

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

23 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

The basis of this Information Bulletin (no. 1/2005) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time. Based on further updates and details from the assessment reports or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation may consider international assistance through an Emergency Appeal in the next few days.

Summary: One week of heavy rainfall from 15 to 21 March 2005 has resulted in flash flood across the country, leading to widespread damage to infrastructure and livelihoods in the central highlands and northeastern part of Afghanistan. An overflowing reservoir during the same period has flooded 10 villages and affected more than 800 families in Darawad district of Uruzgan province.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In Afghanistan: Afghanistan Red Crescent Society: Fatima Gailani (Secretary General), phone: +93 79 38 55 33.
- In Afghanistan: Afghanistan Federation Delegation, Jamila Ibrohim, Head of Delegation, email: hod.kabuldel@wireless.ifrc.org, phone: +882 168 980 2643 (Sat phone) or +93 70 278 372 and +92 300 850 6861 (mobile).
- In Geneva: Asia and Pacific Department, Jagan Chapagain, email: jagan.chapagain@ifrc.org, phone: +41 22 7304316, fax +41 22 733 0395

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering 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>

The Situation

A week of heavy rainfall from 15 to 21 March has resulted in flash flooding across Afghanistan. This has caused widespread damage to infrastructure and livelihoods in the central highlands and northeastern part of the country. The heavy rain and an overflowing reservoir during the same period have flooded 10 villages in the Darawad district of Uruzgan, resulting in 100 people missing and more than 800 families affected. Roads and communications have been seriously affected.

In the northern regions of Baghlan, Balkh and Jawzjan, reports indicate the worse affected districts have been Khwaja Doko, Dahana-e-Ghori and UlmuArub-Ulia. More than 370 houses have been destroyed and over 300 badly damaged, while 174 livestock have been lost. Large areas of agricultural land have also been inundated. Coordinated assessments and response efforts are in progress at the national and provincial level with the Afghan Red Crescent Society taking an active role.

According to the Department of Disaster Preparedness and Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), there is urgent need for blankets, tents, plastic sheets, jerry cans and cooking sets to provide relief in the Darawad district of Uruzgan province.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Afghan Red Crescent Society, through its network of branches and volunteers, has been at the forefront of the disaster response activities, continuing assessments and relief efforts to the most affected areas in the central highlands and northeastern part of the country. To date, the national society, with the support of the Federation, has dispatched 200 tents, 200 kitchen sets, 400 jerry cans, 600 blankets and 67 plastic rolls to the most affected families in Darawad district of Uruzgan province. In addition, food and non-food items have also been distributed to 100 most affected families in Khwaja Doko in Jawzjan province.

Joint assessments, response and coordination efforts are continuing with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), United Nations agencies that include the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), World Food Programme and United Nations Children's Fund as well as the Office of Disaster Preparedness at national and provincial levels. In the northern region, the ARCS is liaising with UNAMA, which is coordinating the overall flood situation.

Emergency assistance still has not reached many affected areas of the central highlands and northeastern parts of the country that are suffering from heavy rain and floods. As a result, the ARCS, with support from the Federation and in coordination with other relief agencies, is currently working in the most affected provinces to determine the most vulnerable people and their needs.

Due to the lack of access to some affected areas, ongoing assessment and response will be slow and the overall extent of the affected population will take some time to ascertain. Whilst Afghanistan suffers regularly from floods, this year, the severity and risk of further flooding are greater due to particularly heavy snowfalls during the winter. There is a real potential for serious flooding as the great mass of snow covering most parts of the country starts to melt. The ARCS is currently operating an emergency operation (Appeal no. 05E003) in response to the severe winter conditions. Please refer to http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?05/05EA00303.pdf for the latest Operations Update. However, the ARCS and Federation are considering the possibility of launching a separate emergency appeal specific to the floods.

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.

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For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

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