

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

IRAN DROUGHT: SUPPORT TO AFGHAN REFUGEES

08 September 2004

REVISED PLAN OF ACTION: AUGUST 2004 -
MARCH 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. 19/02; Operations Update No. 4; Period covered: August 2003 to July 2004;
Revised Appeal coverage : 74%; ([please click here to go directly to the attached revised budget](#)).

Appeal history:

- A first Appeal (21/2000) was launched on 22 August 2000 for CHF 2,268,146 for 12 months for 100,000 beneficiaries. The final report was issued on 31 December 2002.
- A second – related but separate Appeal (19/2002) – was launched on 15 July 2002 for CHF 899,000 for initially 12 months (later extended) for 65,000 beneficiaries
- A revised Plan of Action – presented in August 2004 and detailed in this report – to continue the programme until March 2005, supporting 45,335 beneficiaries
- A new revised Appeal budget from July 2002 to March 2005 is CHF 2,249,198.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: N/A

Outstanding needs: CHF 572,756

Operational Summary:

In May 2004, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (the Federation) commissioned an evaluation of the operation aimed at the distribution of clean water, solid waste disposal and health education among Afghan refugees. The evaluation team composed of experts in water/sanitation, health and disaster management analysed the project from different angles and made a number of recommendations regarding its future.

In general, the evaluation team observed that the objectives as formulated in the proposal were achieved. The work done by the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is recognised and appreciated by the beneficiaries, the local authorities and others and Iranian authorities have recognised the importance of the project and its impact on improving health situation in operational areas. However, there are some concerns about the future of the project. Both the Federation and IRCS initially approached the project as a short-term emergency response operation. The “emergency-response” approach proved to have worked at initial stages of the operation, when an efficient system of water distribution was quickly created. But, being an essentially prolonged relief intervention, the project also needs to pay attention to such issues as sustainability of the project, dependency of beneficiaries and IRCS’ capacity to work with beneficiary communities.

Having examined various options to address these issues and ensure a smooth phase out, the evaluation team suggested an integrated exit strategy, which links with the strategic priorities of IRCS, the Federation country

delegation, Middle East/North Africa (MENA) regional activities, and goes some way towards meeting beneficiary needs. The specific recommendations made by the evaluation team in this regard are:

- To continue water trucking operation,
- To establish a time limit for phasing out the water supply component of the project, taking into account the time required to put in place an appropriate communication strategy and other activities supporting repatriation,
- To construct 1-2 extra water filling station(s) close to the beneficiary-populated areas using the existing water network,
- Using the new water filling station(s) to increase frequency of the water trucking service,
- To construct 4-8 public water distribution points close to the refugee-populated areas in Zahedan,
- To develop a communication strategy to deliver the message to the refugees,
- To transform the existing health education component into Community Based First Aid (CBFA) programme. To include a component of Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA) training and TBA kit distribution into the proposed CBFA. To provide TBA kits to trained Traditional Birth Attendants. To consider distributing larger kits to TBAs who are returning to Afghanistan during the repatriation programme. To utilise CBFA activities to support the communication strategy.
- To support IRCS in building its capacities to work closely with the beneficiary communities and utilise this increased capacity to support the communication strategy.

The Federation believes that these approaches will make it possible to continue meeting the urgent needs of beneficiaries in a fixed period while providing them with a more sustainable water solution and an opportunity for their capacity building, and thus ensure a smooth phase out of the project. Based on the recommendations of the evaluation team, the Federation has set March 2005 as a final time limit for phasing out and revised the Plan of Action and the budget in order to accommodate the activities planned for the final phase out.

This update serves as a formal announcement that the Appeal for Support to Afghan Refugees will remain active and that its operation time frame will be extended to March 2005, and presents an overview of the revised Plan of Action and budget for a period from August 2004 to March 2005.

The new revised Appeal budget from July 2002 to March 2005 is CHF 2,249,198. Out of the total income CHF 1,665,740 received by the Federation, there still remains a balance CHF 335,050 by the end of August 2004. Therefore, **the actual shortfall to cover the extended period is CHF 572,756.**

The Federation avails itself of this opportunity to express its deep thanks to the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), the Swiss Government, and Participating National Societies of Sweden, United States, Finland, Germany and Japan for their generous funding support to the project and appeal for continuous donor support for implementation of this revised Plan of Action.

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The IRCS maintains a website (www.rcs.ir) both in English and Farsi which also provides the latest information, operational updates, reports, interviews and news on the Bam operation to the public.

Background

Over the past six years, Iran has suffered from a severe drought, which has particularly affected the three eastern provinces of the country - Sistan-Baluchestan, Kerman and Khorasan. Among the three, Sistan-Baluchestan, one of the poorest provinces in Iran, has been seriously hit. IRCS and the Federation started the drought assistance project under review in August 2000. The project focused on providing the most vulnerable people in Zahedan and Zabul cities, Sistan-Baluchestan Province of Iran, with a sufficient amount of water, health education and basic hygiene kits. A solid waste disposal program has also been implemented to clean the area and raise environmental awareness among the population. More than 80 % of the beneficiaries of the project are Afghan refugees living in non-camp sites in and around Zahedan and Zabul, the remaining 20% being Iranian families living in the same areas.

With no sign of the drought abating and given the uncertain future of repatriation of the Afghan refugees, there is a need to pay attention to more sustainable approaches, while maintaining the water supply through water trucking system in the short to medium term.

Operational developments

In July 2002, the Federation launched a second consecutive emergency appeal to assist 65,000 people affected by severe water shortages in Sistan-Baluchistan, close to the border with Afghanistan. The operation is a continuation of the Appeal 21/2000.

The distribution of clean drinking water in Zahedan assisted the Afghan refugees to meet their basic requirements and served to promote health and hygiene amongst the targeted population and prevent water-borne diseases. Cleaning up the general living areas in the settlements has guaranteed the safety of water delivered. Health education and distribution of hygiene supplies have also introduced the means to encourage healthy living. Through the health and hygiene education and distribution of health kits, the refugee population's awareness of personal hygiene has been raised. The distribution of plastic water containers to the beneficiaries of the water delivery program has enabled them to collect their daily water allocation by healthier means, thereby preventing beneficiaries from using worn-out and sometimes unclean containers. A one-off distribution of stationary kits to Afghan students studying in city schools in Zahedan and Zabul was undertaken, thereby helping parents of Afghan students to cover the educational costs of their children.

Coordination

IRCS and the Federation have been carrying out this operation in close cooperation with provincial authorities like the Zahedan Public Health Department, the Zahedan Water and Sewage Company and the Sistan-Baluchistan Regional Water Department. In Zabul, regular meetings with the Zabul Rural Water Department are being held to facilitate water collection and distribution. Meetings were held with the Zahedan Municipality to coordinate overall city plans with garbage collection activities undertaken by the program and to encourage the Municipality to include the Afghan living areas in their own program mes.

In addition, coordination meetings are being held at field level between IRCS, the Federation, United Nations agencies and Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF). Finally, efforts are being made to coordinate humanitarian assistance provided through this operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which is responsible for the implementation of the voluntary repatriation scheme that began in 2002 and is scheduled to run until the end of March 2005.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

IRCS and the Federation have been implementing the operation since August 2000. The focus has remained largely the same, both in terms of the beneficiary selection criteria and programme objectives. The number of

water delivery program beneficiaries increased, with the addition of new distribution sites. Moreover, the number of targeted beneficiaries for the health education and distribution of health kits components of the program were increased, as the increased capacity of the National Society enabled it to do so. The continuity of the operation has provided the opportunity to refine the implementation modalities and build capacities on the basis of lessons learnt.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Society

During its first year of implementation, the project suffered from a number of problems - especially financial ones. The National Society Branch was not as experienced as it subsequently became during the second and third years of the programme. Initially, there was no well-planned and close internal monitoring system at branch level, and branch officers were passive in planning. During the period of reporting, the operating National Society made considerable improvement in terms of internal monitoring system, clear responsibilities and duties of the staff involved in the project, initiating plans, project implementation, financial reporting, and so on.

Objectives, activities and results

Water and sanitation

Objective 1: Distribute fresh water to the affected population in Zahedan and Zabul, populated mainly by Afghan refugees living in non-camp settlements.

From August 2003 to the end of September 2003, attempts were made to increase overall water delivery through negotiation with the local authorities and an oil distribution company. As a result, from December 2003 to March 2004, 600,000 litres of drinking water was distributed to 69,000 people on a daily basis.

In Zahedan, five distribution points were added by using the remaining tanks from Zabul and therefore, the number of fixed distribution points went up to 22 in Zahedan. From April to July 2004, approximately 644,000 litres of water was distributed daily to 63,855 people in Zahedan and Zabul

Table 1. Distribution points in Zahedan

Tank No	Name of settlements in Zahedan	Fixed tank capacity (Lt)	Location
1	Karimabad	20,000	End of lane Jamejam Gas Station
2	Karimabad	20,000	Next to Ave. Pasgah 14
3	Karimabad	20,000	After Pasgah 14
4	Shirabad	20,000	Bolv. Keshavarz, Ave. opposite Keshavarz
5	Shirabad	20,000	Hemmatabad
6	Shirabad	20,000	Shirabad, Majdieh
7	Isolated settlement	20,000	Keshavarz Square, Siksuzi
8	Shirabad	20,000	By Camel Market
9	Shirabad	20,000	End of Ayadi Avenue
10	Shirabad	12,000	Bagh-e-Rakhshaniha
11	Isolated settlement	5,000	Keshavarz Square, right hand
12	Shirabad	5,000	Esmaiel Abad, 1 st Chahardivari
13	Isolated settlement	5,000	Siksuzi (Qasemabad)
14	Isolated settlement	5,000	End of Jadeqadim
15	Isolated settlement	5,000	Behind RC warehouse
16	Isolated settlement	5,000	Behind Haqqani mosque
17	Isolated settlement	12,000	By Haqqani mosque
18	Isolated settlement	20,000	Jadeqadim, Bazr 1 (Shahid Rajaie)
19	Isolated settlement	5,000	Jadeqadim
20	Shirabad	5,000	Hematabad Square, Bulukzani
21	Shirabad	5,000	Meydan-e-Keshavarz

22	Karimabad	5,000	After Pasgah 14
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In Zabul, chlorinated water was collected free of charge from two water outlets of the city's water pipeline and distributed in remote rural areas through six distribution points. A decrease from 15 distribution points in the previous operation to six in this one was due to the implementation of the government plan to connect 932 villages in Zabul to the regular water supply system. Eleven small villages targeted by the IRCS operation were included in that plan, and they could therefore be removed from the beneficiary list of this project, while two new villages were added. These did not receive water through the government's scheme and their wells had completely dried up. Approximately 2,600 beneficiaries received an average of 23.07 litres of water per person per day, thus making the total amount of water distributed in Zabul 60,000 litres per day.

Table 2. Distribution points in Zabul

Tank no	Name of Village	Fixed Tank Capacity (Lt)
1	Dahanebagh	20,000
2	Bazikhalesi	20,000
3	Palgi-Bazi	20,000
4	Dargi	5,000
5	Eisa	5,000
6	Allahkadar	5,000

Out of the total fleet available for this project, in Zahedan, IRCS is using 11 trucks - six of 12,000 litres capacity, four of 5,000 litres, one of IRCS 30,000 litres, as well as 10 mobile water tractors. In Zabul, three trucks of 12,000 litres capacity were being used for water distribution.

Community members, including women, were selected to guard water tanks, oversee distribution of water and keep records of delivery. They are recruited from amongst the Afghan population, as part of overall efforts to help them cope with highly limited employment opportunities. The Provincial Branch of IRCS improved control at the distribution points by contracting a supervisor, who makes daily rounds on his motorbike to monitor water distribution and acts as liaison between the beneficiaries and the Provincial Branch Co-ordinator.

During the field visits performed by the Federation Delegation Office in Zahedan to the water distribution sites, it was found that the beneficiaries of the water delivery program were using worn-out water containers. In order to ensure the safety of the water delivered and to help water collectors, some 40,000 plastic water containers (20 litres) were procured by the IRCS Relief & Rescue Organization, and sent to Zahedan. In April 2004, 37,508 water containers were distributed among 10,266 families in Zahedan, through all the water distribution points. In Zabul region, 2,492 water containers were distributed among the water delivery program beneficiaries, throughout six Afghan villages to 535 families in May.

Specific Objective

- ✓ **Beneficiaries have better access to water through the improvement of the water trucking system and construction of a permanent water supply system.**

Activities planned to achieve this objective:

- Increase the quantity of clean water distributed to and available for beneficiaries in Zahedan (43,000 persons) by reducing the travel time and distance of water trucks and providing some sources of permanent water supply. This will be done through construction of 3 water collection points and 4 public water distribution points in residential areas of Afghan refugees.
- Distribute chlorinated water to beneficiaries in Zabul (2,355 persons) from two water outlets of the rural water network.

Expected Results:

- The total amount of daily distributed water will increase to 716,000 litres.
- Water born diseases are reduced.
- Saving from free water distribution is used in meeting other urgent needs of beneficiary families.

Objective 2: Clean up solid waste in non-camp settlements, especially in areas close to the existing water distribution points.

The solid waste disposal project was implemented in Zahedan, with the aim to increase hygiene in the targeted areas, especially those around water distribution points. IRCS recruited, trained and equipped two teams - 11 solid waste workers and 2 drivers. The teams were responsible for the collection of solid waste in allocated sites (one team was in charge of cleaning the defined sites in Karimabad, another team in Shirabad), and its transport by two tractor-trailers to a special disposal area allocated by the municipality, located 12 km away from Zahedan city. An average of 7 metric tons of waste was being disposed of on a daily basis.

Introducing everyday clean living environment to the refugees by the IRCS garbage collectors has psychologically encouraged them to manage garbage disposal even without external support. They have recently begun to take away garbage from the fixed tanks on their own initiative. They are not as careless about their living areas as they had been before. The IRCS has negotiated with the local municipality and has now handed over waste disposal responsibilities to them. Regardless of this and even though the municipality remains somewhat unconcerned about waste in these living areas, an increasing number of refugees have begun to follow-up on waste disposal themselves on a daily basis – reflecting a growing sense of care and responsibility amongst them.

Health and care**Objective 3: Establish a community based preventive health and hygiene promotion programme, in order to improve the living conditions of the Afghan refugee population in non-camp settlements.**

Pamphlets containing simple information on personal hygiene, safe use of water and environmental health were compiled in Farsi and used in health and hygiene education. The IRCS implemented the programme with forty IRCS volunteers trained in public health. They visited beneficiaries' households, collected information on the general health situation and provided face-to-face advice and guidance on safe use of water, hygiene, as well as general and reproductive health. A comprehensive questionnaire was designed for the purpose and the information obtained was entered into a database.

Each family was then invited to participate in further education in health and hygiene at the National Society's training facilities at the logistics warehouse, where they were also provided with hygiene kits in the form of a household trash can packed with hygiene supplies by the volunteers. In August 2003, some 300 families were covered by the health education and distribution of hygiene kits programmes. From September 2003 to March 2004, with an increased capacity of volunteers, 1,300 families were covered each month.

From April to July 2004, the overall program was modified to consist of three phases: during the first phase, over a period of ten days, 1,300 families were visited at their homes and educated in health and hygiene by volunteers; during the second phase, over a period of five days, 1,300 kits were packed; and during the final phase, covering 10 days, 1,300 previously visited families attended classes and were further educated in environmental, water, and personal hygiene issues. Following this, each family received one hygiene kit as a reward for participation. Hygiene kits were enlarged and modified to prevent members of beneficiary families from sharing individual hygiene items, while taking into consideration gender issues

Table 3. Contents of each hygiene kit

Items	Distributed in August 2003	Distributed in April-July 2004
Detergent	2 pcks	2 pcks
Dishwashing liquid	1 unit	1 unit
Toothpaste	2 pcs	3 pcs
Toothbrush	3 pcs	10 pcs
Shampoo	2 units	3 units
Soap	5 pcs	6 pcs
Garbage plastic bags	2 pcks	2 pcks
Sponge	1 pcs	
Insect killing spray	1 pcs	1 pcs
Plastic garbage bin	1 pcs	1 pcs
Sanitary napkins	-	2 pcks
O.R.S. powder	-	4 pcks

Table 4. Distribution (August 2003-July 2004)

Period (Month)	Number of distributed hygiene kits (Number of families covered)
August-03	300
September-03	1300
October-03	1300
November-03	1300
December-03	1300
January-04	1300
February-04	2306
March-04	2420
April-04	1300
May-04	1300
June-04	1300
July-04	1300
Total	16,726

Through the field visits performed by the Federation office in Zahedan, it was discovered that few Afghan children could attend classes in Iranian schools as they do not have legal residential cards. Moreover, some Afghan children were attending informal schools in Zahedan city, which were funded and established by Afghan communities concerned about the Afghan children's future. Further to a request from these Afghan communities, it was proposed to provide Afghan students with some stationary – both for the formal and informal Afghan schooling, to help the Afghan refugees cope with this difficult living situation. Procurement of 4,400 stationary kits was carried out in Tehran, and sent to Zahedan. In May 2004, 1,203 stationary kits were distributed among Afghan students studying in 107 schools in Zabul and 3,197 stationary kits were distributed among Afghan students in 15 schools in Zahedan.

Table 5. Contents of Each Stationary Kit

ITEM	PIECES
Note Book	4 (100 Sheets)
Note Book for drawing	1
Coloured Pencils	1 Package
Pencil	8
Red Pencils	4
Pen	5
Pencil Sharpener	2
Eraser	2
Ruler	1

Specific Objective

- ✓ **Afghan refugees have increased their capacity to deal with health-related issues by themselves.**

Activities planned to achieve this objective:

- Provide Traditional Birth Attendant training for 20 Afghan women.
- Educate 15,000 refugees in primary health care, environmental health, family health, disease prevention and hygiene.
- Train 60 Afghan men and women as skilled community health workers.
- Distribute public awareness materials among beneficiaries.

Expected Results:

- Afghan women have safe child delivery with the help of Traditional Birth Attendants.
- Afghan refugees have better knowledge of community health issues.
- Afghan refugees get primary health care from trained community health workers.
- Red Crescent messages are delivered to target population.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – Principles and Initiatives

IRCS and the Federation played an important role in advocating the need for the provision of a minimum standard of assistance to the refugees, jointly with UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The vulnerable Iranian population living in these same settlements were also included in this operation, thereby ensuring a balance in the provision of assistance and adherence to the criterion of vulnerability as the most important one in identifying target groups.

Female beneficiaries were of major importance in projects such as this one, in view of their central role in the maintenance of households, including the use of water and family hygiene. For that reason, they were particularly targeted by the health education campaigns, and provided with information on safe use of water, proper hygiene and preventive health measures. Women were also being recruited to supervise and administer water distribution from fixed water tankers.

National Society Capacity Building

The Sistan-Baluchistan Provincial Branch of IRCS considerably strengthened its technical and human resources capacity during the course of this project. The vehicle fleet procured through the emergency appeal was handed over to the National Society to replace old malfunctioning trucks and a number of leased vehicles. Human

resources were enhanced, with over 100 new staff and volunteers being recruited and trained. IRCS project coordinators and field officers assumed a greater number of responsibilities within the programme.

The Provincial Branch elaborated an organizational chart indicating clear duties and responsibilities for each person involved in the project. An administrative project base was established at the relief warehouse complex, where the Executive Manager and Project Co-ordinator are based. The vehicle fleet was also located at the warehouse complex, which facilitated monitoring of logistics and staff. Assisted technically by the Federation Delegation team, planning, response and financial reporting according to Federation procedures and standards improved considerably during the project implementation period.

Federation Delegation

The Federation delegation is assisting IRCS in the overall operational management, by coordinating donor response, monitoring the implementation and providing technical assistance to IRCS in capacity building with a focus on planning, monitoring and evaluation of programs, facilitation in the strengthening of human and financial resources and standardization of procedures. A Federation senior field officer based in Zahedan is in charge of daily supervision, monitoring, and coordination of activities with the IRCS provincial branch, as well as data collection - including information on weather conditions, health statistics, repatriation process and other information necessary for the evaluation of the impact of the operation on the most vulnerable.

Advocacy/Public Information

Most activities to advocate the needs and rights of the target population are made at the field level, through cooperation with local authorities, the United Nations and non-governmental organisations present in the region. Local and international media are active in follow-up on the drought situation in the region, as well as regarding issues of water-distribution between Afghanistan and Iran. Finally, IRCS and the Federation are using their respective web sites to draw further attention of external partners and the general public to the need to continue supporting this essential operation.

Outstanding needs

In May 2004, the Federation commissioned an evaluation to formulate a long-term strategy for dealing with refugees and drought, and to design a possible exit strategy for the Federation. Based on recommendations of the evaluation team and in order to meet the needs of beneficiaries in the field, the Federation and IRCS have opted for time-bound and more sustainable solutions as part of a final phase out of this programme. To this end, the Federation requests the extension of the operational period of the Appeal until the end of March 2005. During this period, emphasis will be put on providing more sustainable solutions to the problems faced by Afghan refugees in accordance with the revised Plan of Action.

A total of CHF 918,508 is needed to finance the planned activities in this extended period. The CHF 335,050 that remains from the appeal will be used to support the continuous supply of clean water to the target beneficiaries. **Donors are invited to cover a shortfall of CHF 572,756** which is essential for constructing public water distribution points and providing health-related education and training as part of overall capacity building of Afghan refugees.

[Revised budget attached below; please click here to return to the title page](#)

BUDGET SUMMARY

APPEAL No. 19/2002

Iran Drought: Support to Afghan Refugees

TYPE	ORIGINAL	CHF REVISED
RELIEF NEEDS		
Shelter and construction		250,000
Drinking water & water tanks	101,000	
Water & sanitation	23,000	400,000
Hygeine supplies	100,000	
Chemicals	3,000	
Medical & first aid		150,000
Teaching materials		25,000
Other relief supplies	5,000	65,000
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS	232,000	890,000
CAPITAL EQUIPMENT		
Vehicles		62,000
PROGRAMME SUPPORT		
Programme support (6.5% of total)	99,000	146,198
TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS		
Transport & vehicle costs	111,000	80,000
PERSONNEL		
Expatriate staff	113,000	242,000
National staff	270,000	495,000
Workshopr & training		210,000
Consultants		21,000
ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES		
Travel & related expenses	20,000	18,000
Information expenses	9,000	25,000
Administrative & general expenses	45,000	60,000
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS	667,000	1,359,198
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES	899,000	2,249,198
LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)		1,676,442
NET REQUEST		572,756