



ARCS staff and volunteers carrying out assessment in areas affected by floods. (Photo: ARCS)

Appeal: MDRAF015	Country: Afghanistan	Hazard: Flood	Type of DREF: Response
Crisis Category: Orange	Event Onset: Sudden	DREF Allocation: CHF 750,000	
Glide Number: FF-2024-000049-AFG	People Affected: 83,000 people	People Targeted: 28,000 people	
Operation Start Date: 2024-05-04	Operation Timeframe: 6 months	Operation End Date: 30-11-2024	DREF Published: 05-05-2024

Targeted Areas: **Farah, Ghor, Helmand, Herat, Kandahar, Kunar, Laghman**

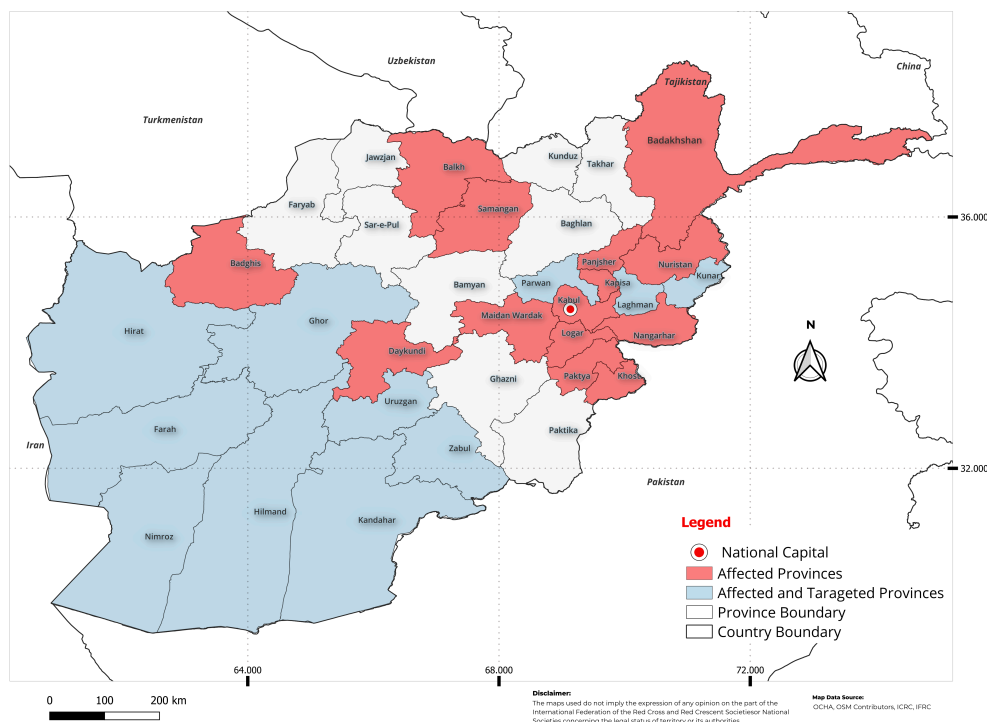
Description of the Event

Date of event

2024-04-26



Afghanistan Flash Floods
Affected & Targeted Areas
As of 22 April 2024



Map of Afghanistan targeted area. (Map: IFRC, IM)

What happened, where and when?

Persistent rains have been affecting Afghanistan for a protracted period resulting in flooding and widespread damages across 24 provinces. Intense rainfall activity commenced during the week of 16 April 2024 culminating on the 26 April 2024 and was potentially associated with the event that impacted neighbouring Pakistan, India and as far as Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, which experienced its heaviest rainfall since records began. The rains followed an uncharacteristically late winter and cold wave which affected more than 24 provinces, significantly impacting lives and livelihoods – particularly the agriculture and livestock sectors. The ongoing severe weather event is anticipated to continue as the spring season advances and is expected to exacerbate the existing humanitarian situation. Assessments conducted by the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) and other agencies have been shedding light on the share toll of the devastation, with destruction and damages to houses, roads, bridges, places of worship, schools, dams, irrigation facilities, acres of agricultural land, electricity networks and commercial entities such as shops and hotels.

The ARCS, in response to the devastation has been going on the ground supporting search and rescue activities, distribution of non-food items and continues to conduct assessments in the affected provinces. Additionally, owing to the devastation wrought by continuous heavy rains, the National Society convened an emergency taskforce meeting with its partners to include the IFRC to share the most recent updates on the situation and to discuss its response options with the support of its in-country partners. The greatest needs are for cash, shelter, food, and household items as well as feed for animals.

It is anticipated that there will be a huge need for urgent humanitarian assistance as the coping capacities of households are already stretched, as they face a compounding reality at a time when their recovery from previous events has been disrupted. The situation is made more disastrous due to the impact on the agricultural sector and resulting implications for national food security—a situation that is already challenging, and with more rain in the forecast, more devastation to this sector is to be anticipated.





ARCS on the ground, carrying out rapid assessments and providing relief aid in the affected areas. (Photo: ARCS)



ARCS staff involving in search as rescue activities in the affected areas. (Photo: ARCS)

Scope and Scale

According to data from the ARCS, the severe weather event affected 24 provinces: Badakhshan, Badghis, Baghlan, Balkh, Diakindi, Farah, Ghor, Helmand, Herat, Kabul, Kapisa, Khost, Kunar, Logar, Laghman, Maidan Wardak, Nangarhar, Nuristan, Nimroz, Paktia, Parwan, Panjsher, Samangan and Urozgan. A total of 41 deaths, 84 injuries, 8,273 damages houses, 5,428 livestock, and 84,069 acres of land lost due to the event. Additionally, public infrastructures including roads, schools, bridges and culverts have been damaged.

The rains are expected, particularly in the central, south, southeast, and southwest regions of the country – with daily accumulation levels of an average of 30 mm (OCHA, 2024) should this materialize, it poses a serious threat to urban areas. Low-lying as well as low-lying and flood prone regions, which would have already reached saturation levels.

The damages and sectoral needs are further elaborated in the below sections.

Previous Operations

Has a similar event affected the same area(s) in the last 3 years?	Yes
Did it affect the same population group?	Yes
Did the National Society respond?	Yes
Did the National Society request funding form DREF for that event(s)	Yes
If yes, please specify which operation	MDRAF011 and MDRAF012

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:

While Afghanistan had experienced similar events in recent years, to which ARCS had responded using locally mobilized and Movement resources, the country is currently facing one of the world's worst humanitarian crises fueled by a deterioration of economic conditions, climatic shocks, other pre-existing needs. Climate change has exacerbated Afghanistan's susceptibility to extreme weather events such as the recently experienced cold waves and cold temperatures. The country's precarious position is further underscored by its very high ranking on the climate risk index which also suggests a high degree of exposure and inadequate coping mechanisms. With an estimated 24 million people nationwide, representing more than half of the country's population, need assistance in 2024, the situation is dire. These kinds of incidences have increased throughout the nation, with previously unaffected regions are now experiencing cold waves. This break from past weather patterns presents new challenges for the impacted areas and worsens the pre-existing humanitarian situation. Droughts, heatwaves, flooding, and desertification are among the additional climate-related hazards that Afghanistan experiences. These events have an increased impact on food security, water availability, health and livelihoods, especially for vulnerable communities (German Watch, 2020; OCHA, 2022). ARCS had responded to previous similar events using locally mobilized resources. The ARCS has depleted its preparedness stocks and stretched its financial reserves, thus requiring external support to address needs wrought by heavy snowfall and extreme cold temperatures.

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 and were included as part of the ARCS contingency plan. The previous response plans included winter conditions, which have been predictable in the recent past, and winterization support was included in 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 in a country which is constantly challenged with ongoing hazards and limited coping mechanisms to respond.

To overcome these challenges and effectively 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 and development funds rather than the current emergency funding, considering the political and operational constraints imposed on Afghanistan. Flexibility in accessing these funds is necessary to implement effective programs and resilient initiatives.

- Pursuing integrated responses has yielded timely and efficient results by involving the affected population in the process and providing assistance quickly. It also allows the optimal allocation of resources, freeing up human resources for other tasks.
- Likewise, it is important to extend distribution days to accommodate absentees and late arrivals, maximizing outreach. It is also crucial to establish distribution points in easily accessible locations near the population, reducing travel time. Additionally, a distribution schedule is developed considering local culture and differences to minimize wait time and reach as many people as possible based on their availability.

Other lessons learned from flood response operation in 2023 include:

- Conducting awareness and information sessions prior to distribution proves to be beneficial in ensuring that the target population has accurate information regarding the distribution process.
- Accurate and verified identity card numbers are essential for efficient validation and distribution processes.
- The registration of target households or individuals should be conducted based on Tazkira (citizenship card or other valid documents) to prevent tensions at distribution points.
- Monitoring activities should be conducted more frequently to ensure programme effectiveness.
- Enhancing supervision during operations is key to ensuring transparency.
- Acknowledging the crucial role of female volunteers in humanitarian response is essential, as their involvement significantly enhances the effectiveness and inclusivity of response efforts.

Current National Society Actions

Start date of National Society actions

2024-04-18

Shelter, Housing And Settlements	The ARCS assisted with the search and rescue efforts to assist those trapped or injured due to structural or roof collapse caused by the heavy rains. It also provided immediate relief in five affected provinces through the provision of tents, kitchen sets, jerry cans, tarpaulins and blankets. The NS has also undertaken joint distributions with the authorities. Through this DREF facility, the ARCS is intent on scaling up its response to cover additional and hard-hit provinces with essential relief items and support the recovery of the most affected population.
Livelihoods And Basic Needs	With significant losses to livestock and acres of agricultural land, it will become necessary to provide support to families/households to support the restoration and overall recovery of their livelihoods. Additionally, given the erosion of household economic capacity and the non-existence of social protection systems, households will require support over the short to medium term to cover their basic needs. From assessments already undertaken, losses to livestock (5,428) and agriculture land (84,060) have been reported across the country, attributed to flash floods that were experienced.
Health	The basic needs of the population are already being covered by existing medical facilities in the provinces and complemented by other organizations. Assessments are ongoing in this sector; however, it is expected that there will be a need for the provision of psychosocial support to the affected population, for which there is negligible capacity for coverage by the ARCS through its MHTs, however, this will not be a consideration under this DREF operation.
Protection, Gender And Inclusion	Consideration must be given to persons who will be placed in shelters to include returnees. Attention must be paid to safety and security concerns as tensions can arise with those who are of different ethnic groups and backgrounds. Further assessment of facilities so configured for the elderly, people with disabilities should be a feature of these facilities and aid should be provided on the basis of confirmed needs in keeping



	<p>gender and age.</p> <p>There continues to be sustained engagement of the communities at large to ensure that interventions are appropriate and aligned to confirmed needs, not prescriptive and addresses any gaps that may be identified in the delivery of humanitarian services. At present the data being provided from the assessments lack the required disaggregation. As the data collection process continues, the NS will be integrating PGI standards to ensure the needs and risks are better identified.</p>
<p>Community Engagement And Accountability</p>	<p>Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) initiatives ensure that affected communities are not just recipients of aid but active participants in the response efforts. This involves facilitating two-way communication channels between IFRC/ARCS and communities, ensuring that information is shared transparently, comprehensively and in languages and formats accessible to all. CEA activities also involve consulting communities on response strategies, needs assessments and the design of interventions, empowering them to voice concerns and preferences. Additionally, CEA fosters accountability by establishing mechanisms for feedback, complaints and community-led monitoring, enabling continuous improvement and alignment with local priorities.</p>
<p>Coordination</p>	<p>ARCS, with 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. The ARCS activated the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and convened an Emergency Response Taskforce meeting on 21 April 2024 bringing together all-in country Movement partners (IFRC, ICRC, Danish Red Cross-DRC, Norwegian Red Cross-NorCross, Qatar Red Crescent-QRCS, and Turkish Red Crescent-TRC) 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 responses to emergencies. It is in this 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 establishes, authorises 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.</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 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 the spring rains, 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 supporting search and rescue efforts and other essential relief items. The branches capacity for response is augmented by the Disaster Relief Units (DRUs) at regional level that supports and coordinate operations as required.</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>The ARCS deployed its Branch Disaster Response Teams (BDRTs) which were augmented by their Mobile Health Teams (MHTs) in the affected provinces to conduct rapid/preliminary assessments of the damages and impacts wrought on by the flood event, as well as to determine the needs of the population. Assessments are ongoing given the number of provinces impacted and the share geographical scale of the event. With more rains in the forecast as well as with the conditions on the ground remaining difficult, it is anticipated that it will be some time before the full scale of the impact is known. However, with multiple agencies conducting their individual assessments to include the authorities, it is expected that there will be a consistent flow of information relating to the impacts and the evolving humanitarian situation.</p> <p>The findings of the initial/preliminary assessments conducted by the ARCS as well as secondary sources has been used to inform the design of the operation. Findings from the assessments have revealed that the greatest and most urgent needs are in the areas of shelter, food and non-food items and basic household items.</p> <p>Ongoing and more detailed assessments may point to other additional humanitarian needs. Where necessary, the Response Strategy will be adjusted according to the emerging immediate needs as the most affected districts and villages are reached.</p>
Resource Mobilization	<p>The ARCS manages an Emergency Fund which makes resources available to provincial branches to support the initial response to emergencies. Similarly, through its information Management mechanism, the ARCS communicates its need for volunteers to support assessments and responses as well as the provision of information to guide interventions.</p>
Activation Of Contingency Plans	<p>The 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 existing procedures for responses to events through its regional and branch mechanisms. The ARCS mobilized its resources to provide essential relief items to the affected population.</p>
National Society EOC	<p>The ARCS activated its EOC at the beginning of the event to communicate with the impacted regions and branches and appreciate the initial impacts as a precursor to the deployment of assessment teams.</p>

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	<p>The IFRC Country Delegation supports ARCS to coordinate 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 the ARCS.</p> <p>The IFRC continues to monitor the evolution of the situation across the impacted provinces and maintain communications with the ARCS accordingly. The IFRC has offered support for the development of the DREF application and the drafting of field reports for sharing on the GO platform.</p> <p>The IFRC maintains stocks of relief items, which are being readied for release, to supplement the ARCS ongoing response once the DREF is approved to facilitate replenishment.</p>
Participating National Societies	<p>In-country PNS's participated in the Emergency taskforce meeting convened by the ARCS. They comprise DRC, NorCross, QRCS and TRC.</p> <p>The IFRC Afghanistan Delegation intends to make an agreement with TRC to support the distribution of household items across the 11 targeted provinces.</p>



IFRC has a project funding agreement with TRC in line with the Agenda for Renewal. The application of the Agenda for Renewal and New Way of Working in Afghanistan aims to enhance membership coordination, leadership, and transformation. It seeks to establish the IFRC Secretariat as a cost-effective, innovative, transparent, and accountable organization. The IFRC secretariat utilizes the sectoral expertise of PNS by channeling funds through them to support the ARCS in implementing the operations strategy.

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The ICRC participated in the emergency task force meeting convened by the ARCS and has committed AFN 2.7 million to the ARCS's flood response.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	Yes
National authorities	The Public Authority has established committees for coordinating responses to needs across the affected provinces.
UN or other actors	The UN and other humanitarian agencies have scaled up their responses 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 that guides principled humanitarian action in Afghanistan which IFRC attends weekly as representative of the membership.

The ARCS and IFRC are members of and participate in the national level monthly coordination meetings of 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, coordinated by the 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 the various cluster members at national and sub-regional levels to ensure a coordinated approach to avoid duplication ensuring meeting people's needs in a timely and efficient manner.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Heavy rains caused widespread flooding, damaging houses and infrastructure, with many houses being inundated or collapsing. Villages are often located in flood-prone areas due to their proximity to farming livelihoods. Steep slopes and land degradation pose risks of landslides and rockfalls. The recent cold wave and temperature increase accelerated snow thawing, exacerbating the hazards.

Assessments conducted so far lack sufficient disaggregated data to fully determine the extent of damage and specific needs. However, they have confirmed significant damage, including 8,273 residential houses and various non-residential structures like roads, mosques, schools, and small bridges.

There is high need of shelter and household items. The affected population will also require support for shelter reconstruction, repairs and comfort items (not provided by the National Society).

The DREF operation will enable the ARCS to scale up relief efforts, focusing on the replenishment of household items for the affected population.





Health

With at least 41 deaths, multiple injuries, families being forced to in alternative shelter provisions as well as the significant loss of livestock and impacts to multiple acres of agriculture land, the outstanding health needs will be for emergency and trauma care, accessing healthcare services, medicine shortages as well as medical supplies and equipment. At present there is not much information on what the health needs are, or the medical assistance provided either in camps or alternative shelters. As assessments continue it is anticipated that these issues will be investigated.

The National Society should consider the deployment and the augmenting of its psychosocial support resources (which is integrated in its community-based health and first aid (CBHFA)) teams to the most affected regions as well as in camps or shelters to assess the needs and devise appropriate interventions to assist those who have been adversely impacted by the events. Men, heads of household, women and children should be targeted in particular in any intervention considered. The following constraints and gaps have been identified for the delivery of MHPSS to the affected population:

- Insufficient number of trained volunteers and staff to deliver MHPSS services to the affected population. Lack of coordination at the provincial level to determine whether or not these needs are being covered, as well as if the 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 the healthcare services to include specialized care for persons living with NCDs and other chronic illnesses may not always be readily available. As not all persons will have the option of returning to their places of origin and will be compelled to stay in alternative accommodations, access to these services may become more challenging. Further, it is unclear whether there will be a charge for receiving these services. These displaced persons are rendered uniquely vulnerable as many will be without the means to pay for the required care. The ARCS may have to expand its Mobile Health Team Unit interventions to cover some of these needs particularly in areas of vaccinations and other needed medical assistance for vulnerable groups.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

With one of the highest rates of waterborne diseases in the world (UNDP, 2022), there will be significant concerns about the potential for epidemics as waterways and storage facilities become at risk for contamination. At present, there are incidences of cholera, leptospirosis, diarrhea, and typhoid fever present in the population and with the advent of the recent rains and more in the forecast, the potential for outbreaks particularly in poverty-stricken regions increases exponentially. There is added concern for the disposal of human waste and the non-existence of a working sewerage system especially in large population centres across the country which means latrines are used in many households across the country.

The ARCS is aware of these risks, however except for the provision of jerry cans for the storage of water, the other needs and gaps will be covered by other entities and will not be a major intervention/consideration under this DREF. The ARCS also intends to arm the population with information on infection prevention and control (IPC) measures by providing IEC materials.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Disaggregated data is not readily available for the affected population to specifically outline the needs and to refine the intervention strategies. An assessment on the numbers of elderly, women and the disabled is needed to customise the interventions as may be required or to feed into the overall planning for distributions to ensure sensitivity to the needs of vulnerable/ marginal groups. An assessment on child-safeguarding is also needed and a continuation of support to mainstream PGI elements in the operations is recommended.

It is important to establish clear indicators and benchmarks related to protection, integration, and gender inclusion, these indicators could include measures of inclusivity in decision-making processes, instances of discrimination reported, or the participation of marginalized groups in project activities. Regular data collection through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions will provide valuable insights into the project's impact on different demographic groups. Additionally, fostering open communication channels where stakeholders can voice concerns or suggestions regarding PGI issues will be considered. This allows for real-time feedback and facilitates the identification of emerging issues.





Education

Assessments to date have revealed that there has been limited impacts to this sector. Nevertheless, this is an area under consideration as it is expected to be covered by other agencies.



Migration And Displacement

Afghanistan continues to anticipate an influx of returnees through a number of access points across the country in keeping with the announcements from the Pakistani authorities, expulsion of the Afghans. It is also feared that should the numbers grow exponentially, this could trigger the exodus from neighbouring/border countries as well, however a significant uptick in numbers is yet to be reported.

It will be important to determine the needs of persons on the move, where they are moving to and the intended time of stay. As the ongoing situation resulting from the cold wave, rains and snow fall may become a medium to long-term matter, it will become necessary to prepare for the anticipated needs and challenges given the appreciable demands for shelter, tensions and protection considerations. At present, the ARCS is executing population movement DREF and as such this will not be a consideration under this facility.



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

As there were significant impacts to livelihoods particularly agriculture and livestock, it will be necessary to undertake further assessments of these areas to be provided with detailed information on the effects on the population. As the event was climate related, recovery will take some time as there may be need for adaptation as Afghanistan proceeds into spring and summer (which can be harsh) and could spell another deleterious blow to this very vital sector. The risk to food security is further heightened and may require a significant increase in food and other kinds of aid to address.

The population of the country continues to increase rapidly which puts pressure on fragile ecosystems and biodiversity. Livelihood pursuits as well as the need for housing increases the rate of land degradation and compounds further exacerbating the threats posed by climate change. It is appreciated that resilience building must take place at the community level and residence must be provided with the required capacities to mitigate against potential threats. The ARCS will not be undertaking any activities in this area.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Accountability requires that ARCS listen and take into account of people in all humanitarian programming phases and use the feedback to design and adjust programming; to giving account by transparently and effectively communicating with people using channels, formats and languages they prefer; and to being held to account for aid workers' conduct - respecting Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and for the quality, effectiveness and fairness of resources and programmes. CEA is amongst 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 the Movement-wide commitments and minimum actions for community engagement and accountability. Affected communities will continuously be engaged by ensuring that they are able to access humanitarian assistance as necessary, have the required information on the services available to them, 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. For instance, this will be done through building and strengthening CEA capacity, piloting and expanding a safe and inclusive feedback mechanism, collaborating with relevant inter-agency working groups and mainstreaming CEA and including CEA responsibilities throughout all sectors and operations (i.e. adding CEA questions into all assessments).



Environment Sustainability

There will not be any environmental sustainability activities considered under this facility.

Any identified gaps/limitations in the assessment



As water levels subside and roads open up, detailed assessment will be carried out to roll out the intervention.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

This operation aims to support the Afghan Red Crescent Society in responding to the immediate needs of 4,000 households/28,000 people affected by the recent flash floods and their effects. With 8,273 houses damaged, and more than 5,428 livestock and 84,069 acres of agriculture land destroyed, the DREF funding will enable the ARCS to provide support to families and individuals to meet their immediate needs and reduce hardships wrought on by floods.

The proposed DREF operation is designed to meet the basic needs of the affected population through multipurpose cash grants, the provision of household items (Blankets, jerricans, tarpaulins, and kitchen sets), and dignity kits for approximately 4,000 households in the most affected areas in the provinces of: Farah, Ghor, Helmand, Herat, Kandahar, Kunar, Laghman, Nimruz, Parwan, Uruzgan and Zabul.

Operation strategy rationale

It is anticipated that the Government of Afghanistan will play a central role in responding to the events and lead recovery restoration efforts in coordination with humanitarian and development agencies in the country, as well as through bi-lateral agreements to rebuild the lives of the affected population.

The ARCS, has as part of its mandate the responsibility to provide relief and associated aid to the affected population post emergencies and is expected to also partner with the government in this regard. The focus of the ARCS's response under this DREF is to provide multi-purpose cash (where markets are functional and accessible) as well as dignity kits (570 dignity kits through DREF and an additional 930 dignity kits distributed from other sources - 1,500 in total) and household items to the most vulnerable families affected by the flash floods and accompanying maladies. All other interventions (CEA, community-based health and first aid support, undertaking hygiene promotion activities through ongoing CBHFA programme in flood affected areas) will be a natural accompaniment to those targeted interventions and are to be integrated accordingly. Given the prevailing context and to maximise the ARCS's reach, there will be partnerships that will engage the services of financial services providers (FSPs). The ARCS will be able to facilitate this (distributions) given their network across the country to include the most difficult to reach areas across the country.

As it remains difficult to determine how the situation will evolve and with conditions remaining difficult for those who lost their livelihoods (farming/Agriculture lands and livestock), the provision of cash is most appropriate to support recovery as well as provide the affected population with the capacity to cover their basic needs. As an imperative, key lessons from previous operations executed by the ARCS and with the support of the IFRC, will aid in mitigating against some of the challenges that the operations could face, and these will be applied accordingly.

Based on the above situations, the ARCS has decided to target displaced households and the most affected areas/ districts in 11 provinces.

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 a coverage. Additionally, the areas being targeted are regions designated as white areas where governmental assets and resources are limited and for which ARCS is already known and has relatively strong coverage.

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 the urban areas.

The interventions proposed are those that the ARCS has great familiarity and should be able to operationalise 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 the ongoing interventions.

Overlapping Operations: There are presently three active operations for which there will be geographical overlapping at the provincial level, the Population Movement, Humanitarian Crises Emergency Operation and the Cold Wave operations. The National Society is also aware of the multi-layered impacts which includes flooding, health gaps, economic hardships as well as population movement and the associated and incalculable needs of the vulnerable. Therefore, it is desirous of ensuring that as many households as is materially possible are assisted. Toward ensuring that there is no overlapping of the ongoing operations, the new districts will be targeted in the six provinces: Farah, Helmand, Herat, Kandahar, Nimroz and Zabul. Additionally, the National Society has a robust system for recipient selection and registration which will eliminate the possibility of duplication. The National Society also employs RedRose particularly for rolling out its cash and in-kind interventions and this further enhances the process ensuring that only new recipients are admitted for assistance (and for this spring floods emergency).



The IFRC Afghanistan Delegation is also intent on entering into a partnership with the TRC to support in monitoring the distribution of household items in the targeted districts across 11 provinces. This partnership is geared at ensuring increased oversight of the intervention supported by this DREF.

The provision of household items is considered most relevant given the type of disaster and its resultant impacts. Many households will need to store additional water over an inordinate period due to disruptions to their usual supply or to reduce the risk of transmitting waterborne diseases which may be prevalent in communal settings. Additionally, some families will have to access or make alternative arrangements for housing which also will necessitate the provision of comfort items such as blankets to cope with cooler temperatures which accompany rainfall events.

As many households would have lost everything in the floods, providing as much support to accelerate their recovery and cover the most basic needs is preferred. Families will be required to provide meals and as such will require the facilities to undertake same, hence the consideration for kitchen sets. Further, it is not always a guarantee that quality items may be available at the local market especially kitchen set, tarpaulin, dignity kits and blankets.

Multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA), as well as dignity kits are key components of this operation to provide support to the most vulnerable households. Given the needs and the suitable market conditions, MPC is included as a primary intervention, granting families the freedom to provide for their needs. CEA, protection, and safeguarding will be integrated into the interventions. Given the prevailing context and expansive geographical area under consideration, IFRC will continue its engagement with existing financial service providers (FSPs) for MPCA as they possess the required capacity and reach. ARCS will facilitate the distributions given their network across the country, including in the most remote areas. 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.

A one-time multipurpose cash assistance of CHF 140 (USD 156) will be granted to each of 2,500 households to meet their essential emergency requirements for a period of one month. The amount of CHF 140 (USD 156) is based on the Afghanistan Cash Working Group's recommendation based on minimum expenditure basket (MEB). The ARCS will follow the MEB standard and distribute the same value to each of the targeted households. However, the recommended value for sudden onset crises is USD 280, where the remainder amount of USD 124 will be topped up to the same households from other sources. MPCA will be undertaken in the areas where markets are functional and accessible to the people. Based on ARCS market analysis, the provinces with functional markets will be selected for the MPCA.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

The ARCS will be targeting 4,000 households (28,000 people) from the most affected districts in 11 provinces of Afghanistan: Farah, Ghor, Helmand, Herat, Kandahar, Kunar, Laghman, Nimruz, Parwan, Uruzgan and Zabul.

Of the 4,000 households considered under this operation, 2,500 households or 17,500 people will be targeted with MPCA while the remaining 1500 households or 10,500 people will be targeted with relief items. MPCA has been heavily programmed into this operation given the diverse needs of the affected population and the significant disruption to their livelihoods. Agriculture is crucial to the national economy, accounting for a quarter of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) with at least 60 per cent of the population being agriculturally dependent. Farming is the main livelihood strategy pursued by over half of Afghan households with some 68 per cent possessing some type of livestock (FAO, 2018). As more rains are forecast, and in the case of some provinces already experiencing them, households will be provided with the needed financial resources to offset some of the costs associated with immediate recovery and consider limited preparations for the advancing rainy season.

It is to be anticipated that there will be some overlapping of the provinces presently targeted under this DREF operation with other ongoing operations. To ensure that the impending operation does not support families currently being assisted under ongoing operations, different districts will be targeted. Additionally, as all beneficiaries are registered, the ARCS will be able to determine whether or not someone has been a previous beneficiary of any of the National Society operations.

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.

The following vulnerability criteria will be used to prioritise selection:

- Households whose house destroyed or damaged by the floods.



- Households that have engaged in negative food-related coping mechanisms.
- Households with two or more children under the age of five who are unable to meet their basic needs.

Within this, the following vulnerability criteria will be used to prioritize selection:

- Elderly people with responsibility for children in the household
- Households without livestock
- Households headed by widows or single mothers with young children
- Households with chronically ill members
- Households not presently benefitting from ongoing Red Cross and Red Crescent interventions
- Households with a member living with a disability.
- Pregnant and lactating women.

Total Targeted Population

Women	14,000	Rural	100%
Girls (under 18)	4,200	Urban	0%
Men	7,000	People with disabilities (estimated)	2%
Boys (under 18)	2,800		
Total targeted population	28,000		

Risk and Security Considerations

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

Risk	Mitigation action
Change in the security situation: While the security situation remains generally stable across the country, there is always a possibility that this could change.	<p>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.</p> <p>The National Society's security framework will apply throughout the duration of the operation to their staff and volunteers. In case of need for deployment for personnel under IFRC security's responsibility, including surge support and integrated PNS, the existing IFRC country security framework will apply, and rapid security assessments and analysis will be carried out. All IFRC must, and RC/RC staff and volunteers are encouraged, to complete the IFRC Stay Safe 2.0 e-learning courses. Staff and volunteers to be aware of the security status and briefed on reactions in emergency.</p>
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.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

There are no security threats directed at the National Society or the operations supported by the RCRC Movement. However, the IFRC/ARCS security team continues to monitor the situation across the country. The operation will be adjusted accordingly to the prevailing security situation.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

No



Planned Intervention



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Budget: CHF 298,733

Targeted Persons: 10,500

Indicators

Title	Target
# of household receiving relief items	1,500
% of recipients surveyed who report that relief items received was applicable to their needs	70

Priority Actions

DREF funds will support the procurement of needed relief items to address the immediate needs of families impacted by flash floods events. The interventions will be guided by the minimum standards for PGI in emergencies.

The priority actions include:

1. Identifying needs and defining targets for the distribution of relief items.
2. Conducting refresher trainings on CEA and PGI for staff and volunteers. This will be ongoing throughout the life of the operation.
3. Develop beneficiary selection criteria to ensure relief items are distributed to the most affected and most vulnerable people.
4. Distribute tarpaulins, kitchen sets and blankets to the selected households.



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 406,964

Targeted Persons: 17,500

Indicators

Title	Target
# of households received multi-purpose cash	2,500
% of households surveyed reporting that the cash provided was sufficient to cover their emergency needs	60
% of persons surveyed reporting that satisfaction with the cash distribution process	80

Priority Actions

The MPCA will support to cover targeted households to meet their essential emergency needs.

1. Carry out assessment in the affected areas. Based on the assessment findings, selection criteria will be developed, and vulnerable households will be identified.
2. Register target households for MPCA in Red Rose
3. Provide a one-time multipurpose cash assistance of USD 156 to each of 2,500 households to meet their essential emergency requirements for a period of one month.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 2,130

Targeted Persons: 28,000

Indicators



Title	Target
# of households provided with IEC materials on hygiene promotion	4,000

Priority Actions

1. Undertake contextual analysis to appreciate the prevalence of diseases in the targeted provinces attributable to improper sanitation and hygiene practices.
2. Develop and/or adapt IEC materials on hygiene promotion in local languages.
3. Distribute IEC materials in the targeted communities



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Budget: CHF 6,390

Targeted Persons: 28,000

Indicators

Title	Target
% of deployed staff and volunteers oriented in PGI sensitization and minimum standards	100
# of households receiving dignity kits	570

Priority Actions

1. Mainstream PGI under technical sectors, including sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) collection.
2. Ensure diversity of staff and volunteers, including male and female
3. Conduct PGI/CEA training to staff/volunteers
4. Ensure the reach of all, including female-headed households.
5. Conduct a safeguarding risk assessment and related work.
6. Distribute 570 dignity kits through DREF.

Note: Budget for PGI activities has been integrated in other sectors.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 3,195

Targeted Persons: 4,000

Indicators

Title	Target
# of people reached through dissemination of key information and messages	4,000

Priority Actions

Establish CEA in emergencies:

1. Communicate selection criteria widely and clearly for all 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.
3. Stress that aid is free to minimize the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse and corruption.
4. Provide a question-and-answer sheet for volunteers to use when in communities to help them share consistent information.
5. Provide staff and volunteers involved in the operation with CEA orientation/training.
6. Use existing community feedback mechanisms and use community feedback data for informed decision-making.
7. Set up dedicated helplines to collect feedback from recipients, notify the National Society about any difficulties in accessing services from the financial service provider, and obtain information regarding the cash programme.





Secretariat Services

Budget: -

Targeted Persons: -

Indicators

Title	Target
% of financial reporting compliance to IFRC procedures	100

Priority Actions

1. Provide technical and management support for the operation utilizing existing IFRC Secretariat capacities in the country supported under Emergency Appeal
2. Membership services including security, reporting, procurement, communication and resource mobilization.



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 32,589

Targeted Persons: -

Indicators

Title	Target
# of lessons learnt workshop conducted	1
# of exit survey/PDM conducted	6
# of volunteers mobilised	100

Priority Actions

1. Translate training materials for use in the training material
2. Carry out monitoring field visits
3. Ensure the well-being of volunteers supporting the response.
4. Carry out exit survey and post distribution monitoring for all types of distribution
5. Conduct lessons learnt 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 mobilised to undertake assessments. Likewise, more than 44 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.

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 will be an integral part of the operation and will be undertaken involving those assisted through the interventions as well as other stakeholders utilizing participatory approaches throughout the operation's timeframe.

Regular internal operation updates will be developed by the implementing team of the ARCS at regional and provincial levels for sharing with the headquarters and key stakeholders.

Monthly financial and operation progress reports will capture key operational achievements and planned activities for projected period



under DREF operation. The reports will reflect the number of people reached disaggregated by gender, age, and disability as far as possible.

Additionally, meetings with key stakeholders, performance reporting, and field visits will be held on monthly basis or as triggered by monitoring needs to follow progress on implementation of activities.

Furthermore, site observation, exit survey and post distribution monitoring will be conducted in line with the IFRC standards to assess satisfaction of the targeted population towards the services as well as quality of the services. In addition, the ARCS will conduct a lesson learned workshop at the end of the operation to capture learnings and good practices to improve National Society's response operations in the future.

Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation

IFRC will support the ARCS communications team to communicate with external audiences with a focus on the situation and the Red Cross and Red Crescent humanitarian actions in assisting the affected people.

The communications will 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.





DREF OPERATION

MDRAF015 - Afghan Red Crescent Society Afghanistan Spring Floods 2024

Operating Budget

Planned Operations	717,411
Shelter and Basic Household Items	298,733
Livelihoods	0
Multi-purpose Cash	406,964
Health	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	2,130
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	6,390
Education	0
Migration	0
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	0
Community Engagement and Accountability	3,195
Environmental Sustainability	0
Enabling Approaches	32,589
Coordination and Partnerships	0
Secretariat Services	0
National Society Strengthening	32,589
TOTAL BUDGET	750,000

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)



Contact Information

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

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IFRC focal point for the emergency: Naimatullah Akbari, Operations Coordinator, naimatullah.akbari@ifrc.org

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