

# 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

## **HUMANITARIAN CRISIS**

9 October 2001

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*This Information Bulletin is related to Appeal No. 32/01: Humanitarian Crisis; Launched on 21 September and revised on 3 October 2001 for CHF 40,280,340 in cash, kind and services to assist 300,000<sup>1</sup> beneficiaries for 6 months.*

### ***The Situation***

The humanitarian plight of hundreds of thousands of people in Afghanistan as well as of those who fled to the neighbouring Pakistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and even Kyrgyzstan has been brought back into focus in the aftermath of the 11 September tragedy in the United States. Two decades of conflict in Afghanistan and years of severe drought in the whole region have brought about many humanitarian challenges, including landmine casualties in Afghanistan, refugees in Iran (more than two million) and Pakistan (more than one million) as well as water shortage victims in Central and South Asia region as a whole. Mines are likely to represent a serious treat for all Afghans who are or will be on the move while water-wise the arrival of large numbers of refugees could overwhelm the fragile semi-desert environment. Another winter season is also approaching and by middle of November mountain passess will be closed.

The attack on the US on 11 September and later announcements by the US government of a military action against Afghanistan, triggered yet another movement of people from major Afghan cities, both towards other points in Afghanistan and towards the country's borders. Although no massive (tens of thousands people) population movements have been reported so far, there are reports stating that large groups of people have gathered on the Afghan side of the border towards Pakistan and Iran.

According to the latest information received from Kabul, the attack on Afghanistan caused no new movements of people. No new arrivals of refugees have been registered at border crossing with Iran in the last few days.

As regards the neighbouring countries, Pakistan has focused on Quetta at the moment as a possible place of influx of people from Afghanistan's Kandahar province. Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and lately also Kyrgyzstan remain greatly concerned about the possible influx of refugees from Afghanistan. Their governments are emphasizing that coordination at regional level is crucial in this humanitarian crisis with refugees becoming a Central Asian issue which cannot be solved at a national level. They have lately strongly supported the idea of assisting potential Afghan refugees within the Afghanistan borders.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

<sup>1</sup> While the Federation's approach is fundamentally based on an initial beneficiary figure of 300,000, given the uncertainties associated with this evolving operation, the Federation has undertaken preparations to scale-up relief activities to deliver assistance to a proposed level of 500,000 beneficiaries.

For the last two weeks the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies have been engaged in scaling-up their preparedness and readiness to respond to the anticipated humanitarian crisis in the region. While the preliminary Appeal was essentially about preparedness and stockpiling of relief items, the revised Appeal articulated how the Federation plans to go about putting in the operational elements to respond to the basic needs of people at the borders or potential refugees. Special attention has been also given to the elderly, although they might not need special services. It is necessary though to make sure they have access to aid and support. The elderly can at the same time provide a sense of culture and history which can in turn assist displaced groups to maintain their dignity and cohesion of the community.

The latest developments, including the military attack on selected targets in Afghanistan, call for even faster mobilization of all available resources in all Appeal-related fields in order to provide a timely response to what is, at this point in time, still a prospective humanitarian scenario for hungry, tired and sick refugees or internally displaced persons. At present, the Federation delegations in the region support the national societies in flexible approach, including possibilities of assisting Afghans on the move inside Afghanistan through pre-positioned Red Crescent posts in bordering areas in Iran and Pakistan.

With support of the Federation delegation in Islamabad, the Operations room at Pakistan Red Crescent headquarters is operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week. At the same time, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society has urged all national societies once again to channel all their donations through the Federation in order to further strengthen the coordinated efforts related to this crisis within the Red Cross Red Crescent movement.

There are medical monitoring teams in the south of Tajikistan and they will report on any changes.

A lessons learned exercise was carried out in the Federation regional delegation in Almaty in an attempt to learn immediately from the present situation i.e. the preparedness process which has been taking place in the region for the last two weeks. It has been established that regional national societies (Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, in particular) will have to go through practical training, as they lack knowledge and experience in certain fields, especially in medical emergency preparedness.

## **Health w**

***Objective: In support to the National Societies in the region, strategically pre-position medical and human resources, including health ERUs, aiming at obtaining maximum response capacity to a major population movement while taking into consideration other alternatives not necessarily involving refugees but focusing on supporting operations inside Afghanistan.***

- All 48 of the Federation-supported clinics in Afghanistan continue to function. The main concern at the moment is to re-supply them. Five hundred medical kits are due to be sent to Peshawar for onward shipment to Kabul in cooperation with the ICRC. The clinics recorded one million visits last year and represent a vital support to many destitute and vulnerable people in Afghanistan.
- The health team in Pakistan is being built up further with a Japanese Red Cross delegate joining the delegation in Islamabad during the week.
- The Pakistan Red Crescent plans to convert a 100-bed spinal injury hospital for Afghan war-wounded built by the ICRC in Peshawar 20 years ago, into a full-scale surgical centre for new refugees if necessary. Due to poor funding in the last years, funds would be needed for refurbishment, additional staff and heating.
- The Norwegian Red Cross referral hospital (ERU) is available and ready to be deployed as and when necessary.

## **Water and Sanitation w**

***Objective: In support to the National Societies in the region, strategically pre-position water and sanitation activities, including ERUs, aiming at obtaining maximum response capacity to a major population movement while taking into consideration other alternatives not necessarily involving refugees but focusing on supporting operations inside Afghanistan.***

- Water/sanitation ERUs made available by the Spanish, German, Swedish and Austrian Red Cross Societies have been fully built into the Federation contingency/response plan and will be deployed as necessary.
- Austrian Red Cross water/sanitation material arrived at Peshawar where a warehouse has been already selected for storage.

### **Relief and Shelter w**

***Objective: Provide basic shelter, food (high protein biscuits) and non-food relief items to an estimated beneficiary population of 300,000 persons.***

- The priority is now to provide an adequate number of tents in Pakistan. It has been decided to move around 5,000 tents immediately from Iran to Pakistan.
- The Iranian Red Crescent plans to establish seven refugee camps along the border with Afghanistan, two near the border of Sistan va Baluchestan province and five near the border of Khorasan province, but off the Iranian territory. Family items, shelter material and clothes are planned to be distributed.
- The latest decision of the Pakistani government is to locate all refugee camps within around 10 km of the Durrand line border while the Peshawar branch of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society considers the locations logistically too far away from Peshawar. The Red Crescent branches closest to the border area would be the best possible place to ship goods. Camps so far identified by the UNHCR-government are 33 in total. Nine are in Baluchistan and 24 in North-West Frontier province.
- In Turkmenistan, training in camp management has been facilitated by the Federation for the national society staff and volunteers, with a special session on radio communications.
- Efforts have been exerted in preparation of relief agreements with governments of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in order to make humanitarian assistance as smooth as possible within their countries.

### **Logistics w**

***Objective: Re-enforce the logistics systems and supply chain elements where needed, including at airports, ports, main supply routes, customs clearance procedures and warehousing operations.***

- A Spanish Red Cross relief flight arrived in Peshawar over the week-end carrying relief supplies containing tents, cooking sets, plastic sheeting, high protein bars and an all-terrain vehicle. All supplies have been stocked into the Peshawar warehouse of the PRCS.
- In Iran, the logistics staging point in Mashad will include a 2,000 sqm warehouse that will be customs bonded. Ten Scania trucks have been ordered and will be used to transship supplies to Herat in Afghanistan and possibly other northern Afghanistan places. A visit to Tehran Relief Centre confirmed 15 hectares of emergency response equipment and warehousing and a high level of preparedness for disasters (tents, heating appliances, vehicles, cooking sets) and should be regarded as a viable option to purchasing relief items abroad. The national society tent and blanket manufacturing plant is turning to the production of a new and improved tent model, with the production of 120,000 pcs per year and should be looked into as a possible supplier of tents for this humanitarian crisis.
- The government of Iran and associated ministries and departments have agreed to grant the national society significant powers in issues related to humanitarian aid import, clearances, export and use of relief items. All goods consigned to the national society will be immediately cleared by assigned national society people all over the country. Only goods consigned to the national society will be exempt from import duties and taxes regardless whether they pertain to this crisis or not. Humanitarian aid consigned to the national society in Iran may be used in the country or if fit in other countries, i.e. the goods can be re-exported (for example, into Afghanistan) without duties and taxes levied.

### **Telecommunications w**

***Objective: Implement a telecommunications network and reinforce the communications for this operation.***

- Shipping of telecommunications equipment for the region is presently in progress. This equipment will further improve the communication within the Central and South Asia regions as well as with Geneva Secretariat.

- Preparations are underway for a telecommunications training course for new staff to be responsible for telecommunications in the region.

## **Delegates - Federation Delegations w**

***Objective: Recruit and position appropriate levels of human resources to support the relief operation.***

At the present moment, the deployment of delegates in the field continues as planned. Some precautionary measures have however been taken and further thought will be given to strengthening the pool of delegates from countries with cultural backgrounds acceptable in the region.

- National staff in the Federation delegation in Kabul reports that all national staff members are in office and that the situation seems to be calm.
- On Friday, 5 October, head of regional delegation for South Asia held a security briefing for all delegates and national staff of the Federation delegation in Islamabad. Delegates are presently on hold in Islamabad apart from two who have already reached Quetta and one in Peshawar.
- For the delegation in Tajikistan, the things remain calm, at the moment. Almost all delegates are presently in Dushanbe while close track is kept of those who are in the field or in transfer.
- The Federation regional delegation for Central Asia also reports that all delegates and delegations in their region work as usual on Monday, 8 October.
- Over the week-end the following delegates left for the field: Pakistan (1 finance/administration, 3 relief) while 2 relief delegates for Turkmenistan and 1 relief and 1 logistics delegates for Uzbekistan are awaiting their visas.

## **Communications and Advocacy w**

***Objective: Coordinate with other components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement in drawing the attention of the media and a global audience to the plight of the refugees and other vulnerable groups, and how the Federation and National Societies are addressing their needs.***

- A statement addressing the problems of refugees, IDPs, migrants and other population movements was delivered on 3 October to the UNHCR Executive Committee 52nd Session in Geneva by the Head of Humanitarian Advocacy Department of the Federation. The statement included the issue of protection and elimination of violence and hatred in local communities. Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in all countries will be seeking dialogue with governments on measures that need to be considered at national and local levels in order to build momentum also with private sector and non-governmental communities.

## **Coordination**

### ***Inter-agency coordination***

- Weekly meetings between the Federation and UNHCR at the Geneva level have been established in order to maximize efforts in logistics.
- The head of the Federation's South Asia delegation met with ECHO representative for the regional office for Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan and stressed the regional approach and plan to utilize the stockpiled supplies in Pakistan, across the border into Afghanistan, if the expected refugee influx does not occur, to support the existing Afghan Red Crescent/Federation support programmes.
- Another meeting was held with the UNHCR representative in Pakistan and information was exchanged concerning the issues of camp sites, registration procedure for refugees, positioning of delegates. The government of Pakistan has announced that any civil servants wishing to assist the humanitarian assistance effort can get leave of absence from their offices to do so.
- According to the recent agreement, the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran is the main implementing partner for the UNHCR in Iran in relation to the current crisis, with the exception of drugs and health where UNHCR is supposed to cooperate with the Ministry of Health. A meeting was held with WFP representatives in Iran in coordinated effort to map the available food, logistics and human resources in the country. Commercial transport of relief supplies upto the border area by WFP and distribution by the national Red Crescent society has been discussed.
- In Turkmenistan, a cabinet minister held a meeting on Saturday, 6 October on the humanitarian crisis with humanitarian organizations present in the country. The government has appointed a commission to liaise all issues related to the humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. In the meeting, the authorities clearly and strongly stated that no refugees from Afghanistan will be admitted into territory of Turkmenistan. In case of

any population movement, the Afghans have to be treated as internally displaced persons inside Afghanistan. All relevant departments (customs, warehouses, railways, border guards, etc) at rayon level have been, however, informed to cooperate fully in humanitarian efforts. Once more, the WFP assured the Federation about adequate quantities of wheat and wheat flour in the country as well as in the pipeline. A meeting was held also with the new ICRC logistics delegate regarding cooperation in warehousing.

### **Media**

- Media coverage in Pakistan within the reporting period included interviews on the Red Cross Red Crescent preparedness efforts and first relief supplies arrivals. Separately, interviews were given to English, French and Spanish media (in their languages), including the AFP Spanish service, National Spanish Radio (RNE), Spanish national TV, TV Azteca (Mexico), Antena 3 TV, Tele 5, El Pais, El Mundo, Radio York, Reuters TV, Radio Notre Dame, Television Broadcasts Ltd. Hong Kong, France 2 TV, Times of London, ARD German TV, European Broadcasting Union (EBU), UN web-site, CNN web-site, BBC, a Belgian magazine and New Zealand Press Association.

### **Visits**

- A decision has been made to constitute a Strategy Coordination group within the Federation Secretariat to ensure an effective and coordinated response to cross divisional issues to the current crisis. This group is tasked to pull together issues in the area of communications, advocacy, relations with external partners as well as programmes issues, the impact of which goes beyond this operation. The ICRC will be invited to attend the meetings of this group to ensure the coordinated response to events as they unfold.
- Representatives of the Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Emirates as well as the Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkey together with senior officials from the Turkish Red Crescent Society visited Pakistan in the reporting period.

### **Outstanding needs**

The updated list of contributions will be reflected in the next report to be issued shortly. See also the attached Mobilization Table for Humanitarian Crisis.

Regarding in-kind contributions, with all of the technical sectors identified above, it is important that National Societies refer to and follow the Federation and ICRC Standard Catalogue/Guidelines: Please refer any questions to the respective technical departments at the Secretariat.

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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 these or other countries, as well as for relevant National Society profiles, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES							
LOGISTICS AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION DEPARTMENT							
MOBILIZATION TABLE FOR WATSAN MATERIAL FOR HUMANITARIAN CRISIS - Appeal 32/2001							
Commodity	Total Quantity needed	Unit	Quantity needed per each destination				Donors
			Pakistan (PK)	Turkmenistan (TM)	Tajikistan (TJ)	Abu Dhabi (AE)	
<b>WATSAN</b>							
Jerry Can, 20 litre, collapsible LDPE 55mm handscrew cap, built in handle	130'000	pce	50000	30000	20000	30000	
			50000				Norwegian RC
			4000				TBC /Pakistan stock
Outstanding	76'000		-4000	30000	20000	30000	
Del'Agua Water Testing Kit, plus extra Consumables Test Kit	7	pce	2	2	1	2	
Outstanding	7		2	2	1	2	
Bladder Tank, 5000 litre,with accessories	110	pce	40	30	10	30	
Outstanding	110		40	30	10	30	
Bladder Tank, 10000 litre, with accessories,	78	pce	30	20	8	20	
Outstanding	78		30	20	8	20	
Bladder Tank, 15000 litre, with accessories	70	pce	30	20	0	20	
Outstanding	70		30	20	0	20	
Oxfam type Tank, 95000 litre	20	pce	8	4	4	4	
Outstanding	20		8	4	4	4	
<b>WATSAN</b>							
Oxfam type Tank, 70000 litre	20	pce	8	4	4	4	
Outstanding	20		8	4	4	4	
Tap Stand with hoses and couplings Red Cross standard for bladder tank	510	pce	200	140	30	140	
Outstanding	510		200	140	30	140	
Atalanta Pumps, diesel type, 2", 30m head	18	pce	8	4	2	4	
Outstanding	18		8	4	2	4	
Water Purification Tablet, 1 tab=20litre	4'400'000	ea	2000000	1200000	0	1200000	
Outstanding	4'400'000		2000000	1200000	0	1200000	
Water Purification Powder 100gm/pack =10,000 litre	4	MT	0	2	0	2	
Outstanding	4		0	2	0	2	
<b>WATSAN</b>							
Water Purification Tablet, 1 tab=1 litre	800'000	ea	0	0	800000	0	
Outstanding	800'000		0	0	800000	0	
SanPlat Latrine Mould Kit	15	kit	6	4	1	4	
Outstanding	15		6	4	1	4	
Squatting Plates	1'500	pce	1000	0	500	0	
Outstanding	1'500		1000	0	500	0	
Back Pack Sprayers, 15 litre	90	pce	50	15	10	15	
Outstanding	90		50	15	10	15	
Chlorine	12	MT	5	2	3	2	
Outstanding	12		5	2	3	2	
Aluminium Sulphate	33	MT	15	5	8	5	
Outstanding	33		15	5	8	5	
Lime	12	MT	5	2	3	2	
Outstanding	12		5	2	3	2	