



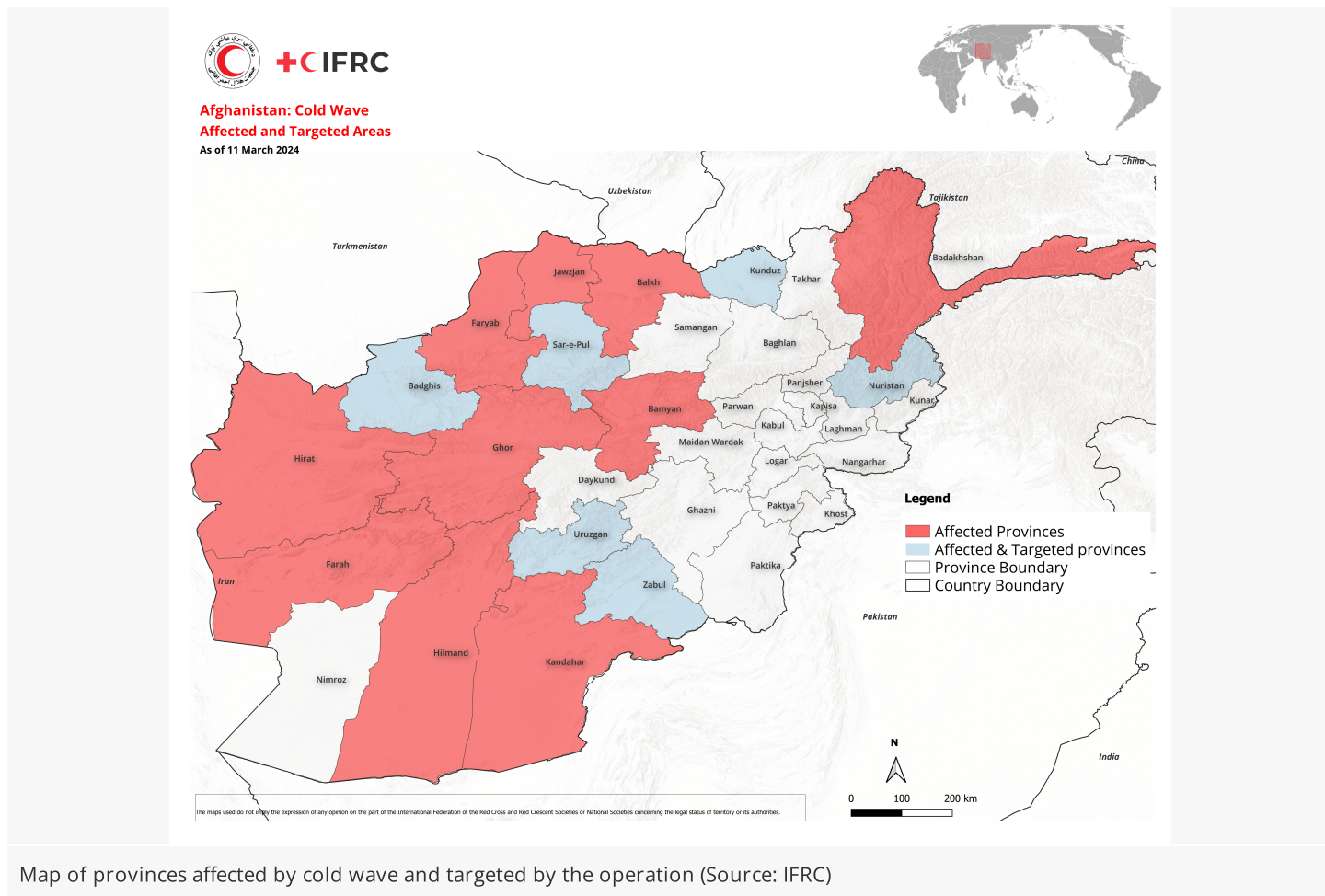
The recent cold wave has significantly affected various aspects of life and livelihoods in Herat, Kunduz, Nuristan, Sar-e-Pul-Uzgan, Zabul of Afghanistan. (Photo: ARCS)

Appeal: MDRAF014	Country: Afghanistan	Hazard: Cold Wave	Type of DREF: Response
Crisis Category: Yellow	Event Onset: Sudden	DREF Allocation: CHF 499,885	
Glide Number: CW-2024-000025-AFG	People Affected: 14,700 people	People Targeted: 11,200 people	
Operation Start Date: 2024-03-16	Operation Timeframe: 4 months	Operation End Date: 31-07-2024	DREF Published: 21-03-2024
Targeted Areas: Badghis, Kunduz			

Description of the Event

Date of event

2024-03-03



Map of provinces affected by cold wave and targeted by the operation (Source: IFRC)

What happened, where and when?

On 3 March 2024, the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) under the auspices of the Vice President convened an Emergency Task Force Meeting in response to the heavy snowfall and extreme cold temperatures that affected several high-altitude provinces of Afghanistan during the first week of March. The event resulted in casualties, heavy losses of livestock, blocked roads, and disruption to economic activities among other challenges. According to public authorities, news agencies, and the ARCS, at least 35 human lives have been lost, dozens of people injured, and thousands of livestock perished, depriving affected households of their livelihoods due to the heavy snowfall and cold temperatures. The provinces most affected include Badakhshan, Badghis, Balkh, Farah, Faryab, Ghor, Herat, Jawzjan, Kunduz, Nuristan, Sar-e-Pul, Uruzgan, and Zabul.

The March 2024 event is almost reminiscent of the cold wave of January 2023 in terms of scale, but the impacts are considered more severe. According to ECHO, temperatures plummeted to as low as -33 degrees in provinces like Ghor, and over 70,000 cattle perished across several provinces and also causing 70 deaths.

Prior to the cold wave in early March, on 19 February 2024, a landslide triggered by heavy snowfall claimed 25 lives, destroyed at least 20 homes, and displaced 350 households in the province of Nuristan.

In response, the public authorities have established local and regional committees to coordinate responses, with the ARCS being a member of the committees as auxiliary to public authorities. Initial assessments, anecdotal information, and secondary data indicate substantial humanitarian needs. Detailed assessments will be conducted in the coming days as access routes blocked by snow or other debris are cleared and weather conditions permit better access.





Cold wave is affecting thousands of people and livestock in Afghanistan (Photo: ARCS)

Scope and Scale

ARCS conducted a rapid assessment of the affected provinces. The assessment findings reveal that the humanitarian impacts of extreme weather conditions include: 2,018 households affected, 39 deaths, 84 injuries, 1,146 houses damaged, loss of more than 57,600 livestock, and damage to 1,505 acres of agricultural land. Additionally, public infrastructure including roads, schools, bridges, and culverts have been damaged. The cumulative impacts as reported from the rapid assessments are as follows: 2, 018 affected families, 1,146 damaged houses, 311 destroyed houses, zero persons missing, 29 persons injured, 38 casualties, 57, 673 livestock deaths and 1,505 acres of land destroyed.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. Afghan Red Crescent Society	https://www.arcs.org

Previous Operations

Has a similar event affected the same area(s) in the last 3 years?	No
Did it affect the same population group?	-
Did the National Society respond?	-
Did the National Society request funding form DREF for that event(s)	-
If yes, please specify which operation	-

If you have answered yes to all questions above, justify why the use of DREF for a recurrent event, or how this event should not be considered recurrent:

-

Lessons learned:

Lessons learned from previous operations are being utilized to mitigate similar challenges in the current cold wave and extreme cold weather operations in Afghanistan, as outlined in the ARCS contingency plan. Previous response plans included winter conditions, which have been predictable in the recent past, and winterization support was included in the existing Emergency Appeal MDRAF007, focusing on high altitude areas. However, due to funding limitations, the recent heavy snowfall and extreme cold temperatures could not be adequately addressed under the current appeal, particularly in a country that is constantly challenged with ongoing hazards and limited coping mechanisms.

To effectively overcome these challenges and address climate change and extreme weather events, comprehensive strategies and international support are crucial. This includes enhancing climate resilience, improving early warning systems, promoting sustainable agricultural practices, strengthening infrastructure, and facilitating adaptation measures to protect vulnerable communities. It is important for the international community to provide long-term development funds rather than relying solely on the current emergency funding, given Afghanistan's current political and operational constraints. Flexibility in accessing these funds is necessary to implement effective programmes and resilient initiatives.

Beyond the aforementioned, previous operations have also provided opportunities for ground truthing the strategies which have guided the selection of the provinces for this operation over the prescribed period. As these are highland provinces, transportation and access challenges due to blocked routes and/or compromised infrastructure are to be expected. The selected provinces provide multiple alternative routes, thereby mitigating supply chain disruptions and distribution challenges in the field. Additionally, more females will be part of the distributions to accommodate considerations for mahrams, to ensure complete coverage of female-headed households.

Current National Society Actions

Start date of National Society actions

2024-03-03

Shelter, Housing And Settlements	ARCS distributed blankets, tarpaulins, tents and kitchen sets from its warehouses in the affected regions and provinces. Additionally, ARCS has undertaken joint distributions with the provincial government.
Livelihoods And Basic Needs	There has been significant loss of livestock across the country attributed to the extreme cold conditions that was experienced. ARCS responded by distributing animal feed to households.
Multi Purpose Cash	The ARCS has conducted some small cash distributions from its emergency funds. However, emergency funds (of AFN 100,000 to AFN 300,000 for branches and regions respectively) are meant for kickstarting response.
Health	Assessments are ongoing in this sector; however, there will be a need for the provision of psychosocial support to the affected population. ARCS will deploy Mobile Health Teams (MHTs) to the affected areas for providing emergency health services, vaccination and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS).
Water, Sanitation And Hygiene	ARCS distributed 14 water barrels to the affected families. This marks an initial intervention as the needs are greater throughout the impacted provinces.
Protection, Gender And Inclusion	Priority consideration must be given to persons who will be placed in shelters, including returnees. Attention must be paid to safety and security concerns, as tensions can arise among those from different ethnic groups and backgrounds. Further assessment of facilities configured for the elderly and people with disabilities should be conducted, and aid should be provided based on confirmed needs, taking into account gender and age.



	<p>There should be sustained engagement with the communities at large to ensure that interventions are appropriate and aligned with confirmed needs, avoiding a prescriptive approach, and addressing any identified gaps in the delivery of humanitarian services. Currently, the data provided from the assessments lacks the required disaggregation. As the data collection process continues, ARCS will integrate PGI standards to ensure that needs and risks are better identified.</p>
<p>Migration And Displacement</p>	<p>As Afghanistan continues to experience an influx of returnees, special consideration will be given to the needs of this group, particularly the most vulnerable: women, children, elderly, pregnant and lactating mothers, as well as people with disabilities.</p>
<p>Community Engagement And Accountability</p>	<p>ARCS continues to undertake assessments to confirm the needs of the affected population and to provide support based on the needs identified. Key informant interviews/ focus group discussions and post distribution monitoring will be conducted with a wider group to get their feedback about the response.</p>
<p>Coordination</p>	<p>ARCS, with the support of the IFRC's Country Delegation, coordinates closely and engages with the clusters, inter-agency working groups, and other (inter)national humanitarian actors at national and sub-national levels. The National Society is a member of committees established at the local and national levels. ARCS activated its Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and convened an Emergency Response Taskforce meeting on 3 March bringing together all-in country Movement partners (IFRC, ICRC, Danish Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Qatar Red Crescent, and Turkish Red Crescent) to discuss the impact and how they can collectively support ARCS in responding to the needs of affected populations.</p> <p>At the field level, the ARCS branches collaborate with the local authorities, as well as with local representatives and agencies via committees established for the coordination of response to emergencies. It is in these local committees that ARCS was requested by authorities to supplement in their auxiliary role to support in responding to the emergency. In addition to the establishment of the committees at the provincial level to respond to the recent situation, there are standing arrangements anchored in legislation which establish, authorize commissions and designate ministries as special actors. The Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) serves as the secretariat, of which the ARCS is a part and facilitates the coordination of responses. The assessment is multisectoral (other partners are involved).</p>
<p>National Society Readiness</p>	<p>ARCS is a primary national partner for responding to crises across the country and facilitates disaster preparedness activities with its 34 provincial branches. ARCS's presence and local networks are exceptionally well established, which enables the National Society to reach vulnerable populations who are not served by other humanitarian actors, such as those in highly remote and hard-to-reach areas.</p> <p>ARCS has a five-year Strategic plan (2021-2025) which outlines its operational priorities, with one of its strategic goals being: "Communities with strengthened life-saving resources and capacities to respond to and recover from natural disasters, health emergencies, and conflict-generated shocks." In line with this goal, ARCS has a long history of providing life-saving humanitarian assistance across Afghanistan. At the provincial/ branch level, it has Branch Disaster Response Teams (BDRTs) which are supported by Disaster Response Unit (DRUs) at the regional level. In all, the National Society has 3,000 staff (of whom 20 percent are female) and 24,600 active volunteers (of whom 27 percent are female) from the community level.</p> <p>ARCS branches are at the frontline of responses. Upon receiving reports about the impact of heavy snowfall, respective ARCS branches deployed its trained staff and volunteers to conduct rapid assessments and to supplement efforts of the BDRTs. The branches immediately responded by providing hot meals and other essential relief, and continued the distribution of winterization kits which forms part of Emergency Appeal MDRAF007 operation which is supported by the IFRC. In Nuristan, ARCS response efforts to the landslide have been boosted by financial and material support from the Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) enabling immediate assistance to 400 households with food and</p>



	<p>non-food items.</p> <p>The National Society continues to benefit from ongoing investments in their overall capacity enhancement, to a major part with support of members of the IFRC network in-country. Deployment of BDRTs and DRUs is guided by existing procedures and supported by staff at the regional and provincial levels.</p>
Assessment	<p>This operation is designed based on initial rapid assessments, anecdotal information, and secondary data, all indicating substantial humanitarian needs. Detailed assessments will be conducted over the coming days as access routes blocked by snow or other debris are cleared, and weather conditions permit better access. Rapid assessments conducted to date have confirmed the following needs expressed under their respective sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shelter/ Settlements and Basic Household items: Household items (e.g, tents, tarpaulins, kitchen sets, blankets, winterization kits), clothes. - Multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) and Cash for Work (CFW) - Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH): Hygiene kits, dignity kits (for women and girls) , safe Water - livelihood and livestock - Education <p>While the assessments confirmed that education institutions were also impacted, this will not be featured in ARCS's interventions. Detailed assessments, planned for the coming days, may point to other additional humanitarian needs. Where necessary, the Response Strategy will be adjusted according to emerging immediate needs as the most affected villages are reached. The data for the detailed assessment will be collected disaggregated by age and sex.</p>
Activation Of Contingency Plans	<p>ARCS had developed a Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan in late 2023. The contingency plan includes potential threats which can result from severe weather events. The National Society has also activated its existing procedures for responses to events through its regional and branch mechanisms. The ARCS mobilized its resources to provide food, and essential relief items, including animal feed.</p>
National Society EOC	<p>ARCS activated its EOC at the beginning of the event to communicate with the impacted regions and branches and to assess the initial impacts as a precursor to deploying assessment teams.</p>

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	<p>The IFRC Country Delegation supports ARCS in coordinating with clusters, inter-agency working groups, and other (inter)national humanitarian actors at national and sub-national levels. The IFRC has participated in the Emergency Taskforce meeting convened by ARCS. Furthermore, the IFRC continues to monitor the evolution of the situation across the impacted provinces and maintains communications with ARCS accordingly. Also, the IFRC supported the development of the IFRC-DREF application and the drafting of field reports for sharing on the IFRC GO platform. Moreover, the IFRC maintains stocks of relief items, which are currently being prepared for release, to supplement the ongoing response of ARCS, once the IFRC-DREF is approved to facilitate replenishment.</p>
Participating National Societies	<p>In-country PNS participated in the Emergency taskforce meeting convened by the ARCS. They comprise Turkish Red Crescent, Danish Red Cross, Qatar Red Crescent Society and Norwegian Red Cross</p>



ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The ICRC participated in the emergency task force meeting convened by ARCS and has indicated readiness to provide complementary support to ARCS's response efforts. Additionally, the ICRC has contributed AFN 1.8 million to ARCS's ongoing response.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	Yes
National authorities	Local authorities requested the intervention of international organizations to respond to the needs of the affected population. Additionally, the government has established committees to coordinate responses to the needs across the affected provinces. Moreover, the government has allocated AFN 1 million per district to purchase dry grass and pug to be distributed to the affected herdsmen.
UN or other actors	The UN has scaled up its response in the affected provinces to accommodate the needs of the affected population.

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) serves as a strategic, policy-level, and decision-making forum guiding principled humanitarian action in Afghanistan. IFRC attends these meetings weekly as a representative of the membership.

ARCS and IFRC are members of and participate in monthly coordination meetings at the national level for various clusters, including the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster, Cash and Voucher Working Group, Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items (ES-NFI) Cluster, Accountability to Affected Population Working Group, Health Cluster, WASH Cluster, and Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group. IFRC also attends the Inter-cluster Coordination Team meeting. The Clusters system was established as a sectoral coordination mechanism at the national and regional levels to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each partner, including non-governmental organizations, United Nations (UN) agencies, public authorities, and other stakeholders. Cluster meetings occur monthly at the national level and are coordinated by respective cluster lead agencies such as shelter, food security and agriculture, health, WASH, protection, and nutrition, which is coordinated through OCHA.

IFRC is closely coordinating with various cluster members at national and sub-regional levels to ensure a coordinated approach, avoid duplication, and ensure meeting people's needs in a timely and efficient manner.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Damage and Needs Assessment:

The assessments conducted to date do not provide the required disaggregation related to demographics to fully determine the damage and needs attributed to the events. Below are the data currently available from the assessments conducted by ARCS:

- Residential houses: 1407
- Non-residential: 3

It is estimated that at least 14 of the 34 provinces were impacted over a period of five days, commencing on February 26 and ending on March 2, 2024.

The following needs are identified as a priority: Winterization kits (warm clothing and footwear to insulate household members against cold. Each kit has clothes and footwear for a 7-member family - 2 adults and 5 children)

Risk Analysis:



- Winter: Traditionally, the winter period for Afghanistan runs from mid-December to late March, with January and February being its peak. Provinces in the extreme highlands of the Hindu Kush mountains may experience winter conditions for an extended period into early spring. This will most likely affect the provinces in the north, northeast, and the central highlands. Winterization kits may be required for those in shelters or camps not equipped for those conditions.

- Prolonged displacement: Families displaced by the recent severe weather events due to damages or destruction of their settlements will require medium to long-term support related to shelter assistance (transitional shelter or rental assistance through multipurpose cash grants). It is anticipated that returnees, as well as those not intent on returning to their places of origin due to livelihood loss, etc., will require priority attention from the National Society to complement other initiatives/interventions by the government or other actors. As the full impact of the events remains unknown, the ARCS should begin to make preparations to deal with increased population movements and an influx of families, particularly in urban areas.

- Seasonal Changes: With spring on the horizon, the accumulated snow over the winter season will begin to thaw, potentially resulting in flooding and landslides, particularly in the extreme altitude regions of the country: Badakhshan, Nuristan, Takar, Kunduz, Samangan, among others. This will exacerbate the current situation wrought by the recent events, potentially leading to additional establishment of camps and other shelters for those impacted. The NS should also be mindful that districts not adversely affected by past events may be impacted this time should there be significant levels of precipitation and rapid thawing triggering flash floods and landslides.



Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The cold wave that impacted the country during the first week of March resulted in significant losses to livestock, primarily sheep, with preliminary counts from rapid assessments placing the numbers at more than 57,000. This significant loss is expected to further impact livelihoods and food security, with directly affected families and communities bearing the brunt of the effects.

According to FAO, Afghanistan's livestock sector is also a significant contributor to the rural population's income and food, estimated to be worth more than USD 7 billion. Similar to the cold wave in December 2022 - January 2023, the impact on household economies and income flow was significant, with as much as 76 per cent of the population reporting a reduced ability to purchase necessities. It is anticipated that given the compounding realities on the ground in much of Afghanistan, the effects may be similar.

As there have been significant impacts on the livelihoods of the affected population, as a consequence of the deaths of livestock, there will be a need for immediate support to provide for basic needs, which will be undertaken using multipurpose cash grants.



Health

With at least 35 deaths, multiple injuries, families being forced into alternative shelter provisions, and significant loss of livestock, along with impacts on multiple acres of agricultural land, the outstanding health needs will be for emergency and trauma care, accessing healthcare services, medicine shortages, as well as medical supplies and equipment. There were no reported impacts on medical facilities. Currently, there is limited information on the health needs or the medical assistance provided in shelters. As assessments continue, it is anticipated that these issues will be investigated. However, ARCS is integrating mobile health services into their ongoing response in the affected provinces. This integrated approach also considers the potential spread of communicable diseases and adheres to required IPC considerations. No specific interventions are planned in this regard.

The National Society should consider deploying and augmenting its psychosocial support resources, which are integrated into its community-based health and first aid (CBHFA) teams, to the most affected regions as well as to camps or shelters to assess the needs and devise appropriate interventions to assist those adversely impacted by the events. Men, heads of households, women, and children should be targeted in particular in any intervention considered.

Constraints and gaps identified for the delivery of MHPSS to the affected population include:

- Insufficient number of trained volunteers and staff to deliver MHPSS services.
- Lack of coordination at the provincial level to determine whether these needs are being covered, as well as whether interventions are standardized to ensure no harm is done to beneficiaries, in accordance with the do no harm principles and methodology.

As Afghanistan continues its recovery from multiple and compounding challenges, access to healthcare services, including specialized care for persons living with non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and other chronic illnesses, may not always be readily available. Not all individuals will have the option of returning to their places of origin and may be compelled to stay in alternative accommodations, making access to these services more challenging. Additionally, it is unclear whether there will be a charge for receiving these services. These displaced persons are uniquely vulnerable, as many will be without the means to pay for the required care. ARCS may need to



expand its Mobile Health Team Unit interventions to cover some of these needs, particularly in areas of vaccinations and other necessary medical assistance for vulnerable groups, out of necessity.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

At present, the ongoing assessment data lacks the required disaggregation of the affected population, making it unclear who constitutes the affected population. However, given the demographic profile and other indicators, it is expected that the most affected will be women and children, among other marginalized groups. Additional support will be needed to ensure the ARCS collects disaggregated data to cover the specific needs of the affected.

The challenge of providing for families is particularly acute in single female-headed households and those where husbands are unable to provide due to conflict or other impairments. Response actions should consider providing dignity kits to affected women, especially in remote and conservative areas.

To address this gap, PGI will be mainstreamed into all activities proposed under this IFRC-DREF, with a focus on women and other marginalized groups, including people with disabilities. ARCS will prioritize people who have difficulties accessing humanitarian services through its expansive network of volunteers to provide aid as required.

In recognition of the unique vulnerability of children, a child safeguarding risk analysis will be undertaken to ensure that operations adhere to the tenets of the IFRC's Child Safeguarding Policy, furthering the "Do no harm" principle.

A total of 800 dignity kits are allocated for the most affected in high altitude areas, particularly for women who will be disproportionately affected. Additionally, cash will be provided to the targeted population as a means to meet their basic needs.



Education

Assessments conducted thus far have revealed limited impacts on this sector. However, it remains under consideration as it is expected to be addressed by other agencies.



Migration And Displacement

The influx of returnee decreased significantly due to cold winter. However, IFRC is implementing a population movement IFRC-DREF (MDRAF013) and addressing the need of the returnee in the areas of destination through the existing Humanitarian Crisis appeal (MDRAF007).



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

Due to the significant impacts on livelihoods, especially in agriculture and livestock, further assessments of these areas will be necessary to gather detailed information on the effects on the population. Given that the event was climate-related, recovery will take time, and there may be a need for adaptation as Afghanistan proceeds into the harsh conditions of spring and summer. This could pose another detrimental blow to this vital sector. The risk to food security is further heightened, potentially requiring a significant increase in food and other types of aid to address it.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Accountability requires that ARCS listens and takes into account people in all humanitarian programming phases, using feedback to design and adjust programming, transparently and effectively communicating with people using channels, formats, and languages they prefer, and being held accountable for aid workers' conduct, including the quality, effectiveness, and fairness of resources and programs. Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) is among the core components of IFRC's and ARCS's humanitarian programming.

Under this operation, IFRC and ARCS will ensure community engagement and accountability in all aspects of field implementation, applying Movement-wide commitments and minimum actions for community engagement and accountability. Affected communities will



continuously be engaged to ensure they can access humanitarian assistance as necessary, have the required information on available services, and are involved in the planning and delivery of assistance, including beneficiary selection, distribution of cash assistance, and implementation of post-distribution monitoring activities.

The Movement-wide commitments and minimum actions for CEA will be mainstreamed throughout operations as much as the context allows. This will include building and strengthening CEA capacity, piloting and expanding a safe and inclusive feedback mechanism, collaborating with relevant inter-agency working groups, and integrating CEA responsibilities throughout all sectors and operations, such as adding CEA questions into all assessments.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

The operation aims to support ARCS in responding to the immediate needs of 11,200 people affected by the recent cold wave and its effects. With 1,146 houses damaged, 311 destroyed, and more than 57,000 livestock killed, the IFRC-DREF funding will enable ARCS to provide support to families and individuals to meet their immediate needs and reduce the hardships wrought by the cold wave (snowfall and heavy rains). Specifically, the operation is designed to meet the basic needs of the affected population through multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA), the provision of winterization kits, and dignity kits for approximately 1,600 households (or 11,200 people) from the most affected areas in six provinces (Badghis, Kunduz, Nuristan, Sar-e-Pul, Uruzgan, and Zabul) for over four months.

Operation strategy rationale

It is anticipated that the Government of Afghanistan will play a central role in responding to the events and leading recovery and restoration efforts, coordinating with humanitarian and development agencies in the country, as well as through bilateral agreements to rebuild the lives of the affected population. ARCS, as part of its mandate, has the responsibility to provide relief and associated aid to the affected population post-emergencies and is expected to partner with the government in this regard.

The main focus of ARCS's response under this IFRC-DREF is to provide multipurpose cash (MPC), as well as dignity kits and winterization kits, to the most vulnerable households affected by the cold wave and accompanying maladies. Due to the high demand for winterization kits, ARCS anticipates that the market price is likely to increase. Therefore, to ensure targeted people for assistance can access the required goods with the expected quantity and quality, ARCS has opted for in-kind contributions. Additionally, through the in-kind modality, ARCS will procure the needed goods (in terms of quality and quantity) and then distribute them to vulnerable households. Information will be provided to affected families that the MPC can be used for food and purchasing animal feed and medicine if required. CEA, protection, safeguarding, and hygiene promotion will be integrated into the interventions.

Given the prevailing context and to maximize ARCS's reach, IFRC will engage existing financial services providers (FSPs) for MPCA. ARCS will facilitate the distributions given their network across the country, including the most difficult-to-reach areas. In high altitude provinces, winter is expected to last beyond the regular winter period. As it remains difficult to determine how the situation will evolve and with conditions remaining difficult for those who lost their livelihoods (farming and livestock), the provision of cash is the most appropriate to support recovery and provide the affected population with the capacity to cover their basic needs.

Key lessons from previous operations implemented by ARCS and with the support of IFRC will aid in mitigating some of the challenges that the operations could face, and these will be applied accordingly. The operation will be targeting 1,600 households for cash distribution, with each being allocated a sum of CHF 110 (or CHF 176,000 cumulatively) to cover their basic needs. The amount of CHF 110 is agreed based on the MPC working group's assessment. The markets are functional in the target provinces, and ARCS uses secondary data for market monitoring. Distributions will be conducted using contracted FSPs who will be supported by ARCS at pre-established distribution points in the targeted provinces.

Based on the above situations, ARCS has decided to target displaced families and highland/remote areas of four provinces: a) Operationally, it would be difficult to have a wide catchment area as the country is quite expansive, even at the provincial level, and will require additional resources to ensure that capacity is there for such coverage. Additionally, the areas being targeted are likely to fall in regions designated as white areas where governmental assets and resources are limited and for which ARCS is already known and has relatively strong coverage. b) Most other affected parts of the country are likely to be returning to normalcy and will also be recipients of aid and support from both the government and development agencies, particularly in urban areas. c) The interventions proposed are those that ARCS has great familiarity with and should be able to operationalize with relative ease. Further assessments are anticipated to keep track of the evolution of the situation, which would compel a revised strategy for the expansion of ongoing interventions.

The Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) is one of the planned interventions that will be carried out for MPCA, winterization kit, and dignity kit. 800 Dignity kits are allocated for the most affected in high altitude areas, especially for women who will be disproportionately



affected. While cash will be provided for the targeted population in its entirety as a means to provide for their basic needs. IFRC has valid contracts with two existing FSPs, which will prevent delays in the recruitment of new FSPs.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

The ARCS will be targeting 1,600 households (11,200 people) from the most affected districts in six highland provinces of Afghanistan: Badghis, Kunduz, Nuristan, Sar-e-Pul, Uruzgan and Zabul. Further, the ARCS will use an integrated approach whereby those targeted for winterization kits will also be provided with MPCA. The discussion is going on with ARCS to mobilize resources to address the whole population affected. This will be more clearer after comprehensive assessment is completed.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The National Society will be providing assistance in collaboration and consultation local administrations, heads of villages and other partners guided by the existing framework for coordination in Afghanistan. Further, the ARCS will using an integrated approach whereby recipients of winterization kits will also be provided with MPCA.

The following vulnerability criteria will be used to prioritise selection:

- Seniors with responsibility for children in the household.
- Households headed by widows or single mothers with young children.
- Households with members with chronic medical conditions.
- Households with a member with disability.
- Pregnant and lactating women.
- Households with its member with congenital heart defect.
- Returnees from neighboring countries and/or from internally displaced persons (IDP) camps.

Total Targeted Population

Women	5,600	Rural	100%
Girls (under 18)	1,680	Urban	0%
Men	2,800	People with disabilities (estimated)	2%
Boys (under 18)	1,120		
Total targeted population	11,200		

Risk and Security Considerations

Please indicate about potential operation risk for this operations and mitigation actions

Risk	Mitigation action
Ethnic and social tensions may hinder humanitarian assistance in the targeted communities.	The ARCS will work through its branches to fully understand the social setting in targeted communities prior to conducting any intervention and use the information provided to design appropriate strategies that takes into consideration more which goes counter to community cohesion.
Change in security situation. While the security situation remains generally stable across the country, there is always a possibility that this could change.	The IFRC constantly monitors the security situation in Afghanistan and works closely with various partners to potentially pre-empt changes in the country. It also provides advice on the deployment of team members internally and conducts routine assessment in areas it operates or intend to operate. Further, the risk of



	exposing IFRC staff is minimal as the implementation of the DREF operation will be carried out primarily by ARCS operatives who are also guided by security protocols.
Seasonal Changes which could bring additional strain on the population through the impacts on their health, livelihoods and property.	.There is constant monitoring of the weather situation across the country and care is taken to not establish Humanitarian Service Points in vulnerable areas.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

No

Planned Intervention



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Budget: CHF 241,516

Targeted Persons: 11,200

Indicators

Title	Target
# of households receiving winterisation kit	1,600
# of volunteers mobilized	80
% of people surveyed who report that relief items received was applicable to their needs	70

Priority Actions

The IFRC- DREF funds will support the procurement of needed relief items to address the immediate needs of families impacted by the severe weather events. The interventions will be guided by the minimum standards for PGI in emergencies. The priority actions include:

1. Identify needs and define targets for the distribution of relief items.
2. Conduct refresher trainings on CEA and PGI for staff and volunteers. This will be ongoing throughout the life of the operation.
3. Develop recipient selection criteria to ensure relief items are distributed to the most affected and most vulnerable people.
4. Distribution of winterization kits - procure and distribute winterization kits to targeted communities.

As winterization kits are domestically procured, all potential delays are mitigated against due to existing arrangements with suppliers (as per IFRC's procedures), thereby ensuring distributions within the established timeframe of the operation. ARCS will provide the winterization kit in-kind instead of cash. The reasons for such a decision are as follows: (1) The targeted communities are in mountainous areas where physical access to markets (i.e., due to roadblocks) is quite challenging; (2) ARCS has a specific winterization kit requirement, ensuring good quality items are provided to the targeted recipients. Such products are not available in the local market, therefore, IFRC will do the procurement to ensure the quality of the winterization kits.



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 206,184

Targeted Persons: 11,200



Indicators

Title	Target
# of households provided with multi-purpose cash	1,600
% of households surveyed reporting that the cash provided was sufficient to cover their most important needs	60
% of persons surveyed reporting that satisfaction with the cash distribution process	80

Priority Actions

Priority actions include:

1. Selection of households for MPCA
2. Distribution of MPCA: a one-off cash grant transfer to support households with the provision of their basic needs, such as food items, animal feed, medication and basic household needs.
3. Conduct an exit survey to capture feedback from the recipients at distribution points for improving the ongoing distribution.
4. Conduct PDM to assess to what extent the cash was used for the indented purposes and identify gaps to inform future operations.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Budget: CHF 34,080

Targeted Persons: 11,200

Indicators

Title	Target
% of deployed staff and volunteers oriented in PGI sensitization and minimum standards	100
# households receiving dignity kit	800

Priority Actions

PGI has been integrated in all sectors. Hence, there is no separate budget for PGI. Priority actions include:

1. Train staff and volunteers on PGI sensitive assessments
2. Mainstream PGI under technical sectors, including sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) collection.
3. Ensure diversity of staff and volunteers, including male and female,
4. Ensure the reach of all, including female-headed households.
5. Conduct a Safeguarding Risk Assessment, and related work
6. Plan using the PGI minimum standard checklist for livelihood, and MPCA sectors.
7. Distribution of dignity kits.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 2,130

Targeted Persons: 11,200



Indicators

Title	Target
# of household reached through dissemination of key information and messages	1,600
% of people satisfied with receiving services and with dignity	70

Priority Actions

Priority actions include:

1. Communicate selection criteria widely and clearly for all relevant sectors, with recipients and nonrecipients, using a range of channels and approaches.
2. Share information on sectoral plans, progress, activities and distribution processes, delays, and challenges, and people's rights and entitlements systematically. Additionally, stress that aid is free to minimize the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse and corruption.
3. Provide a question-and-answer sheet for volunteers to use when in communities to help them share consistent information.
4. Provide staff and volunteers involved in the operation with CEA orientation/training.
5. Utilize community feedback mechanisms - use existing mechanisms and the community feedback data for informed decision-making.



Coordination And Partnerships

Budget: -

Targeted Persons: 30

Indicators

Title	Target
# of coordination meetings conducted/participated	6

Priority Actions

Key actions include:

1. Ensure effective coordination with authorities at regional and local levels.



Secretariat Services

Budget: -

Targeted Persons: -

Indicators

Title	Target
% of financial reporting compliance to IFRC procedures	100

Priority Actions

Key actions include:

1. Provide technical and management support for the operation, utilizing existing IFRC Secretariat capacities in the country supported



under existing Emergency Appeal.

2. Provide membership services, including security, reporting, procurement, communication, and resource mobilization.



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 14,910

Targeted Persons: 18

Indicators

Title	Target
# of lessons learnt workshop conducted	1
% of volunteers insured	100

Priority Actions

Key actions include:

1. Ensure the well-being of volunteers supporting the response.
2. Engage authorities at local levels for effective coordination and implementation.
3. Conduct lessons learned workshop.

About Support Services

How many staff and volunteers will be involved in this operation. Briefly describe their role.

More than 100 ARCS volunteers have been mobilized to undertake assessments, while over 50 staff members have been engaged in providing coordination support at the provincial and regional levels, as well as sharing the required information with Movement partners and other stakeholders.

Will surge personnel be deployed? Please provide the role profile needed.

The IFRC plans to engage a PGI /CEA surge delegate to support the IFRC-DREF operation.

If there is procurement, will it be done by National Society or IFRC?

IFRC will undertake all procurements in keeping with its procurement procedures and standards.

How will this operation be monitored?

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) will be integral parts of the operation and will involve those assisted through the interventions as well as other stakeholders, utilizing participatory approaches throughout the operation's timeframe. Regular internal operation updates (biweekly or monthly) will be developed by the implementing team of the ARCS at regional and provincial levels for sharing with headquarters and further distribution to key stakeholders as necessary.

Monthly financial and operational progress reports will capture key operational achievements and planned activities for the projected period under the IFRC-DREF operation. The reports will reflect the numbers of assisted people disaggregated by gender, age, and disabilities if possible. Additionally, meetings with key stakeholders, performance reporting, and field visits to follow progress on the implementation of activities will be conducted monthly or as triggered by monitoring needs.

Furthermore, a satisfaction survey of assisted people will be conducted in line with IFRC standards to determine their satisfaction



towards the services received from this DREF-supported operation. Additionally, the ARCS will hold a lessons learned workshop at the end of the operation to evaluate key achievements and challenges in order to improve its response operations in the future. PDM will be carried out for MPC, winterization kits, and hygiene kits using standard tools.

Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation

IFRC will support the ARCS communications team in communicating with external audiences, focusing on the situation and the Red Cross and Red Crescent humanitarian actions in assisting the affected people. The communications efforts aim to generate visibility and support for humanitarian needs and the Red Cross Red Crescent response. Close collaboration will be maintained between the Asia Pacific IFRC regional communications unit, IFRC Country Delegation, and the National Society to ensure a coherent and coordinated communications approach.



Budget Overview



DREF OPERATION

MDRAF014 - Afghan Red Crescent Society - Afghanistan Cold Wave

Operating Budget

Planned Operations	483,910
Shelter and Basic Household Items	241,516
Livelihoods	0
Multi-purpose Cash	206,184
Health	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	0
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	34,080
Education	0
Migration	0
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	0
Community Engagement and Accountability	2,130
Environmental Sustainability	0
Enabling Approaches	15,975
Coordination and Partnerships	1,065
Secretariat Services	0
National Society Strengthening	14,910
TOTAL BUDGET	499,885

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)



Contact Information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

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[Click here for the reference](#)

