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## Information bulletin

### Afghanistan: Flash Floods

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

<b>MDRAF005; Glide n°</b> <a href="#">FF-2019-000018-AFG</a>	<b>Date of issue:</b> 8 March 2019
<b>Date of disaster:</b> 1 March, 2019	<b>Point of contact:</b> Abdulrahman Kalantary Disaster Management Director (ARCS)
<b>Operation start date:</b>	<b>Expected timeframe:</b>
<b>Host National Society(ies):</b> Afghan Red Crescent Society	
<b>Number of people affected:</b> Approx. 250,000 people (36,000 families)	<b>Number of people to be assisted:</b>
<b>N° of National Societies currently involved in the operation:</b> Canadian Red Cross, Danish Red Cross and Norwegian Red Cross.	
<b>N° of other partner organizations involved in the operation:</b> Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) and provincial government through Provincial Disaster Management Committees (PDMC) in 16 provinces.	

***This bulletin is being issued to reflect the current situation and details available at this time. The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), with support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), is activating a Disaster Emergency Relief Fund (DREF) allocation to support the relief activities for the flash floods operation. An emergency appeal is now in the pipeline, which ARCS is going to scale up the operation for both drought and flash floods happening in country.***

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## The situation

Afghanistan is highly prone to intense and recurring natural hazards such as flooding, earthquakes, snow avalanches, landslides and droughts due to its geographical location and years of environmental degradation. Climate change also poses a threat to Afghanistan's natural resources, of which the majority of Afghans depend for their livelihoods. Afghanistan faces significant impacts of climate change and disasters which impact growth prospects. It has a continental climate, which combined with its location at the western end of the Himalayas, renders it susceptible to extremes of temperature and rainfall. Together with the limited vegetation in many mountainous areas, extensive destruction of forests and warmer temperatures limiting snowfall, spring and summer storms in particular can lead to flash floods in many parts of the country.



Disaster Response Teams are conducting rapid need assessment in flood affected areas of Afghanistan. **(Photo by: ARCS)**

According to the Government of Afghanistan through its command and control centre for Flood Emergency and UN OCHA report, eight provinces have been affected by heavy rains and flooding since 1 March 2019, in which more than 20 people died and thousands of houses swept away. Helmand, Zabul, Kandahar and Farah provinces are severely affected. A further seven provinces have been affected by snowfall and avalanches. It is important to note that those provinces are also heavily affected by drought which the vulnerability remains high.

A meeting has been held under the chairmanship of President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on recent flooding and how to assist the affected population. The participants of this meeting were Chief Executive Officer, the Minister of State for Disaster Management, Ministry of Refugee and Returns and Head of the Central Statistics and they shared the updates of affected population by devastating floods in Afghanistan. These floods have been created damages in eight provinces and the possibility of flooding in other provinces is predicted. The Government of Afghanistan established command and control centre under the supervision of Minister of State for Disaster Management, for coordination and to assist flood affectees. In this response, government involve civil and military departments from the country and in order to better response to flood affected population in provinces which is organised by the Chief Executive Officer.

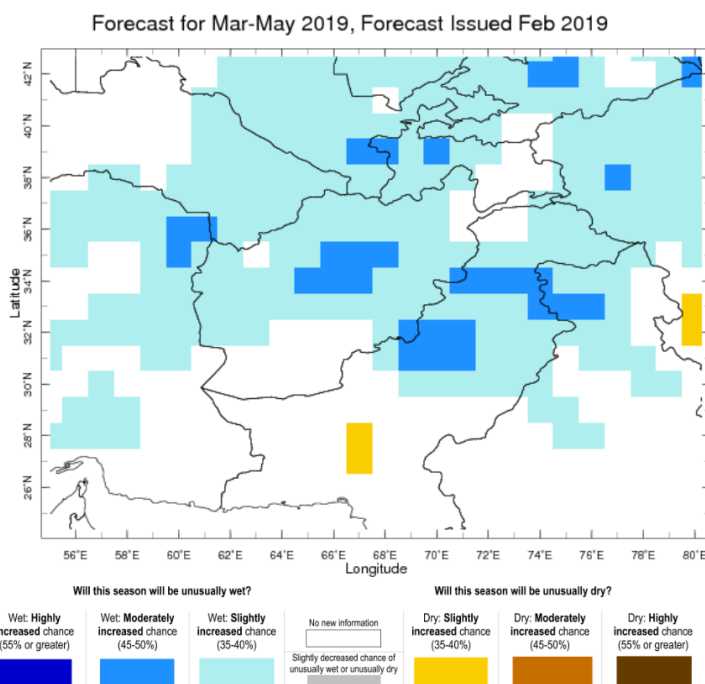
Due to El Nino phenomenon declared in early February this year, which bring above-normal snowfall/ rainfall to Afghanistan, and also warmer temperatures across the country. The country has witnessed unusual heavy rainfall, an increase of 146 per cent from the record. According to the forecast by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), it is expected that rainy weather will continue until May, with 40-50 per cent higher than normal, and the air temperature will be higher than the average in the months of February to April. In addition to poor soil absorption due to the drought, it is expected that the risk of flash floods to increase in the coming months.

According to the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) and Command and Control Centre for Flood Emergency, the vulnerability of the population is further heightened where 212 villages in 111 districts with a total of 111,121 people are heavily exposed to the threat of a possible flood events. In addition, 111 hectares of gardens, 121 hectares of vineyards, 1,186 hectares of agricultural land and 2,883 hectares of heavily threat by risk of flooding. Due to the floods, there is an increased risk of potential disease outbreaks (vector borne, and water borne diseases) over the next two weeks.

The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) and other humanitarian agencies are conducting assessments in affected areas. The Government of Afghanistan has activated its Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) with the support of UN agencies in flood affected provinces and coordinating the response activities to affected people. Flood affected people are in need of emergency shelter, warm clothing, food and non-food items and hygiene kits.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) remains vigilant and has been monitoring the situation since the onset of the flash floods. ARCS has been in coordination with Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) and Command and Control Centre for Flood Emergency and participating in cluster meetings in provinces and at national level. National Statistics and Information Department, Afghanistan is observing the



Source: IRI Multi-Model Probability Forecast for precipitation and temperatures, by the Columbia University.

deteriorating situation for the last three weeks. ARCS National Headquarters requesting its provincial branches to submit primary information reports regarding flooding situation in their respective provinces. The EOC at headquarters level has been activated to coordinate with relevant stakeholders and update on the situation on a regular basis. ARCS provincial branches mobilized its branch trained staff and volunteers to conduct rapid assessment in flood affected provinces with the support of National Headquarters' technical capacity.



ARCS is distributing NFIs to the flood affected families. (Photo: ARCS)

Based on the situation and request for assistance by the Government of Afghanistan, in the first week of March, ARCS has decided to launch an operation aimed at providing humanitarian assistance in the worst affected areas. 250 non-food relief items (NFIs) have been distributed to 250 families (1,750 people) in Zabul, Herat, Farah and Uruzgan provinces.

The ARCS disaster management and operations team is currently developing a four-month response plan to cover four worst affected provinces through DREF allocation. The plan will cover key needs in the areas of emergency shelter and non-food items for 5,000 families.

Initial findings from the assessment at eight affected provinces conducted by the ARCS team are tabulated below:

Region	Province	Districts/Villages	House destroyed	Injured People	No. of People died	Public building & Mosques
East Region	Nangarhar	Chaparhaar District, Guldara Dowlatzai Village, Surkh Rood District, Bakhtaan Village, Angoor Bagh area of Jalal Abaad and Haska Mina district Dowlatkheil Village	920	143	13	11
South West Region	Kandahar	Arghandaab, Panjwai, Dand, Zherai, Boldack and Shah Wali Kot	1,214	230	25	23
	Helmand	Lashkargah district, Seminti, Qala Kuhna and Saafyan villages	431	137	5	20
South West Central Region	Paktia	Zaazi Aryoub district Marikhil village and Wazi Zadran district	37	3	3	11
	Khost	Mandozai, Bak, Ali Shir, Sabri districts and Khost City	43	19	2	7
	Wardak	Sayed Abaad, Daimir daad, Jalriz districts	31	7	0	3
West Region	Farah	Ab Kamari, Bala Murghab, Jawand, Qala-e-Naw	980	329	19	17
	Herat	Shendand district	100	79	7	5
<b>Total</b>			<b>3,756</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>97</b>

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is having regular coordination and communication with the ARCS. The ARCS disaster management teams are in the field conducting rapid need assessment and based on the completion of assessment, ARCS will organise the meeting with in-country movement partners, IFRC and ICRC regarding the flood situation and ARCS response planning.



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## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

- **In the Afghanistan Red Crescent Society:**
  - Dr. Nilab Mobarez, secretary general; phone: +93781570085; email: [drnilab.mobarez@gmail.com](mailto:drnilab.mobarez@gmail.com)
  - Abdulrahman Kalantary, director disaster management; phone: +93792222182; email: [kalantary@redcrescent.af](mailto:kalantary@redcrescent.af)
- **In the IFRC Afghanistan Country Office:**
  - Ariel Kestens, head of country office; phone: +93 700274881; email: [ariel.kestens@ifrc.org](mailto:ariel.kestens@ifrc.org)
  - Dr. Arvind Bhardwaj, health delegate/acting DM delegate; phone: +93 702727254 email: [Arvind.Bhardwaj@ifrc.org](mailto:Arvind.Bhardwaj@ifrc.org),
  - Abdul Basit Khan Swati, surge operational support; phone: +93 707549974; email: [abdul.basit@ifrc.org](mailto:abdul.basit@ifrc.org),
- **IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office, Kuala Lumpur:**
  - Necephor Mghendi, head of disaster and crisis prevention, response and recovery; email: [necephor.mghendi@ifrc.org](mailto:necephor.mghendi@ifrc.org)
  - Alice Ho, operations coordinator; email: [alice.ho@ifrc.org](mailto:alice.ho@ifrc.org)

**For communications enquiries:**

- **In IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office:** Zulaikha Mudzar, acting communications manager; email: [zulaikha.mudzar@ifrc.org](mailto:zulaikha.mudzar@ifrc.org)

**For planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) enquiries:**

- **In IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office:** Liew Siew Hui, PMER manager; email: [siewhui.liew@ifrc.org](mailto:siewhui.liew@ifrc.org)

## How we work

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**Save lives,**  
protect livelihoods,  
and strengthen recovery  
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**  
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**  
and a culture of  
**non-violence** and **peace**.

