

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: SEVERE WINTER

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In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 03/2006) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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The situation

Afghanistan has been experiencing extremely harsh winter conditions since the beginning of 2006, with heavy snowfalls, rain and bitter cold across much of the country.

Heavy snowfalls have killed a total of 29 people in two provinces. On 31 January, heavy snowfalls hit Faizabad province in the northern region particularly hard. This resulted in one person being killed, two injured, 20 houses destroyed and the loss of 200 livestock in Deh Mardi village in Sancharak district. In Deh Yak village in the same district, 15 children were killed, eight people injured, 15 houses destroyed and 120 livestock lost. This village, which is a four-to-five hour horse ride in the summer, is now inaccessible, with roads closed due to the snow and avalanches. In the village of Gholdori in Kohistanat district of Sar-i-Pul province, there have been 13 reported deaths, 11 people, five houses totally destroyed, and a further 16 dwellings damaged.

Heavy rain has been falling in Herat in the western part of the country since the end of January, affecting 12 villages in Lash Jowain district of Farah province. It has been reported that houses belonging to 38 families from four villages have partially collapsed because of the rain. A landslide took place in Aular village of Kohistanat district of Sar-i-Pul province on 18 February. Though there were no human casualties, 18 houses were totally destroyed and 55 livestock lost.

On 20 February, the districts of Helmand and Zabul of Kandahar province were affected by fresh floods because of seasonal rains. There are no details of damage or casualties at this stage.

Red Cross Red Crescent action

The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) Faizabad branch has helped evacuate affected people and the injured have been transferred to hospital for treatment.

The Sar-i-Pul branch has distributed to the affected people of Deh Mardi village 20 bags of assorted foodstuffs, 20 bags of flour, 20 tins of edible oil, 12 pressure cookers and ten tarpaulins. The ministry of rural and rehabilitation development distributed ten tents and 40 blankets.

In Deh Yak village, the Sar-i-Pul branch has distributed 30 tarpaulins, 30 pressure cookers, 30 bags of foodstuffs, 30 bags of flour and 60 tins of edible oils. The ministry of rural and rehabilitation development distributed 30 tents and 100 blankets, while the ministry of public health has handed out medicines and medical equipment.

In Heart, the Federation sub-delegation has assisted the families in the 38 families whose homes have been damaged by the floods in four villages. The sub-delegation has distributed from disaster preparedness stocks the following: 266 blankets (seven blankets per family), 15 tents for the most affected families, 38 kitchen sets, 38 plastic sheets and 76 jerry cans (two per family). The ministry of rural and rehabilitation development in Farah has agreed to provide shovels and axes to the families in the area. Where the World Food Programme is not providing food items, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will assist in distributing food packages, which will consist of rice, beans, oil and salt.

The ARCS Sar-i-Pul branch and the ministry of rural and rehabilitation development have conducted a joint survey of damage caused by a landslide in Aular village and distribution of relief goods will be organized and carried out.

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