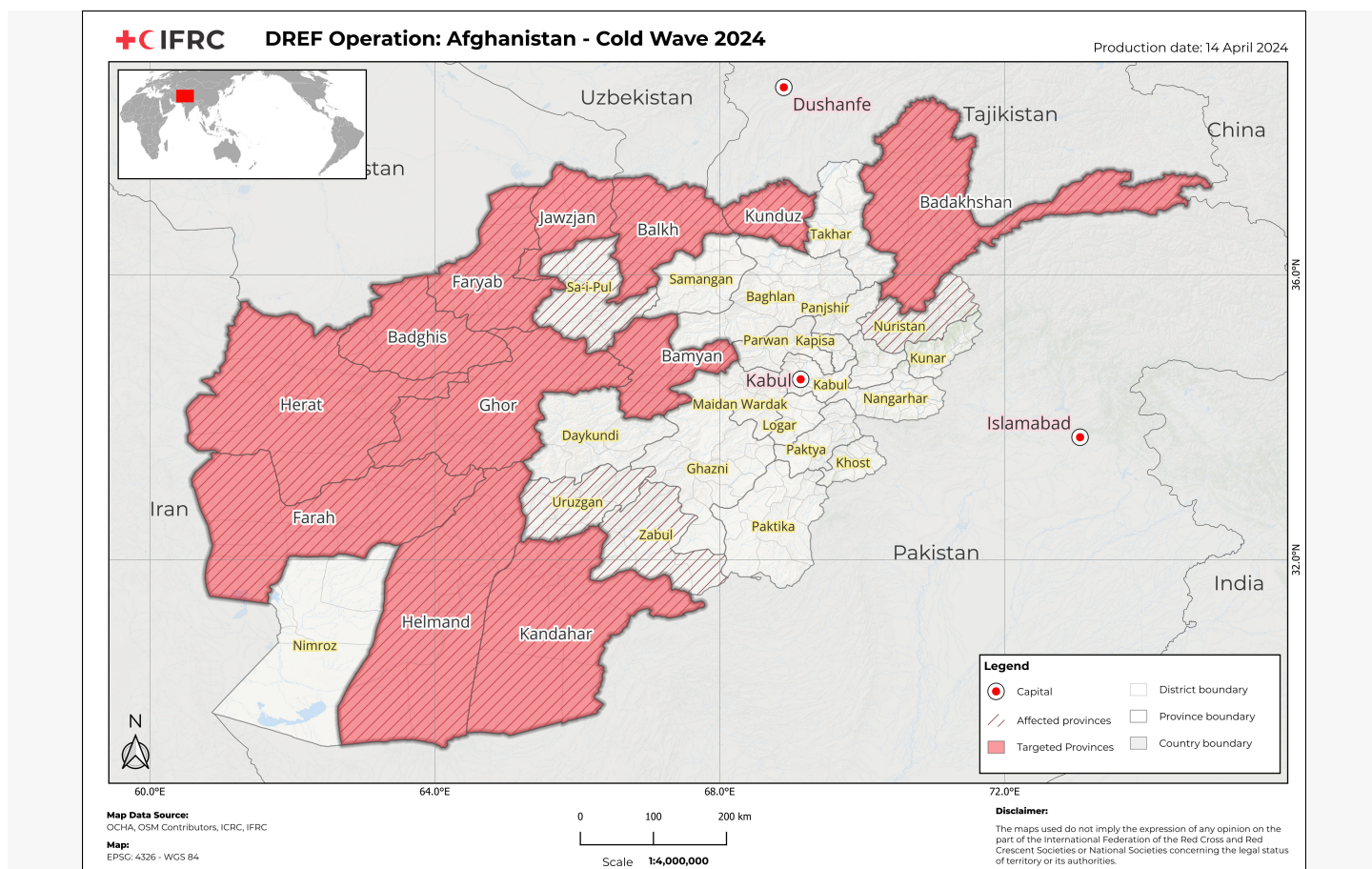




ARCS conducting beneficiary registration in Nangarhar Province (Photo: ARCS)

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| Appeal:<br><b>MDRAF014</b>                           | Total DREF Allocation:<br>-                | Crisis Category:<br><b>Yellow</b>  | Hazard:<br><b>Cold Wave</b>                   |
| Glide Number:<br><b>CW-2024-000025-AFG</b>           | People Affected:<br><b>325,205 people</b>  | People Targeted:<br><b>22,400 people</b>   |   |
| Event Onset:<br><b>Sudden</b>                        | Operation Start Date:<br><b>16-03-2024</b> | New Operational End Date:<br><b>31-07-2024</b>   | Total Operating Timeframe:<br><b>4 months</b> |
| Reporting Timeframe Start Date:<br><b>16-03-2024</b> |  | Reporting Timeframe End Date:<br><b>15-04-2024</b>   |   |
| Additional Allocation Requested:<br>-                |  | Targeted Areas:<br><b>Badakhshan, Badghis, Balkh, Bamyan, Farah, Faryab, Ghor, Helmand, Herat, Jawzjan, Kandahar, Kunduz</b> |   |

# Description of the Event



Afghanistan map that highlights 11 affected provinces

## Date of event

2024-03-03

## What happened, where and when?

An uncharacteristically late winter season impacted multiple provinces across Afghanistan, resulting in heavy snowfall and extreme cold temperatures, prompting responses from the authorities and other actors. The Afghan Red Crescent, in response to the situation, convened an Emergency Task Force Meeting on 3 March 2024 to present findings from their rapid assessments and to discuss possible interventions with the support of in-country partners. From the reports, it was apparent that several high-altitude provinces suffered casualties, heavy losses of livestock, blocked roads, and disruption to economic activities, among other impacts.

Subsequent and more detailed assessments confirmed the true scale of the impact wrought by the event, with the National Disaster Organization reporting that as many as 325,205 people were affected across at least 18 provinces, and thousands of livestock perished, significantly affecting households and livelihoods. The provinces most affected include Badakhshan, Badghis, Balkh, Farah, Faryab, Ghor, Herat, Jawzjan, Kunduz, Nuristan, Nangarhar, Sar-e-Pul, Uruzgan, and Zabol.

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, also causing 70 deaths. The event doubly impacted the province of Nuristan, which was still recovering from the ravages of a landslide triggered by heavy snowfall, which claimed as many as 25 lives, destroyed 20 homes, and displaced 350 households.

The humanitarian needs remain significant and will require long-term interventions to strengthen the resilience of communities, particularly in the areas of Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction.





ARCS Volunteers carrying out selection and registration of beneficiaries in Nangarhar Province (Photo: ARCS)

## Scope and Scale

Detailed assessments conducted by multiple agencies, including the authorities, have unearthed the true toll of the severe winter event on the population. With more than 1,197 deaths, 2,217 people injured, and damages to more than 39,000 households, along with significant losses to agricultural land and livestock, the resulting humanitarian impacts have been significant, necessitating a multifaceted response to cover the varying needs. This situation is exacerbated by an increase in the number of returnees from neighboring countries who are also seeking new livelihoods and a new way of life.

Afghanistan as a country continues to recover from decades of conflict, protracted and complex crises which have further reduced the capacity of the country to respond. Events such as the cold wave have highlighted the vulnerabilities of the population, where the numbers and quality of the housing stock are inadequate, and the agriculture sector is in ruins due to the ravages of climate change and degradation, alongside ongoing health maladies.

Women and children continue to bear the brunt of the existing humanitarian crisis as they often lack the required capacity to cope and respond. Additionally, local mores also present challenges for this group. Given the repeated impacts on the agricultural sector, urban centers have become the epicenter of population movement as families, stripped of their livelihoods, seek to find new opportunities.

## Source Information

| Source Name                    | Source Link   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Afghan Red Crescent Society | <a href="https://www.arcs.org">https://www.arcs.org</a> |

## Summary of Changes

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Are you changing the timeframe of the operation | No |
|---|----|

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Are you changing the operational strategy               | Yes |
| Are you changing the target population of the operation | Yes |
| Are you changing the geographical location              | Yes |
| Are you making changes to the budget                    | No  |
| Is this a request for a second allocation               | No  |
| Has the forecasted event materialize?                   | No  |

**Please explain the summary of changes and justification:**

Below is the summary of changes and justification:

1. Increase in the number of target provinces from 6 to 11:

The impacts were more widespread and severe than confirmed from the initial assessments from the ARCS; also supported by reports from the ANDMA where it has been revealed that 1197 people died, 2217 were injured, and 39,315 houses were damaged across the impacted provinces.

2. Increase in the number of targeted households for multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) from 1,600 to 3,200:

Market conditions have normalized, allowing the affected population to access basic supplies as may be required, especially in the additional provinces. Primary support required at this time is for livelihoods recovery – particularly for the procurement of agricultural and livestock goods, which are available in the local market. The additional 1600 HHS MPCA cost will be covered by the cost allocated for the winterization kit.

3. Removal of procurement of 1,600 winterization kits:

The season is changing, and while some provinces remain snow-covered, this has been significantly reduced due to warming associated with the change in season (spring) which accelerated faster than was anticipated given the late peak of winter. Normalcy is returning to the markets, so families can access items as needed. The existing suppliers gave the assurance that the winterization kits could be procured and delivered in two days. However, it was subsequently communicated that the window of opportunity was no longer available, and that the new timeline for the same is two weeks or even more, at which point, that intervention would be irrelevant.

4. Increase in the number of Dignity Kits from 800 to 1,750:

The Dignity Kits are earmarked for the most affected provinces as women and girls have been disproportionately affected by past crises and the existential humanitarian situation. While market conditions are returning to normal, the targeted districts are remote (with some being classified as white areas by the NS) and are known to benefit the least from interventions. The distance from the markets also presents an added challenge for the women and girls, as traditions may preclude them from traveling to access these items as needed. In addition, discussion on menstrual health with men considers cultural taboo. Therefore, provision of dignity kits to the household increased as the number of provinces increased. This will ensure protection and menstrual hygiene of women and girls who are living in high-altitude districts and with distance from the local market. The cost will be covered through savings from the winterization kit.

## Current National Society Actions

### Start date of National Society actions

2024-03-03

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Shelter, Housing And Settlements</b> | The ensuing operation is not presently conducting interventions in this sector.   |
| <b>Livelihoods And Basic Needs</b>      | With significant losses to livestock and the agriculture sector overall, the ARCS has scaled up its intervention in this sector targeting an increased number of households with MPCA to cover basic needs as well as support livelihood restoration. |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Multi Purpose Cash</b>                      | <p>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. Under the current operation, ARCS has scaled up its support and will be providing MPC to 11 provinces, targeting a total of 3200 households.</p>  |
| <b>Health</b>                                  | <p>Existing health facilities continue to cover the needs of the population that were impacted by the cold wave. ARCS however through its Mobile Health Teams (MHTs) continue to provide its routine services in the areas of vaccination and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS).</p>   |
| <b>Protection, Gender And Inclusion</b>        | <p>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> <p>PGI is integrated in the ongoing and scaled up operations for the ARCS. The dignity kits to be distributed will target women and girls as well as the distributions will include female volunteers. There will 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>   |
| <b>Migration And Displacement</b>              | <p>Returnees are a specially vulnerable within Afghanistan, the anticipated second wave of returnees from Pakistan has not been realized, however this situation may change over time. While special consideration will be given to this uniquely vulnerable group, this would be accommodated under a separate facility and not under this current DREF for Cold Wave.</p>   |
| <b>Community Engagement And Accountability</b> | <p>As the true impact of the cold wave becomes clearer, ARCS is now able to better target and provide support based on the identified needs. Key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and post-distribution monitoring will be conducted with a wider group to gather feedback about the response in the specific areas of intervention, multi-purpose cash (MPC), and Dignity kits.</p>  |
| <b>Coordination</b>                            | <p>ARCS, with the support of the IFRC's Country Delegation, continues to coordinates closely 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> |
| <b>National Society Readiness</b>              | <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</p>  |



|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <p>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 per cent are female) and 24,600 active volunteers (of whom 27 per cent 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 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> |
| <p><b>Assessment</b></p>                      | <p>Additional Assessments have been conducted by the authorities among other agencies and this has revealed the scale of the impact wrought on by the cold wave across multiple provinces. With appreciably significant livestock losses, damages and destruction to households, the ARCS has opted to scale up its responses to better align with the realities on the ground. The detailed assessments have confirmed need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shelter/ Settlements and Basic Household items: Household items (e.g. tents, tarpaulins, kitchen sets, blankets, clothes.</li> <li>- MPCA and Cash for Work (CFW)</li> <li>- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH): Hygiene kits, dignity kits (for women and girls) , safe Water</li> <li>- livelihood and livestock</li> <li>- Education</li> </ul> <p>The ARCS has opted to scale up interventions in MPCA and dignity kits as these are considered to be most impactful given the specific needs of women and girls vis-a-vis the socio-cultural context and for the coverage of basic needs of households to include livelihood restoration. The response strategy has been adjusted accordingly.</p>  |
| <p><b>Activation Of Contingency Plans</b></p> | <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>   |
| <p><b>National Society EOC</b></p>            | <p>The NS's EOC continues to monitor all events across the country.</p>   |

## IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <p><b>Secretariat</b></p> | <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</p> |
|---------------------------|---|



|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | 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. |
| <b>Participating National Societies</b> | 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  |

## 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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Government has requested international assistance</b> | Yes   |
| <b>National authorities</b>                              | 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. |
| <b>UN or other actors</b>                                | 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 undertaken to date did not provide the required disaggregation as it relates to demographics to gain an in-depth appreciation of the impacts and needs attributed to the event.



As the situation evolves on the ground, so has the needs and the priorities of the affected population. Afghanistan is now advancing into spring which means that the conditions that would have necessitated the provision of winterization kits no longer exists and as such the interventions have been modified to reflect same.

#### Risk Analysis:

- With the advent of climate change and a projected weakening El Nino (OCHA, 2024), there could be an increase in the precipitation levels across Asia - potentially impacting Afghanistan. Having gone through an uncharacteristically late winter with significant snow fall in some provinces, the double threat associated with rapid thawing and rainfall increases the flood risks across the country with possible deleterious impacts to lives and livelihoods.



## Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The cold wave that impacted the country during the first week of March resulted in significant losses to livestock and other agricultural holdings. This significant loss has impacted livelihoods and food security, with 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

The needs of the population continues to be covered by the existing health facilities. It is anticipated that there continue to be needs within this sector that requires specific interventions such as in the area of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), however this has not been revealed from the assessments conducted. The ARCS will not be targeting this area for intervention, given the required coverage and the possible need for referral services for which there are unconfirmed capacities. There are also potential barriers to accessing mental health services. The National Society will also have to strengthen its capacity in this area to meet the needs of this population. There were no reported impacts to medical facilities.

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.

Afghanistan's recovery from multiple and compounding challenges, continues to be hindered by a number of shocks which can prevent access to healthcare services, including specialized care for persons living with non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and other chronic illnesses. Additionally, it remains unclear whether there is a charge for accessing health services. The ARCS may need to expand its Mobile Health Teams 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

Data provided by the authorities continue to lack 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

This is not a consideration for the ARCS.



## Migration And Displacement

The influx of returnee decreased significantly due to cold winter. However this is expected to change with a second wave expected to return from Pakistan per a directive issued by the government. IFRC is implementing a population movement IFRC-DREF (MDRAF013) and addressing the need of the returnees 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 causative or underlying factors which resulted in the significant losses experienced. Given that the event was climate-related, recovery will take time, and there may be a need for adaptation as Afghanistan continues to advance into the spring and summer seasons. This could deliver 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 22,400 people affected by the March cold wave and its effects. With 39,000 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 MPCA, and the



provision of dignity kits for approximately 3,200 households (or 22,400 people) from the most affected areas in eleven (11) provinces (Badakhshan, Badghis, Kunduz, Nuristan, Sari-e-Pul, Balkh, Faryab, Ghor, Uruzgan, Zabul and Nangarhar) over four months.

## Operation strategy rationale

It is anticipated that the Government of Afghanistan will continue to 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 MPC, as well as dignity kits to the most vulnerable households affected by the cold wave and accompanying maladies. Given the expanded needs and the normalizing of market conditions, MPC will be the primary intervention granting families the freedom to provide for their needs. Information will be provided to affected families that the MPC can be used for food and purchasing animal feed (which will support the restoration of their livelihoods) and medicine if required. CEA, protection, safeguarding, will be integrated into the interventions.

Given the prevailing context and to maximize ARCS's reach, IFRC will continue its engagement with 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 has come to an end, significantly reducing access concerns. As the season changes, however, and with the ensuing rains, the situation is an evolving one (both from a humanitarian standpoint and seasonal variability), and with conditions remaining difficult for those who lost their livelihoods (farming and livestock), the provision of cash remains the most appropriate intervention 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 3,200 households for cash distribution, with each being allocated a sum of CHF 110 (or CHF 352,000 cumulatively) to cover their basic needs. The amount of CHF 110 is agreed based on the MPC working group's assessment and is the standard rate adopted by ARCS for all its MPC programs in the country. It is considered that changing the rate applied will have far-reaching implications to NS programming and budgets. The markets are functional in the target provinces, and ARCS uses secondary data for market monitoring. Distributions will continue to be conducted using contracted FSPs who will be supported by ARCS at the pre-established distribution points in the targeted provinces.

ARCS has scaled up its interventions to attend to the needs of the affected population across 11 provinces with a primary focus on displaced families and highland/remote areas:

- a) Operationally, in order to not exceed the limits of the NS's capacity, one district per province will be targeted with regions designated as white areas, where governmental assets and resources are limited and for which ARCS is already known and has relatively strong coverage, will be the focus.
- 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 scaled-up interventions proposed continue to be in areas that ARCS has great familiarity with and should be able to operationalize with relative ease.

The Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) is one of the planned activities that will be carried out for MPCA and dignity kits. 1750 Dignity kits are allocated for the most affected provinces as women and girls have been disproportionately affected by past crises and the existential humanitarian situation. While market conditions are returning to normal, the targeted districts are remote (with some being classified as white areas by the NS) and are known to benefit the least from interventions.

The distance from the markets also presents an added challenge for the women and girls, as traditions may preclude them from traveling to access these items as needed. In addition, discussion on menstrual health with men is considered a cultural taboo. Therefore, the provision of dignity kits to the household has increased along with the provinces. This will ensure protection and menstrual hygiene of women and girls who are living in remote districts and distant from local markets. The costs will be covered from the savings from the removal of the winterization kits as part of the intervention. While cash will be provided for the targeted population in its entirety as a means of providing for their basic needs. IFRC has valid contracts with two existing FSPs, which are able to accommodate the increased distributions and as such additional capacity will not have to be recruited.



# Targeting Strategy

## Who will be targeted through this operation?

The ARCS will be targeting 3,200 households (22,400 people) in eleven provinces: Badakhshan, Badghis, Kunduz, Nuristan, Sari-e-Pul, Balkh, Faryab, Ghor, Uruzgan, Zabul and Nangarhar. The ARCS will be taking an integrated approach whereby those targeted for Dignity Kits will also be provided with MPCA in five of the eleven most affected provinces.

## Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The National Society will be providing assistance in collaboration and consultation with 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 dignity kits will also be provided with MPCA.

The following vulnerability criteria will be used to prioritize 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.
- Households that suffered significant losses to their agricultural holding/ livestock.
- 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                     | 11,200 | Rural                                | 100% |
| Girls (under 18)          | 3,360  | Urban                                | 0%   |
| Men                       | 5,600  | People with disabilities (estimated) | 2%   |
| Boys (under 18)           | 2,240  |                                      |      |
| Total targeted population | 22,400 |                                      |      |

## Risk and Security Considerations

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

| Risk  | Mitigation action  |
|---|--|
| 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.  |
| 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 | The IFRC constantly monitors the security situation in Afghanistan and works closely with various partners to potentially pre-empt   |



that this could change.

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.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

No

## Planned Intervention



### Multi Purpose Cash

**Budget:** CHF 352,000

**Targeted Persons:** 22,400

### Indicators

| Title  | Target | Actual |
|--|--------|--------|
| # of households provided with multi-purpose cash   | 3,200  | 0      |
| % of households surveyed reporting that the cash provided was sufficient to cover their most important needs | 60     | 0      |
| % of persons surveyed reporting that satisfaction with the cash distribution process                         | 70     | 0      |
| # of PDMs conducted  | 2      | 0      |

### Progress Towards Outcome

Planned activities:

1. Selection of households for MPCA
2. Distribution of MPCA
3. Conduct exit survey
4. Conduct PDM

Progress to date:

The Project agreement has been signed by the ARCS and the Country Delegation, allowing for mobilization of resources for the implementation of activities. ARCS has commenced beneficiary selection and registration across the priority provinces through Red Rose system and has advanced mobilization to support actual distribution which will be conducted by FSPs. Cash distribution has commenced in two provinces: Zabul and Nangarhar. Furthermore, the registration process is ongoing in the remaining nine (9) provinces.



### Protection, Gender And Inclusion

**Budget:** CHF 82,500

**Targeted Persons:** 22,400



## Indicators

| Title  | Target | Actual |
|--|--------|--------|
| % of deployed staff and volunteers oriented in PGI sensitization and minimum standards | 100    | 0      |
| # households receiving dignity kits  | 1,750  | 0      |

## Progress Towards Outcome

Planned activities:

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 engaging female volunteers.
8. Develop IEC materials (in local language) for building awareness on the use and care of sanitary materials in the dignity kits.

Progress to date:

Distribution plans have been developed and beneficiary registration has commenced across the five targeted provinces. ARCS has also commenced the distribution of dignity kits.



## Community Engagement And Accountability

**Budget:** CHF 1,000

**Targeted Persons:** 22,400

## Indicators

| Title  | Target | Actual |
|--|--------|--------|
| # of household reached through dissemination of key information and messages | 3,200  | 0      |
| % of people satisfied with receiving services and with dignity               | 70     | 0      |

## Progress Towards Outcome

Planned activities:

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.

Progress to date:



The selection criteria have been developed and shared with the relevant sectors, serving as guidance for the overall beneficiary selection process being undertaken by the ARCS with the support of the Federation. Staff and volunteers have commenced benefiting from orientation and training sessions for CEA in the 11 targeted provinces. Community feedback mechanisms have been established.



## Coordination And Partnerships

**Budget:** CHF 0

**Targeted Persons:** 30

### Indicators

| Title   | Target | Actual |
|---|--------|--------|
| # of coordination meetings conducted/participated | 6      | 0      |

### Progress Towards Outcome

Planned activities:

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

Progress to date:

This is undertaken by the Regional and Branch Offices of the National Society. The ARCS maintains positive relations with the authorities at both levels.



## Secretariat Services

**Budget:** CHF 0

**Targeted Persons:** 0

### Indicators

| Title  | Target | Actual |
|--|--------|--------|
| % of financial reporting compliance to IFRC procedures | 100    | 0      |

### Progress Towards Outcome

Planned activities:

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.

Progress to date:

The Secretariat has appointed a Project Manager to directly support the implementation of the project with the ARCS. The required project control and monitoring instruments, such as a detailed Distribution Implementation Plan, have been developed and shared with the national society, and there is close collaboration with ARCS's and IFRC's PMER teams.





Budget: CHF 12,100

Targeted Persons: 18

## Indicators

| Title                                  | Target | Actual |
|--|--------|--------|
| # of lessons learnt workshop conducted | 1      | 0      |
| % of volunteers insured                | 100    | 0      |

## Progress Towards Outcome

Planned activities:

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.

Progress to date:

Engagement has commenced with authorities at the local level to apprise them of the objectives of the National Society and to secure their support for the successful implementation of the interventions in their respective districts.

## 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, and dignity kits using standard tools. PDM for dignity kits will also be supported by female volunteers which has the added benefit of providing information on appropriateness and quality.

## **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

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>Planned Operations</b>                       | <b>483,910</b> |
| 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              |
| <b>Enabling Approaches</b>                      | <b>15,975</b>  |
| Coordination and Partnerships                   | 1,065          |
| Secretariat Services                            | 0              |
| National Society Strengthening                  | 14,910         |
| <b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>                             | <b>499,885</b> |

*all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)*



# Contact Information

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

**National Society contact:** Mohammad Nabi Burhan, Secretary General, sg@arcs.af, +937289000

**IFRC Appeal Manager:** Necephor Mghendi, Head of Delegation, necephor.mghendi@ifrc.org, +60122246796

**IFRC Project Manager:** Ahmad Siamak Haris, Operations Response Officer, siamak.haris@ifrc.org, +93707 173 077

**IFRC focal point for the emergency:** Naimatullah Akbari,, Operations Coordinator South Asia, opscoord.southasia@ifrc.org

[Click here for the reference](#)

