

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

AFGHANISTAN: SEVERE WINTER

4 March 2005

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organisation and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

Appeal No. 05EA003; Operations Update no. 2; Period covered: 24 February to 4 March, 2005; Appeal coverage: 21.2%; ([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List, also available on the website](#)).

Appeal history:

- Launched on 21 February, 2005 for CHF 812,000 (USD 686,330 or EUR 525,620) for 3 months to assist 17,542 beneficiaries.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 100,000.

Outstanding needs: CHF 640,098 (USD 541,997 or EUR 413,140)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: Afghanistan [Annual Appeal 05AA045](#)

Operational Summary: This operation has been quickly initiated to assist the Afghanistan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) respond to the severe winter conditions in Kabul by providing a basic support to more than 17,000 persons whose vulnerability has been worsened by heavy snow and rain falls and temperatures reaching -16 C at night. There has been a positive response from donors/partners at the local level. ARCS is receiving support from Afghanistan traders and other private donors.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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Background

Afghanistan has been suffering from extremely severe winter conditions since mid-January with heavy snowfalls, rain and bitterly cold conditions. Hundreds of people have died nationwide as a result. ARCS has been given a major role in assisting 3,435 highly vulnerable families of internally displaced persons (IDPs) currently living in very basic conditions in Kabul. They are in the process of being relocated in three districts. While this process is continuing, many have to live in old and partially damaged buildings which offer little protection against the elements.

Operational developments

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

Overall Objective: to improve the lives of IDPs and returnees in Kabul severely affected by the adverse winter weather and meet the urgent humanitarian needs of 3,435 unassisted families and strengthen the capacity of the Afghan Red Crescent through disaster preparedness and response.

Specific objective 1: to distribute basic food items to 3,435 families and non-food items to 1,484 families covering a three-month period and to replenish the DP stocks used during this response.

Progress/Achievements

To respond to the humanitarian situation, the ARCS-disaster management (DM) department, with support from the Federation, has been active from the first day, providing essential relief items from available stocks and maintaining a close contact with key stakeholders present. Regular information sharing meetings are held as well as coordination meetings. The disaster response team has set up a Red Crescent post centres in two sites. Disaster response unit (DRU) teams are also maintaining infrastructures of settlements, including the erection of shelter, shower and latrines.

At the time of reporting, 80 percent of target beneficiaries have been reached and registered. The distribution action plan and beneficiary lists are in progress and expected to be completed by 3 March.



Distribution organised by ARCS DM staff in Takhnikam

The distribution plan for the coal and stoves has been completed and delivered to Federation logistics. Twenty MT of coal have been delivered to ARCS and four MT have already been distributed on 3 March while the stove distribution should start from 5 March. This will significantly improve the living conditions of the affected families. Due to successful negotiations, the price of coal has been highly reduced which will allow a double distribution of coal to the beneficiaries.

Impact:

The main impact is the alleviation of the suffering of the affected population by providing an appropriate and quick response and organising immediate relief items distributions.

Constraints:

The main constraint remains the lack of logistics within ARCS and the lack of communication material.

Specific Objective 2: to construct community latrines, rehabilitate existing toilets facilities for women and children and provide hygiene and preventive health education to the selected communities.

Progress/Achievements

In Risat-e-panj, 27 latrines and 30 bathing facilities will be constructed. In Markazi Talami, 27 existing latrines will be improved, 12 bathing facilities constructed and a 10,000-litre bladder has been installed with a water distribution line. The ARCS water tanker is providing potable water on daily basis. Thirty latrines facilities are under construction in Takhnikam

All three main settlements were surveyed by the community-based first aid (CBFA) trainers in order to establish basic CBFA courses to the beneficiaries and a health survey of the camps has been done by the ARCS health team, data collected are being compiled and appropriate measures will be taken accordingly.

The 22 other settlements are being surveyed by the ARCS health team and adequate action will be organised accordingly.

Impact:

The main impact is the prevention of waterborne diseases and the improvement of the hygiene situation among the beneficiaries. The inappropriate customs of the targeted population is being influenced and changed through hygiene education and preventive health awareness. During the operation, the Federation water and sanitation officer is training a newly recruited ARCS counterpart.

Constraints:

The main constraint resides in the lack of water and sanitation structure within the national society.

Specific Objective 3: to improve the capacity of ARCS in disaster preparedness and response.**Progress/Achievements**

So far, all efforts have been concentrated on organising the response to the emergency but the Federation's DM department is continuously providing guidance and support to its counterparts and ARCS colleagues. A logistician has been identified and is now working from the Federation office in order to learn the various aspects of the Federation logistics systems mechanisms and procedures.

Impact:

The ARCS DM department is gaining confidence and expertise in practicalities at headquarters level which will be duplicated at regional and district levels. The embryo of an ARCS logistics structure has been now created and will hopefully be expanded at a wider scale in the national structure.

Constraints:

The main constraint is the actual need of an immediate response to the emergency situation leaving little time to concentrate on the capacity building at this stage of the operation. More efforts will be put in this activity at a later stage.

Federation Coordination

The Federation is maintaining close links with all partners involved although ARCS is being empowered and has the ownership of the operation, while the Federation is providing support and guidance.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and initiatives

Awareness and dissemination of the Red Cross principles is ongoing towards the affected populations as well as towards the government and military forces, insisting on neutrality and independence.

The severe winter conditions in Afghanistan have resulted in extraordinary snow falls. As a direct consequence, landslides, avalanches and floods are expected to hit the country in a few weeks' time from now. The Federation is in the process of preparing a contingency plan in close cooperation with ARCS and the ICRC in order to provide a joint response in a movement perspective. Mapping of the potential prone areas and of the existing and available resources is being prepared in order to provide an appropriate response in coordination with the government and UN agencies to avoid duplication of activities.

National Society Capacity Building

During the implementation of this operation, emphasis is being put on developing ARCS' capacity in terms of logistics, communication as well as planning, budgeting and reporting. The opportunity will be taken to involve and develop the capacity of the ARCS Kabul branch during the implementation of the operation.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

The operation benefited from excellent information coverage through the traditional local media such as Bakhtar news agency, Radio-Television Afghanistan, Kabul Weekly newspaper, Anis daily news and a two-hour interview with the ARCS programme coordinator took place on 26 February on a private radio station.

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

Afghanistan - Severe Winter

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 05EA003

PLEDGES RECEIVED

01/03/2005

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

					TOTAL COVERAGE	
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				812,000		21.2%
CHINA - HONG KONG - RC BRANCH		6,100	HKD	902	24.02.05	
SWEDISH - GOVT		1,000,000	SEK	171,000	22.02.05	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				171,902	CHF	21.2%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

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