

INFORMATION BULLETIN



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: EXPLOSION

17 August 2002

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This Bulletin is for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The Situation

Several people were killed and injured in a massive explosion near Jalalabad, in eastern Afghanistan, on Friday 9 August 2002. The cause is as yet unknown and investigations are ongoing. An Afghan Red Crescent (ARCS) house to house survey the following day in Tappa-e-Darunta village concluded that 17 people died and 172 were injured.

The blast devastated the Afghan Construction and Logistics Unit (ACLU), a local NGO. The victims were mainly villagers and travellers on the nearby main road. In addition to the casualties, several homes were destroyed and damaged. Of those still standing, some are in danger of collapsing. Villagers, who have been made homeless, have been taken in by neighbours and friends.

The majority of the population is poor, relying on casual brick labouring and subsistence agricultural work. In the wake of the explosion, a lack of food, water, shelter material, blankets and medicines are the greatest needs.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The ARCS team found that 158 families (1,224 people) - 12 percent of the population - had had their homes destroyed or severely damaged: 48 families (397 people) whose homes were destroyed or near-destroyed; 54 families (395 people) whose homes were severely damaged; and 56 families whose homes were badly damaged. In addition, water pipes have been damaged affecting supplies.

The security situation in the area remains tense. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's lead agency in-country advises on all security issues and is monitoring the situation.

The UN's assistance mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) called a coordination meeting the day after the blast. The ARCS - and Federation - attended and presented its survey findings. It was later agreed that the ARCS and its network of volunteers - in cooperation with the Federation - would coordinate relief supplies from the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN's refugee agency (UNHCR), World Health Organisation (WHO), and INTERSOS.

The four organisations pledged the following:

- UNHCR - 100 blankets, 150 plastic mats, 200 pieces of soap, 150 jerry cans and 50 plastic sheets.
- WHO - medicines for the local clinic and the University Hospital of Jalalabad.

- WFP - a one-off supply of food for two months to the 158 families on the ARCS's list plus a one month supply for another 173 families. In addition, WFP will provide food for work to help remove debris and clear canals.
- INTERSOS - 21 tents - 40 people each - and two 1,000-litre water bladders.

To make up the shortfall in pledges, the Federation provided 308 blankets, 166 jerry cans and 48 tents. It also covered transport and delivery costs from Kabul and the payment of incentives for volunteers engaged in the distribution. The ARCS and Federation distributed all items on Tuesday 13 August. As part of the operation, the ARCS provided:

- storage and security;
- volunteers and security for distribution; and
- professional medical staff to handle the WHO medicine.

The local government is also using the ARCS victims' list in a charity project to make payments to families of those who were killed and injured. The ARCS will continue to monitor the situation and try to address any additional needs.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

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For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

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