARCS disaster management department a disaster response unit comprised of a four wheel drive vehicle fully equipped with telecommunications and other necessary emergency equipment. The donated unit is worth approximately CHF 50,000.

At the time of reporting, two disaster management training workshops were organized in Herat and Jalalabad provinces for a total of 60 volunteers. Similarly, two community-based disaster preparedness training workshops were held for 44 volunteers in the Mazar and Herat regions.

In March, a three-day community-based disaster preparedness training workshop, organized in Laghman province, attracted a total of 25 newly recruited volunteers from 10 districts. The training is part of the national society strategy to improve its human resource capacity.

The plan for the next quarter is as follows:

- Organize planning and coordination meeting for the national society disaster management regional supervisors;
- Develop disaster preparedness and response plans;
- Establish and train a national disaster response team.

Expected result 2: Targeted communities are knowledgeable and better prepared to assess and respond to the eventuality of natural disasters.

As explained earlier, no activities have taken place in this reporting period. In the coming quarter, the plan is to elaborate terms of reference for a consultant to develop public and school awareness material. Disaster awareness campaigns will be launched in three highly disaster-prone provinces.

Expected result 3: ARCS cooperation, coordination and networking with key stakeholders and within the Movement are improved.

None of the planned activities for this period have been conducted as yet.

In the recent spring floods operation in the country, the national society disaster management team participated in regular coordination meetings with the national flood task force. In March, the Afghan Red Crescent became a member of the joint operation centre, bringing together various disaster preparedness and response role players from the government, non-government organizations and United Nations agencies. Furthermore, the national society was given responsibility for coordination of the distribution of relief items.

The emergency operation centres both at national and regional levels play a key role in coordinating emergencies through out the country. In Kabul there is a Movement taskforce that meets regularly and was established to draw up plans of actions and allocate the necessary logistic needs in response to the spring floods disaster. ARCS coordinates with other organizations, United Nations agencies and government disaster management units, amongst other organizations.

By the end of June, a database of key disaster management stakeholders in Afghanistan will be developed, and a one-day workshop conducted with the aim to introduce and integrate the ICRC *safer access* model into the disaster management programme.

Expected Result 4 ARCS has a better understanding/policy regarding population movement and has initiated a pilot project in the population movement based on the Manila Action Plan.

Due to capacity constraints, there are no activities to report under this expected result, apart from the translation and printing of the refugee protection book. In the coming quarter, the plan is to start developing the population movement guidelines and policies, and organize a one-day coordination meeting with other key players.

Constraints

Delays in donor response to the disaster management component of the annual appeal coupled with a lack of adequate human resources in disaster management unit has severely constrained the implementation of the disaster management programme.

The communication system and flow of information between the provincial branches and the national society headquarters remained challenging throughout the reporting period.

Humanitarian values

Background

The change of ARCS leadership has seen the humanitarian values programme given greater recognition as a priority for the national society. The planned activities, however, are largely outstanding, as ARCS has not yet recruited a humanitarian values focal person. The delays will force ARCS and the Federation to review and scale down its planned activities for this year. The revisions and selected priorities will be announced in the next programme update.

The youth programme continues to expand, with a high level of interest among schoolchildren and students. It has the potential of becoming self-sufficient in the future; however, a number of challenges are slowing down this process. Firstly, the renewal process of the yearly memorandum of understanding between ARCS and the ministry of education has been postponed due to the appointment of the new minister. Secondly, ARCS provincial branches

secretaries need to improve their level of ownership of the youth programme at the provincial level and to endorse its activities locally.

So far, approximately one quarter of the programme budget has been covered by confirmed pledges. However, most donations are earmarked, and do not allow for proper monitoring and follow-up of the programme.

Overall goal: The ARCS's humanitarian message contributes to reduced vulnerability of Afghans to violence and intolerance.

Programme objective: ARCS's capacity to promote Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values through all programmes in the community is increased.

Progress/Achievements

Expected result 1: ARCS staff, youth, volunteers and members of movement components has better understanding of the humanitarian values concepts and act to disseminate and influence the behaviour in the community.

The new ARCS leadership has recognized the need to establish a humanitarian values department within the national society headquarters. This will be done as part of the ongoing structural revision at the headquarters, and it will be followed by the recruitment of a humanitarian values officer. In support of this positive change, ICRC and the Federation held a meeting in which they discussed the best ways to speed up this process and prepare for specific activities once the focal point is in place.

During the reporting period, the trained teacher volunteers in Mazar-i-Sharif recruited 12 new teacher volunteers and have conducted a three-day training session for them on the topic of humanitarian values. Teacher volunteers are active in disseminating that knowledge to students and their communities.

The ARCS youth theatre groups in Mazar-i-Sharif and Kabul regions were fully functional during the period. They performed several shows related to anti-discrimination, ARCS activities and the role of youth in Afghan society. Most performances took place in youth clubs, where more than 800 youth volunteers and under-privileged students gather to receive training on a variety of topics. The theatre groups have also performed in Kabul and Mazar on the occasion of the International Women's Day.

Expected result 2: ARCS has a strong youth organization motivated by the humanitarian mission with a better countrywide network, with increased visibility and credibility among the community, thereby strengthening the future of the national society and inspiring others to join ARCS as well as being effective vehicles for spreading the message of consistency, tolerance and non-discrimination.

ARCS has a pool of over 19,000 active youth volunteers and youth leaders, as well as 543 teacher volunteers throughout the country. They are active in the facilitation of youth activities, promotion of humanitarian values, and participation in the implementation of disaster management and health programmes.

Most schools in the northern regions of Mazar and Kabul were closed for winter holidays. The ARCS youth department organized special activities for the youth volunteers during that period. They included various courses on the national and international languages, tailoring, computer classes, humanitarian values, and theatre courses. More than 800 youth volunteers in both youth clubs participated daily. The courses were facilitated by youth leaders with relevant skills and knowledge. There were also sports and drawing competitions and theatre performances, which helped attract more students to participate in the activities. The winter programme was fully supported by the Japanese Red Cross, as part of a larger support which that national society provides to the ARCS youth programme.

Youth volunteers actively supported the disaster management activities in the country. Some 12 volunteers participated in the beneficiary identification and food and non-food distribution, as part of the winter emergency operation in Kabul. Also, six youth volunteers from the Kabul province joined the ARCS assessment team for the Ghazni dam collapse operation. Finally, 35 youth volunteers assisted the Herat branch with food distributions in the province.

Other activities that took place in this quarter include sports competitions in four schools in Jalalabad and Mazar, where youth volunteers also received first aid materials, t-shirts and badges, as well as city cleaning campaigns in

Mazar and Herat, on the occasion of the Afghan New Year (21 March). Over 6,000 volunteers in Mazar and some 150 in Herat participated in these campaigns.

ARCS officers held regular monthly meetings with teacher volunteers in all five regions, in order to maintain their commitment to the programme.

Expected result 3: ARCS has developed a strategic plan for a refocus on the humanitarian values programme on anti-discrimination agenda.

Since the national society does not yet have a focal person for humanitarian values, no progress has been made on this expected result. Activities are expected to start in the second quarter of the year.

Outputs

Activities of youth volunteers in cities and schools have created an opportunity for ARCS to be introduced to a wider community. Youth clubs are now considered the best gathering point for men and women youth who come from afar to meet and learn. More than 800 youth volunteers and underprivileged youth have graduated from the classes offered in the clubs. The families and local communities are supportive of the youth volunteers' activities.

The ARCS youth volunteers have been active in other programmes of the national society, which helped improve the understanding of the importance and role of the Red Crescent youth within ARCS.

Constraints

Insufficient funding is seriously hampering the implementation of planned activities, particularly in relation to the recruitment and training of new volunteers.

While the position of humanitarian values focal point at the ARCS national headquarters remains vacant, no progress will be made on systematizing the current knowledge and experience and moving the programme forward. It is hoped the new leadership's enthusiasm for the humanitarian values programme will help in ensuring this position is filled.

Organizational development

Background

The organizational development programme largely reflects a continuation of the 2004 activities: concluding the ARCS constitutional review; improving the membership base; establishing governance bodies at branch and headquarters level; setting up effective human resources management system; improving the national society's self-reliance; and continuing assistance to ARCS *marastoons* (homes for the under-privileged).

Following the appointment of the new ARCS president/secretary general, most efforts focused on streamlining the national society in terms of separation of governance and management, setting up a stable structure and strengthening basic rules and principles.

The organizational development programme's financial situation has so far been satisfactory. A detailed review of programme activities and budgetary implications is taking place in April.

Overall goal: ARCS has improved its capacity in service delivery to vulnerable people.

Programme objective: To assist ARCS in improving its capacities towards becoming a well-functioning national society.

Progress/Achievements

Expected result 1: An ARCS constitution is adopted, as per the Movement standards and guidelines.

Discussions with the newly appointed president/secretary general of the national society confirmed some progress in terms of commitment to finalizing the ARCS constitutional review process. A new committee was set up to that effect; however, with no specific output in the first quarter of the year. ARCS reported that a draft constitution is currently being prepared for discussions with the Movement partners in Kabul. The plan is to finalize the draft constitution and submit it to the joint commission in Geneva, before the president's visit there in May.

Expected result 2: Further development of organizational capacities at ARCS headquarters and branch levels.

Most of the activities undertaken in the first quarter of the year were not under the work plan. The ARCS president/secretary general took the lead in addressing organizational deficiencies in the society. On assuming office, she dismissed some key headquarters personnel (heads of human resources and finance included) who were alleged to have been involved in serious accountability and integrity problems. The Federation and ICRC followed up on the president's action by recommending a strategic review of ARCS's human resources system, starting with the national society headquarters. An external management audit was agreed upon, and the British Red Cross will assist the process with specific focus on human resource development systems. In the interim, the president set up a committee to recommend a management structure for the headquarters. The delegation organizational development department participated in the process, taking the lead by preparing and presenting a draft organigram. After a series of discussions and some amendments, the first two levels of the organigram (comprising the secretary general and directors) were accepted in principle.

The next step in the process of restructuring the headquarters management in the next three months is to fill in the positions at the first two levels of the organigram, starting with the secretary general post. That will include preparation of job descriptions and a transparent and fair selection process.

Implementation of the national society membership development process continued, with emphasis on field activities, more specifically community sensitisation for membership, recruitment of members, and formation of branch groups. Of the five pilot branches (Laghman, Logar, Badghis, Parwan and Baghlan), Baghlan did not participate in implementing the field activities. Reports received from the four participating branches indicated that none of them had succeeded in recruiting the minimum 200 members per month as was planned. However, one of the branches in Herat region – Badghis – did recruit 169 new members in March. In total, some 350 members were recruited.

Plans for the next quarter include a review of the field implementation of the membership process. The objective is to determine whether implementation of activities has been as planned and/or whether there is need for changes to be made. Depending on the outcome of the review activities may continue, including formation of town groups. Towards the end of June, it is expected that structural linkages between the groups and their branch management would have been created for governance structures to be established.

Expected result 3: Establishment of standardized and cost-effective human resource systems in ARCS headquarters in 2005 and in branches in 2006.

As reported under the expected result above, an informal review of the national society's human resources system commenced during the period. The external review of the human resources system is likely to start during the third quarter. Implementation of a new human resources system in branches may stretch beyond 2006 into 2007. Plans for the next quarter would concentrate on recruitment of the secretary general and other key headquarters positions.

Expected result 4: Increased fundraising by the national society, to enhance self-reliance and sustainability in the longer-term.

The following activities were conducted in this period: finalization of the December 2004 fundraising workshop report, including policy recommendations to ARCS; preparation of the 2005 plan of action; briefing of the new president/secretary general on progress made in the process; and on the need for a fundraising manager at the national society headquarters. There was no specific activity on fundraising development. However, the president/secretary general reiterated her determination to make the national society financially self-supporting. She made references to potential sources for assisting the national society to build the necessary fundraising capacities, but acknowledged that such sources anticipated basic systems and procedures in place in the society. Another important development was that provision was made in the ARCS organigram (under preparation) for a fundraising development programme manager within the directorate of external and public relations.

Activities in the next reporting period will comprise the establishing of the fundraising department within the headquarters of the society and the finalization of a plan of action.

Expected result 5: Residents of the five ARCS marastoons received regular humanitarian assistance and technical training support that prepares them for a return to life in their original communities.

This is the first time the *marastoon* programme is included in the Federation's annual organizational development programme plan, following its handover to ARCS and the Federation by ICRC. The integration process has been successful. Despite many challenges related to ownership, structure and management within the *marastoon* programme, the objectives are gradually being met, and activities related to the branch development objective are set to commence during the second quarter of the year.

The following activities have been taking place since the beginning of the year:

- Provision of food and non-food items to residents of *marastoons*;
- Monthly supply of working advances;
- Field visits;
- Review of number of residents, as well as managerial procedures in the five *marastoons*;
- Preparation of an operational budget and plan of action for 2005.

The purpose of these activities is to develop sound managerial procedures for the project. In the coming months, the following activities will take place:

- A review of the resettlement activities of the five *marastoons* will be carried out;
- If necessary, a training course will be held for *marastoons* personnel and Federation field officers;
- ARCS will be encouraged to employ a programme officer to be in charge of branch development and managing the *marastoon* programme).
- A policy for the ARCS *marastoon* programme will be developed.

Outputs

The Federation delegation was regularly consulted by the new president/secretary general for guidance in strategic decision making. Such regular consultation between both parties (and also with ICRC) is assisting the national society as it strives to become a better functioning organization. The importance of the Federation as a reliable consulting partner within the movement is also enhanced.

Based on discussion with the new president/secretary general, it was decided that a formal review of the national society's human resources system is to be conducted in the third quarter of the year. This decision indicates the determination of the new ARCS management to move from the existing disorganized and non-transparent human resources system to a creditable one. This would also assist ARCS towards becoming a well-functioning national society. A draft organigram for the national society headquarters management was prepared, and the first two levels of the structure were agreed upon. The organigram provides for a management structure of the society to be headed by a secretary general, a distinct from the governance of the society which would be headed by a president. With time, similar structures would be established in the branches, making provision for checks and balances that would enhance the functioning of ARCS.

Through the pilot branches, membership recruitment commenced. Ownership of the branches would increase from just a few people as at present, to a larger number of people within the branches' communities. Next steps would involve formation of governance groups in branches, and subsequently at the national level of the society.

A provision has been made for a fundraising manager position at national society headquarters. The objective of enhancing local resource mobilization and self-reliance towards supporting the sustainability of the society's programmes and institutions is being addressed.

The *marastoon* programme continues to provide day-to-day services to the residents. The plan is to improve the management of the project on the basis of the recommendations of the project review, which will be discussed with ARCS.

Constraints

Security constraints continued to make it impossible for Federation personnel to travel to many parts of the country where the national society's programme activities are supported. Proper monitoring and verification of activities (for example membership recruitment by branches) were therefore, at best, unsatisfactory. There was thus continued dependence on the national society's regional officers and the sub-delegations' minimal capacities.

ARCS continue to face problems in managing the *marastoons*, mainly due to a weak administrative structure, as well as poor understanding of the Red Cross Principles. While these problems are being addressed, they are not expected to be resolved shortly.

Implementation and management

Coordination, cooperation and strategic partnerships

The Federation continues to provide technical support to ARCS programme personnel. Particular efforts have been made by the head of delegation, programme coordinator and organizational development coordinator in supporting the new leadership on a one-to-one basis. This is being done in coordination with the ICRC head of delegation and cooperation delegate.

The relationship with ICRC remained a close and cooperative one, with regular meetings held between the heads of delegations, but also in the sphere of organizational development and disaster management. Apart from assisting ARCS in coordinating the two ongoing relief operations, ICRC and the Federation are working closely together in supporting the national society's restructuring process, as elaborated above.

Formal and informal relationships with all key donors have been maintained. Security concerns and the shift of donors' priorities onto the tsunami operation have meant that only the Finnish and German Red Cross representatives have so far visited the national society and the delegation.

Governance support

A programme of intensive support for the new leadership of the national society has been initiated in the beginning of the year, following the appointment of the new ARCS president/secretary general. The main focus is on the restructuring process of the national society, and on addressing the funding and financial management issues. Draft action plans for the restructuring have been developed; they will inevitably require considerable down-sizing the current number of approximately 2000 employees. At the same time, the process of revising the ARCS constitution has been reinvigorated. The next step will be the separation of governance and management functions, scheduled to take place in the second quarter with the appointment of an ARCS secretary general. It is also envisaged that a full external audit of the national society will be undertaken later in the year.

The ARCS president visited the Federation's regional delegation for South Asia in Delhi in April. She also attended the Secretariat's leadership training course in late May in Geneva.

The next quarter will focus on pushing forward the restructuring process, starting at the national headquarters level. This will require additional technical support of an expert in human resource management and development, and plans are under way to recruit one. Other priorities will remain the ARCS constitution, support to both the president and the new secretary general, membership, volunteer and branch development, finance development, fund-raising and external representation. These efforts contribute to the overall objective of the ARCS president to restore self-reliance, sustainability and a positive image of the national society, as was the case before the long years of conflict.

Effective representation and advocacy

An active programme of external representation was scaled up during the first quarter, after a period of low credibility of the national society within the diplomatic, governmental and non-government organizations circles. The appointment of the new leadership and its commitment to improve the quality of the national society's service to the vulnerable has created favourable conditions for an active promotional campaign of the ARCS profile. These efforts will continue throughout the year.

Delegation management

Since the beginning of the year, the delegation's key priority has been to initiate a considerable scaling down of staff and resources, while at the same time continuing to provide adequate support to the national society. The realignment of the delegation is being made on a needs-based analysis of what is now required to support the national society, but to also reflect the urgent need to continue to reduce the core costs. It is clear that the role of the Federation will be one of facilitation and support, mainly based on an organizational development agenda, as

the national society grows in confidence and assumes more responsibility and ownership of the programmes, along with its clear ambition towards self-reliance and sustainability.

The planned changes in the delegation include a reduction of national staff, particularly in sub-delegations, but also in Kabul. A position of the head of sub-delegations has been filled, with the main aim to improve line management of sub-delegations as well as the existing interface of field programme personnel with their respective Kabul-based counterparts. The role of sub-delegations is shifting towards providing specific technical support to regional ARCS branches, as well as regional representation and coordination, both external and internal with the ARCS headquarters. The head of sub-delegations will also be tasked with reviewing the structure and function of the Peshawar office.

A new delegate has been recruited to provide support to ARCS in managing the *marastoons* project, which the national society has recently taken over from the German Red Cross. The ARCS leadership sees the *marastoons* programme as a flagship activity for the national society. A new finance/administration delegate and health coordinator are in place. At the end of the first quarter, the number of delegates was seven, a considerable reduction from the same period last year, and 130 national staff.

As the lead agency in Afghanistan, ICRC maintains responsibility for security, including that of the Federation personnel. This is further strengthened by the delegation's own detailed standing security regulations, which will be revised in the next quarter, and additional security instructions which are given in the event of a rapidly changed situation. The security measures are kept under constant review, with the Secretariat and regional delegation informed on a prompt and regular basis. In view of the deteriorating security situation, which is likely to further worsen in the run-up to the elections scheduled for 18 September 2005, the delegation will consider a possible reduction in the number of visitors and delegates in the country over the summer period.

Finally, the delegation plans to move to the old ARCS headquarters, situated in the city centre and much nearer to the ARCS headquarters and the Kabul branch. Unfortunately, for various reasons including security, it is not yet possible for the delegation to be based at the ARCS national headquarters, but this is certainly a long-term objective, when a smaller Federation presence could be envisaged.

Another issue that adds more workload to the delegation in this very complex working environment is related to a high number of specific reporting requirements from many donors. This burden would need to be decreased in order to allow the delegation to concentrate more energy on service delivery than on carrying out heavy administrative tasks.

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

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->					TOTAL COVERAGE	
					9,055,922	25.5%
BRITISH - RC		90,217	GBP	196,763	06.04.05	HEALTH
BRITISH - GOVT/DIFD GRANT				106,000	01.01.05	ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
CAPACITY BUILDING FUND				75,000	18.01.05	BRANCH DEVELOPMENT & CAPACITY STRENGTHENING
GERMANY - RC		100,000	EUR	153,950	17.02.05	HEALTH AND DM
FINNISH - GOVT/RC		100,000	EUR	154,900	29.03.05	DISASTER MANAGEMENT
FINNISH - RC		40,000	EUR	61,960	22.03.05	HUMANITARIAN VALUES
FINNISH - RC		80,000	EUR	123,920	22.03.05	CBFA
HELLENIC - GOVT		27,000	EUR	41,809	28.02.05	ADRASKAN CLINIC
NORWAY - GOVT/RC				165,900	17.03.05	DELEGATE COSTS
SWEDISH - RC		1,000,000	SEK	171,000	18.04.05	HEALTH ACTIVITIES
SWEDISH - GOVT		3,400,000	SEK	581,400	18.04.05	DISASTER MANAGEMENT, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH ACTIVITIES
SWEDISH - GOVT		450,000	SEK	76,950	29.03.05	HIV/AIDS
USA - PRIVATE DONOR		2,000	USD	2,264	20.05.05	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1,911,816	CHF	21.1%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
AUSTRALIA	DELEGATE(S)			57,200		
CANADA	DELEGATE(S)			91,400		
GREAT BRITAIN	DELEGATE(S)			73,000		
DENMARK	DELEGATE(S)			3,200		
FINLAND	DELEGATE(S)			54,600		
GERMANY	DELEGATE(S)			73,000		
GREECE	DELEGATE(S)			48,200		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				400,600	CHF	4.4%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

Afghanistan

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 05AA045

PLEDGES RECEIVED

07/06/2005

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