

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: EARTHQUAKE

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This Bulletin is being issued based on the information available at this time. The Federation is currently not seeking international assistance. However, depending on further updates and assessment reports, an appeal may be launched to assist the Afghan Red Crescent Society in its relief operation.

The Situation

A series of earthquakes - registering up to 6.2 on the Richter scale - struck the Nahrin district of Baghlan province in northern Afghanistan overnight. Unconfirmed reports put the death toll from 100 to as high as 1,800 people, with 5,000 people injured. It is also estimated that 10,000 people have been displaced and 4,000 houses destroyed. Nahrin, which has a population of 82,916, was reported to be 85% destroyed. The region is 160 km east of Mazar-i-Sharif over difficult terrain in the Hindu Kush.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have made available a stock of relief items for dispatch with a UN convoy due to leave Mazar-i-Sharif later today. The stock - which includes tents, blankets, kitchen sets and jerry cans - is sufficient for 5,000 families.

A Red Crescent health emergency mobile unit, equipped with medical supplies, is due to arrive in Nahrin later today. Because of the confusing nature of early reports, the team will not only provide immediate medical assistance but also verify the extent of the disaster in terms of numbers affected and most pressing needs. A second information bulletin will be issued early tomorrow and will include their first assessment.

UNOCHA has taken the lead role to coordinate all relief efforts in kind and services. The Federation has submitted a list of all available supplies and emergency stocks it has in the area (see table below).

The Federation's relief delegate is due to travel to Pulhi Khumri and Nahrin tomorrow. Federation logistics personnel are arranging for more supplies to be sent from Kabul to Mazar tomorrow.

Government and UN officials left Kabul to carry out a needs assessment. They were due to report back this evening to an Emergency Task Force Office established at the UNDP.

The Russian Embassy has offered an Antonov airplane to fly emergency supplies from UNHCR to Kunduz airfield.

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WFP has agreed to provide three helicopters by tomorrow morning (March 27) to fly in relief items and mostly medical personnel. The Federation's health delegate, based in Mazar, will take part in the assessment.

The ARCS also responded to an earthquake on March 3, measuring 6.7 on the Richter scale which killed at least 70 people in Samangan province north-eastern Afghanistan. Two earthquakes in February and May 1998 left about 9,000 people dead in north-eastern Afghanistan.

As well as the stocks available in Mazar, the Federation has the following relief items in other warehouses around Afghanistan. National Societas and donors wishing to offer assistance are requested to coordinate their response taking into account the availability of the below items.

Items	Unit	Kabul Available	Mazar Available	Herat Available	Kandahar Available	Jalalabad Available	Total Available
Blanket	pc	16'617	4'766	0	1'876	0	23'259
Cooking set	set	3'768		0	0	0	3'768
Tent	set	2'446	888	3'400	431	0	7'165
Plastic sheet	roll	72	36	0	344	0	452
Jerry cans	pc	7'774	1'153	0	-601	0	8'326
Shovel	pc	344	245	200	199	0	
Pick axes	pc	99	50	50	49	0	
Generator	pc	1	1	1	1	1	
Plastic rope	meter	400	200	200	200	0	
Stretcher	pc	147	0	50	50	0	
Sleeping bag	pc	60	7	24	39	0	
Kitchen set	set	0	0	600	878	0	1'478
Tarpauline	pc	0	4'198	0	46	0	4'244

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

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

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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