

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: FLOODS (IN THE NORTH AND WEST)

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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 185 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 03/2006) is being issued for information only, and reflects the status of the situation and information available at this time. 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 beset with heavy rains in all regions across the country since 15 November. As a result, some of the provinces have been hit with flash floods. The northern and western regions of Afghanistan remain the worst-hit areas.

The extent of the damages is not very clear as assessments are still on-going. Some of the flood-hit areas remain inaccessible due to damaged infrastructure. Bad weather conditions have also prevented assistance to be delivered to the affected people by helicopter. At this stage, the urgent needs of the affected people are medical facilities, health services and food and non-food items, in which the Movement are already involved.

According to assessments conducted by various organizations, including the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), about 3,000 to 4,500 families have been affected by the flash floods in Bala-Murghab and Ghoremach districts of Badghis province, one of the worst-hit areas in the country. It was reported that 56 people are dead, 100 missing, about 3,000 houses completely destroyed, 4,000 heads of livestock perished and thousands of hectares of farmland washed away. Pneumonia is reported to be spreading in the province and so far 20cm of snow have fallen.

The Afghan government National Emergency Response Committee, headed by the country's second vice-president Karim Khalili, is the coordinating body for all humanitarian activities to the affected population in which the ARCS is a member. Due to security restrictions and road accessibility, it was decided that the bulk of

operations in Bala-Murghrab will be carried out by NATO's provincial reconstruction team (PRT), Afghan National Army and the provincial authorities. The operation in Ghoremach, the second heavy affected district of Badghis, is under the responsibility of the national society and, consequently, the Movement for assistance and distribution.

According to assessment reports conducted by the ARCS, eight people have died and eight villages are affected in Ghoremach. Between 600-800 families affected, 212 houses were completely and partially damaged, 10 mosques are damaged, 38 wells have been damaged, 644 head of livestock have perished and roads within the affected villages are completely destroyed. Due to security and bad road conditions from Heart to Ghoremach, all assistance is now carried out through the ARCS Mazar branch.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Food and non-food items from ARCS, Federation and ICRC, have been dispatched and in areas where there is road accessibility, distribution has started.

- **Western region**

Assessments have been completed by the ARCS, Federation and local authorities. A total of 135 families have received food and non-food items in the province (119 families in Shindand, eight families in Zenda Jan and eight families in Obe). The table below shows the food and non-food items that will be distributed in Heart region.

| ITEMS | ARCS | Federation | ICRC |
|-----------------|-------|------------|------|
| Tents | 200 | 50 | |
| Blankets | 1,440 | 1,300 | |
| Jerry cans | 400 | 300 | |
| Kitchen sets | 220 | 200 | |
| Tarpaulins | 101 | 200 | |
| Plastic sheets | | 39 | |
| Pressure cooker | 150 | | |
| Stove | 240 | | |
| Salt | 300kg | | |
| Food ration | | | 125 |

The ARCS and Federation team will continue distribution of non-food items for 220 families in sub-districts 6 and 7 of Heart City on 25 November. The Federation disaster management manager had been in Heart region for coordination of operation with the Movement components.

The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), the Ministry of Public Health, Unicef, World Food Programme, and other UN agencies have provided considerable medical kits and food and non-food items to the affected people in the region.

- **Northern region**

Assessments have been completed and the ARCS Jawzjan and Faryab branches have so far dispatched the following non-food items to the flood-affected families in the northern region.

| ITEMS | ARCS | Federation |
|-----------------|------|------------|
| Pressure cooker | 187 | |
| Plastic sheets | 187 | 100 |
| Jerry cans | 103 | 200 |
| Tents | 9 | 137 |
| Blankets | | 548 |
| Kitchen sets | | 100 |

Turkman Qodoq village of Qoshtepa district and Dashte Laili district, both in Jawzjan province, and Loqman village, Khwaja Sabzpoosh district of Faryab province were the areas that the ARCS and Federation will distribute the non-food items.

The MRRD and Unicef have distributed non-food items and the WFP has handed out food items to the flood-affected people in the region.

Additionally, the second ARCS emergency mobile unit (EMU) team – outfitted with a doctor, a pharmacist, a nurse and a doctor – and a disaster response team comprised of four ARCS Mazar branch staff members, including the regional disaster management supervisor, left Mazar for Ghormach district of Baghdis province via Faryab province, with medical kits and non-food items released from Federation stock for 100 flood-affected families. It has been estimated that the EMU and disaster management teams will arrive at Ghormach district by 24 November.

The Federation disaster management officer is now based in Mazar for the coordination of the operation with the Movement components.

- **Eastern region**

Flash floods hit Hejrat Keli village of Surkhrod district, Nangahar province in the eastern region of Afghanistan on 11 November. Assessments in the region has been carried out and completed by the ARCS and Federation. As of 15 November, the ARCS Nangahar branch, with support from the Federation, has distributed 15 tents, 30 blankets, 15 stoves, 15 cooking sets, 15 jerry cans and 15 packets of clothes. The ICRC has provided 375kg of split peas.

The Movement components (ARCS, ICRC and Federation) have coordinated the disaster response and at this point, there is no need for further assistance and support.

- **Southern region**

According to the media, 80 houses have been destroyed and 20 people reported dead in Dehrawad district of Uruzgan province. Two ARCS staff members and three from MRRD are in the midst of conducting an assessment in the province. To date, no ARCS stocks have been released and the assessment results is expected to be ready shortly. The deputy governor of the province has so far dispatched two trucks of assistance (though the source and specific contents are not known). As the southern region is a conflict zone, the ICRC will be supporting the Uruzgan branch once the assessment is ready and the ARCS is able to distribute food and non-food items from various aid agencies independently.

Coordination

The National Emergency Response Committee team members, including the head of the ARCS disaster management department, are visiting the affected areas of Badghis province for the coordination of the operation, particularly in Ghoremach district.

A second Movement coordination meeting, consisting of ARCS Herat branch, Federation and ICRC sub-offices, took place in Herat on 20 November to coordinate Movement intervention and support to the flood-affected areas.

The Federation emergency base has been established in Qala-e-Naw as of 20 November and a Federation representative is manning the base. The ICRC sub-delegation provided a satellite telephone to the team composed of Federation and ARCS personnel.

The Federation is continuing its close coordination with ICRC on all operational issues, particularly on security matters. All Federation field staff members have daily security briefings with ICRC. The Federation delegation is in close communication and coordination with ICRC Kabul for the progress and continuation of the operation. Information sharing is taking place on a daily basis between the Movement components.

Constraints

- **Security**

Security situation is not stable due to heightened risk of criminality/banditry (UNDSS reports, ICRC Heart sub-delegation).

- **Weather condition**

Though it has stopped raining, snow has fallen in Badghis province while some parts of Heart have started to snow, which is very unusual for this time of the year.

- **Accessibility**

Road conditions and accessibility in all operational areas remains difficult.

Conclusion

The Afghan government, together with the governmental and non-governmental organizations, has been active in responding to the needs of the population from the start of the operation. The ARCS has been pro-active in responding to this emergency and has been the lead agency in the dispatching and distribution of food and non-food items to the affected families. The national society and the Federation have enough non-food items in stock to assist the affected people for the time being.

At this stage, the launching of an emergency appeal does not seem necessary and has not been requested by the national society yet.

The delegation is closely monitoring the progress of the operation and needs of the affected people.

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The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to achieve the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- *Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.*
- *Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.*
- *Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.*
- *Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.*

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering quality and accountable assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>