



AFGHANISTAN

2023 IFRC network annual report, Jan-Dec

9 August 2024

IN SUPPORT OF THE AFGHAN RED CRESCENT



34

National Society branches



286

National Society local units



26,000

National Society volunteers



4,525

National Society staff

PEOPLE REACHED

Emergency Operations



675,314

Climate and environment



7,512

Disasters and crises



1,397,858

Health and wellbeing



5,243,254

Migration and displacement



119,336

Values, power and inclusion



83,414

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

in Swiss francs (CHF)

Country	Funding Requirement	121.1M
IFRC Secretariat	Emergency Operations Funding Requirement	60.8M
	Emergency Operations Funding	29.4M
	Emergency Operations Expenditure	23.3M
	Longer-term Funding Requirement	20.3M
	Longer-term Funding	10.5M
	Longer-term Expenditure	5.5M
Participating National Societies	Funding Requirement	25M
	Funding	11.7M
	Expenditure	9.9M
HNS other funding sources	Funding Requirement	15M

Afghan Red Crescent

Overview

Funding Sources

Appeal number **MAAAF001**

In addition to: CHF 750,000 DREF Funding

ONGOING EMERGENCY INDICATORS

MDRAF007 / Humanitarian Crises

People reached by National Societies with contextually appropriate health services	675,000
People reached with livelihoods support	536,000
People reached by National Societies with contextually appropriate water, sanitation and hygiene services	304,000
People (and households) reached by hygiene promotion activities in the response period	304,000
People supported with CVA	203,000
People reached with disaster risk reduction	110,000
People covered by approved Early Action Protocols (EAPs) for the FbA by the DREF and by DREF allocations for imminent crises	109,000
People reached by protection, gender and inclusion programming	83,000
People reached through humanitarian service points (migrants and displaced people)	81,000
People reached with shelter support	55,000
People reached with immunization services	53,000
People reached with RMNCH clinical services in emergencies	20,000
People reached with psychosocial and mental health services	8,000
People trained by National Societies in first aid	2,000
Number of formal interagency/international coordination platforms the IFRC Network is part of	6
Number of Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs) providing assistance and/or protection services to displaced persons, migrants and host communities	2
National Society is showing progress in digital transformation according to the digital maturity model outlined in IFRC Digital Transformation Strategy	Yes
National Society have strengthened their integrity and reputational risk mechanisms	Yes
Percentage of target population reached with health promotion as a response to an emergency	1%

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Climate and environment	People reached with activities to address rising climate risks	8,000
	People reached with heatwave risk reduction, preparedness or response activities	720
	People reached with activities to address environmental problems	720
	Implementing nature-based solutions (including those with a particular focus on the planting of trees and mangroves)?	Yes
	Developing and implementing strategies and plans that address rising climate and environmental risks?	Yes
Disasters and crises	People reached per year with support services, in-kind, cash and voucher assistance for emergency response and recovery	1.3M
	People reached with livelihoods support	536,000
	People reached with shelter support	110,000
	People reached with disaster risk reduction	110,000
Health and wellbeing	People reached by National Societies with contextually appropriate health services	5.2M
	People reached by National Societies with contextually appropriate water, sanitation and hygiene services	2.2M
	People (and households) reached by hygiene promotion activities in the response period	2.2M
	People reached with immunization services	1.5M
	People reached with psychosocial and mental health services	339,000
	People trained by National Societies in first aid	14,000
Migration and displacement	Migrants and displaced persons reached with services for assistance and protection	119,000
	Number of Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs) that provided assistance and/or protection to people on the move along land based migration routes	2
	Data collection, research, analysis or other information management initiatives to better assist and protect people on the move?	Yes
Values, power and inclusion	People reached by protection, gender and inclusion programming	83,000
	People reached by RCRC educational programmes	16,000

ENABLING FUNCTIONS

Strategic and operational coordination	Number of formal interagency/international coordination platforms the IFRC Network is part of	6
	Number of government led coordination platforms the National Society is part of	1
National Society development	Youth engagement strategy developed or in place	Yes
	Strategy for strengthening the auxiliary role developed or implemented	Yes
	One National Society Development plan in place	Yes
Humanitarian diplomacy	Participation in IFRC-led communication campaigns	Yes
	National Society has domestic advocacy strategies developed aligning, at least in part, with global IFRC advocacy strategies	Yes
Accountability and agility	National Society is showing progress in digital transformation according to the digital maturity model outlined in IFRC Digital Transformation Strategy	Yes
	National Society have strengthened their integrity and reputational risk mechanisms	Yes
	National Society has a PSEA policy to enforce prevention and support survivors (cumulative)	Yes
	National Society has a PSEA Action Plan to enforce prevention and support survivors (cumulative)	Yes
	Functioning data management systems that inform decision making and support monitoring and reporting on the impact and evidence of the IFRC network's contributions	Yes

IFRC NETWORK SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES

National Society	Multilateral Support	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing	Values, power and inclusion	Enabling Functions
Australian Red Cross	●				
Austrian Red Cross	●				
Bahrain Red Crescent Society	●				
British Red Cross	●				
Canadian Red Cross Society	●				
Danish Red Cross	●	●	●	●	●
Finnish Red Cross	●				
German Red Cross	●				
Iranian Red Crescent Society		●			
Irish Red Cross Society	●				
Italian Red Cross	●				
Japanese Red Cross Society	●				

Korean Red Cross	●				
Kuwait Red Crescent Society	●				
Monaco Red Cross	●				
Netherlands Red Cross	●				
New Zealand Red Cross	●				
Norwegian Red Cross	●	●	●		●
Philippine Red Cross	●				
Qatar Red Crescent Society		●	●	●	●
Red Cross Society of China	●				
Singapore Red Cross Society	●				
Slovenian Red Cross	●				
Swedish Red Cross	●				
Turkish Red Crescent Society	●	●	●	●	

■ Supported

OVERALL PROGRESS

Context

The end of Afghanistan's decades-long conflict in August 2021 marked a significant shift towards a more stable security environment nationwide. With the disappearance of frontlines, there has been a notable push for improved access to public services, even in previously hard-to-reach areas. However, the lingering consequences of the conflict and the imposition of international sanctions since 2021 continue to hinder economic recovery and job opportunities. This situation has prolonged the absence of developmental activities and reduced funding for the humanitarian-development nexus, exacerbating the complexities in addressing the escalating humanitarian needs of the Afghan population.

The humanitarian landscape in Afghanistan remains dire, with women and girls disproportionately affected by ongoing challenges. Despite efforts, a substantial portion of the population - estimated at 42 million people - is expected to require urgent humanitarian assistance in 2024. Key drivers of humanitarian needs during 2023 and 2024 include recurring natural disasters, the compounding effects of climate change, population displacement, economic hardships, gaps in healthcare services, and threats to protection, particularly impacting the well-being of women and girls.

Due to its geographical location, Afghanistan faces significant risks from severe and recurrent natural calamities such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, avalanches and droughts, often resulting in catastrophic outcomes. The country ranks among the top 15 nations most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and struggles with inadequate preparedness and adaptation measures. Off-seasonal floods in 2023 affected approximately 126,000 people across 18 provinces, leading to the destruction of 1,360 homes, the loss of 13,023 hectares of agricultural land, and the death of at least 1,128 livestock. In October 2023, a series of earthquakes, beginning with a magnitude 6.3 tremor on 7 October 2023, struck western Afghanistan. The Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority reported significant damage across 382 villages spanning 10 districts. The earthquakes resulted in approximately 48,000 houses being destroyed or damaged.

Late 2023 witnessed the return of hundreds of thousands of undocumented Afghans and refugees from Pakistan due to new policies affecting an estimated 1.3 million Afghans. Projections by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) anticipate approximately 720,000 undocumented individuals and 50,000 individuals without Proof of Registration cards to return from Pakistan by July 2024. Many returnees are settling in areas already experiencing prolonged displacement. Many Internally Displaced People (IDPs) households reside in Informal Settlements (ISETs), which lack formal land usage agreements and are typically situated in or near major urban centres. These households face eviction risks, evidenced by multiple incidents of evictions from predominantly urban informal settlements in 2023. The ongoing displacement crisis and large-scale returns underscore the urgent need for durable solutions supporting voluntary return, local integration or resettlement.

Afghanistan's economic crisis is pervasive, with more than half of households experiencing financial shocks. High unemployment rates and inflation in essential commodities have escalated average household debt, challenging coping mechanisms and impeding the fragile economy's ability to withstand shocks. According to the UNDP's Socio-Economic Outlook 2023, over 85 percent of the population now lives below the poverty line. The vulnerable Afghan economy heavily relies on humanitarian aid and remittances, further strained by women's exclusion from economic participation. The humanitarian situation is compounded by restrictions hindering the participation of women and minority groups. In December 2022, authorities announced measures curtailing women's access to education and employment opportunities. Pragmatic approaches ensuring women's inclusion must be pursued. Restrictive policies hamper women's access to services and assistance, negatively affecting international engagement and donor contributions.

Key achievements

Climate and environment

In 2023, the Afghan Red Crescent made progress in resilience and climate change efforts in Herat and Samangan provinces. It distributed drought-resistant saplings, provided extensive disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation training, and supported income generation activities for households. The National Society established disaster risk management committees and school safety committees, enhancing community and youth engagement in climate risk awareness and mitigation efforts.

Disasters and crises

During the reporting period, the Afghan Red Crescent engaged in comprehensive disaster risk reduction activities alongside humanitarian interventions. The National Society's disaster response teams received enhanced training and equipment through the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) initiative, bolstering their readiness for emergencies. Concurrently, progress continued with the development of a multi-hazard contingency plan aimed at bolstering community resilience to climate change impacts. The National Society also intensified efforts to ensure the safety and security of its personnel and assets, with a focus on enhancing the capabilities of its security department. In 2023, the National Society reached approximately 5.2 million individuals with a diverse range of services and programmes, including both emergency and longer-term initiatives.

Health and wellbeing

In 2023, the Afghan Red Crescent made progress in enhancing its health, as well as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programming by training its staff and volunteers in first aid, psychosocial support, community-based health and hygiene promotion. It improved primary and emergency healthcare services through static and mobile facilities, promoted hygiene and health in schools, and supported COVID-19 vaccination efforts. The Afghan Red Crescent institutionalized commercial first aid and expanded community engagement on health topics such as menstrual hygiene, reproductive health and disease prevention.

Migration and displacement

The Afghan Red Crescent in 2023 supported Afghan returnees by setting up mobile health teams, establishing Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs), and providing essential food items and non-food items. It held regular consultations with returnees and internally displaced people to address their needs and shared information on available assistance programmes. With support received from the IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF), the Afghan Red Crescent implemented a multi-sectoral response for returnees, including HSPs, ambulances, winterization kits and health facilities.

Values, power, and inclusion

In 2023, the Afghan Red Crescent worked to integrate protection, gender and inclusion (PGI) measures into its activities, which was done by providing equal access to services for both genders and prioritizing vulnerable groups such as households headed by women and those with disabled or chronically ill members. The National Society implemented robust Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) measures, including feedback mechanisms and complaint desks, while conducting extensive cash distribution efforts to support households.

Enabling local actors

In 2023, the Afghan Red Crescent focused on strengthening its local branches through efforts such as training programmes for staff and volunteers, development of a digital volunteer management platform, and enhancing branch development through specialized recruitment and field visits. It also made progress in the revision of the Red Crescent law to facilitate greater access to resources and to strengthen its auxiliary position in the country. Part of its efforts to bolster internal and external communications, the Afghan Red Crescent published communications materials to advocate for change, especially on the issues of the ban on women in education and the workplace.

The National Society conducted finance development training sessions across various provinces. It took measures to enhance compliance and prevent fraud and corruption, conducting due diligence for contractors, and worked to reinforce a culture of ethical conduct through integrity measures.

Changes and amendments

In 2023, the Afghan Red Crescent undertook revisions in its Emergency Appeals to adjust its operational scope to meet evolving needs and to incorporate sustainable solutions for long-term impact. The earthquake response in western Afghanistan underwent revision in terms of funding framework and extension into 2024. The strategic extension was aimed at enhancing the impact and sustainability of humanitarian efforts across affected regions in Afghanistan.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION

ONGOING EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Emergency Operation	Afghanistan: Humanitarian Crises
Appeal number	MDRAF007
People to be assisted	2,000,000
Duration	10 April 2021 to 31 December 2024
Funding requirement	Federation-wide Funding requirements: CHF 300 million IFRC Secretariat Funding requirements: CHF 120 million
Revised Emergency Appeal	Afghanistan: Humanitarian Crises
Revised Operational Strategy	Protracted Humanitarian Crises Operational Strategy
Latest Operations Update	Protracted Humanitarian Crises Operations Update No.9

Afghanistan is still facing one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world resulting from compounded impacts of multiple shocks. The combination of disasters caused by natural hazards – including severe drought, flooding and earthquakes – public health emergencies, and economic hardship have increased humanitarian needs exponentially. The political changes of August 2021 prompted the application of a sanctions regime which has fuelled economic hardship due to constrained international banking. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 28.3 million people will require multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance in 2023 as the country enters its third consecutive year of drought-like conditions and the second year of crippling economic decline. This reflects a 16 per cent increase from the 24.4 million people who required humanitarian assistance in 2022 and a 54 per cent increase from the 18.4 million people who required humanitarian assistance in 2021.

Key drivers of humanitarian need in 2023 are multidimensional: a protracted drought, climate-induced disasters, other hazards, protection concerns particularly for women and girls, economic hardship, and constrained access to essential services. Furthermore, while there is no more widespread conflict, the effects of a 40-year conflict and situations of violence continue to slow the move towards recovery and building resilience. There are needs in every province of the country, with extreme need in 33 out of 34 provinces and 27 out of 34 major cities/provincial capitals with the rest in severe need, indicating how widespread the crisis is across the country. Even with two-thirds of the country already having humanitarian needs in 2023, further deterioration is highly possible unless the root causes and drivers of need are addressed. Substantial investments in water infrastructure, sustainable agriculture, alternative livelihoods, gender policy reform and macroeconomic stabilization are urgently needed, along with the stabilization of services supporting basic human needs – especially health care and social services – to reduce dependence on humanitarian actors to provide emergency care and transition to longer-term support.

Short description of the emergency operational strategy

This Emergency Appeal provides for four operational strategies. These strategies cover the following emergencies:

- Wider Humanitarian Crises (21 April 2021 to 31 December 2023)
- Khost and Paktika Earthquakes (22 June 2022 to 31 December 2023)
- Protracted Humanitarian Crisis (1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024)
- Herat Earthquake (7 October 2023 to 31 December 2024)

For the period 10 April 2021 to 30 September 2023, the Afghan Red Crescent implemented various integrated interventions for communities affected by the humanitarian crises. Highlights follow:

Shelter, housing and settlements

Household kits and blankets were provided to affected communities. Shelter repair support including house and latrine reconstruction was also provided.

Livelihoods

Essential food packages were distributed to affected households. Women received soft skills and vocational training to improve their livelihoods. In flood-affected areas, the cash-for-work programme provided employment and supported community repairs. Additionally, farmers received urea fertilizer, conditional cash for agricultural kits and community training.

Multi-purpose cash

Cash was provided to impacted households, focusing on female beneficiaries and those at risk, including widows, female-headed households and families with disabilities or pregnant and lactating mothers.

Health and care

Primary healthcare services and health education were delivered through Mobile Health Teams. Awareness sessions were held, first aid training was offered in schools, and cash assistance was provided for congenital heart disease treatment. Community health and grandmother committees were established, and mental health support activities were carried out.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Hygiene and dignity kits were distributed along with soap. Volunteers were trained in household water treatment, hygiene promotion and epidemic control. Health messages were delivered through household visits and integrated sessions on hygiene, disease prevention and COVID-19 risk communication were conducted.

The operational strategy integrates the cross-cutting approaches of **community engagement and accountability** (CEA) and **protection, gender and inclusion** (PGI), with the aim of recognizing and valuing all community members as equal partners, with their diverse needs shaping the response.

Herat Earthquake

In reference to the Herat Earthquake operation, the following support was provided to affected communities during the reporting period 7 October 2023 to 31 May 2024:

Assistance included emergency shelters, household items, and cash vouchers, supplemented by safe shelter training. Food packages and cash transfers for basic needs were provided. Primary health services, maternal and newborn care, health education and mental health and psychosocial support services were provided to the affected communities. Bottled water, jerrycans and hygiene kits were distributed. The response integrated cross-cutting approaches of community engagement and accountability (CEA) and protection, gender and inclusion (PGI) to ensure that the diverse needs of community members shaped the aid.

Khost and Paktika Earthquake

In reference to the Khost and Paktika Earthquake operation, the following support was provided to affected communities during the reporting period 22 June 2022 to 30 June 2023:

Assistance included household and winterization kits, house repairs, and awareness-raising activities. Food packages and multi-purpose cash grants supported livelihoods. Mobile health teams provided primary healthcare and hygiene promotion. Safe drinking water was supplied through water trucks and tanks, along with hygiene kits. The response integrated cross-cutting approaches of community engagement and accountability (CEA) and protection, gender and inclusion (PGI) to address the diverse needs of community members.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Climate and environment

Communities with higher long-term resilience through risk reduction, improved health and livelihoods, and adaptation to climate change and migration

Progress by the National Society against objectives

The Afghan Red Crescent has been working on strengthening resilience and climate change project in Herat and Samangan provinces. In 2023, under the livelihoods and disaster management components of this project, the Afghan Red Crescent distributed 42,000 drought-resistant saplings to 840 households in Herat province, contributing to climate change mitigation, biodiversity enhancement, and community well-being. Additionally, the National Society also conducted an extensive training programme for staff, volunteers, and community members on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, early warning systems, and school safety.

The integration of disaster risk reduction components into the National Society's operations and programmes, along with the establishment of community-based committees and disaster risk management committees in Herat and Samangan provinces, underscores its commitment to mainstreaming disaster risk reduction. The Afghan Red Crescent supported 500 households with business skills and market linkage training to income generation activities in the face of drought and climate challenges. It also conducted training for the Afghan Red Crescent staff and volunteers to build and enhance their climate action capacity and conducted Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (EVCA) training.

The Afghan Red Crescent established 40 disaster risk management committees in Herat and Samangan with the role of assessing/identifying the hazards that their communities are vulnerable to, map/rank areas at most risk of being affected by the hazards identified, designing community-based disaster risk reduction activities together with the National Society, and more. These committee were provided with emergency kit for the establishment of disaster risk management centres.

In 2023, the National Society established 20 school safety committees in Herat and Samangan with the key role of maintaining a safe learning environment and plan for education continuity, monitoring project activities in the school and resolve/manage project-related conflicts in school. These activities are aimed at engaging youth and volunteers to increase their climate risk awareness and improve the abilities and capacities of communities to assess, identify, prioritize and address risks of natural hazards.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC has supported the National Society in enhancing community resilience and managing climate-related risks through several key initiatives. The IFRC has organized extensive training programs on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and livelihood skills for the National Society staff, volunteers, and community members. It also provided technical assistance to the National Society in developing, updating and mainstreaming its disaster risk management strategy into its operations. The IFRC also supported the National Society in the formation and mobilization of community-based committees in project activities.

The **Japanese Red Cross Society** supported the National Society in resilience and climate change projects in Herat and Samangan provinces. This support facilitated the distribution of saplings and the implementation of livelihood and disaster management initiatives.



Disasters and crises

For real-time information on emergencies, visit [IFRC GO Afghanistan](#).

In 2023, two IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (IFRC-DREF) were approved for the National Society's response to [population movement](#) and [flood](#).

1.

NAME OF OPERATION	Pakistan – Afghanistan Population Movement
MDR-CODE	MDRAF013
DURATION	6 months (27/11/2023 to 31/05/2024)
FUNDING ALLOCATION	CHF 750,000
PEOPLE TARGETED	50,000
DREF OPERATION DOCUMENT	Operations Update No.1

The DREF allocation of 750,000 CHF in November 2023 supported the Afghan Red Crescent in assisting approximately 50,000 Afghan returnees from Pakistan. The National Society supported the targeted people over a six-month period with assistance such as through cash for work initiatives, health and hygiene services for returnees, and targeted assistance to returnees through the establishment of humanitarian service points ([HSP](#)).

2.

NAME OF OPERATION	Afghanistan Flood 2023
MDR-CODE	MDRAF012
DURATION	4 months (05/08/2023 to 31/12/2023)
FUNDING ALLOCATION	CHF 448,578
PEOPLE TARGETED	28,000

The DREF allocation of 448,578 CHF in August 2023 supported the Afghan Red Crescent in assisting approximately 28,000 people affected by floods in the areas of Badakhshan, Kabul, Kandahar, Maydan Wardak, Nangarhar, and Parwan. The National Society support the targeted people over a four-month period with assistance such as the distribution of tarpaulins, blankets, shelter box/kits, jerry cans, among others.

Communities with strengthened life-saving resources and capacities to respond to and recover from natural disasters, health emergencies, and conflict-generated shocks

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In 2023, the Afghan Red Crescent provided a variety of training to its staff and volunteers to strengthen their capacity to plan and implement different programmes and activities in the community. The Preparedness for Effective Response ([PER](#)) approach emphasizes the development of local capacities to ensure that National Societies are well-equipped to provide services during disasters. Given the country's vulnerability to disasters, the Afghan Red Crescent worked to strengthen its response capabilities, with a particular focus on institutional readiness. As part of the Herat earthquake

response, the National Society currently engaged in developing a multi-hazard contingency plan. To mainstream disaster risk reduction into the National Society operations including shelter interventions, the Afghan Red Crescent has integrated disaster risk reduction in its operations such as cash for work for road renovation and embankment construction of rivers.

Under its household and community-managed livelihood projects aimed at income generation, the Afghan Red Crescent conducted business skills and market linkage training and supported households with cash assistance for income generation. With the [cash assistance](#), the recipients procured income generation tools mentioned in their respective business proposals. In addition to cash assistance, the National Society conducted soft skills training such as financial literacy and numeracy, business management, business planning, followed by vocational training such as tailoring and embroidery in the areas of Balkh, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, and Nangarhar provinces.

The Afghan Red Crescent has prioritized capacity building among its volunteers and technical staff to improve community programming capabilities. Training initiatives have equipped personnel with essential skills across health, environment, and community development sectors. The National Society is actively updating its disaster risk management strategy to improve readiness for emergencies such as earthquakes through comprehensive multi-hazard contingency planning.

IFRC network joint support

The **IFRC** supported the Afghan Red Crescent in its interventions such as the development of a multi-hazard contingency plan and enhancing the capacity of the National Society staff and volunteers. Through its support, the National Society implemented humanitarian crises operations in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan which included interventions through Cash and Voucher Assistance ([CVA](#)), delivery of emergency kits, livelihoods project, disaster response training, among others. IFRC mechanisms such as the Disaster Response Emergency Fund ([IFRC-DREF](#)) and the Emergency Appeals are activated for timely and efficient delivery of assistance during disasters and crises.

The **Danish Red Cross** supported the National Society in its rapid assessment after the Herat earthquake. The Danish Red Cross also supported the earthquake affected population with household items such as winter heating assistance and solar panels as well as mental health and psychosocial ([MHPSS](#)) support.

The **Japanese Red Cross Society** supported the Afghan Red Crescent in implementing community resilience programme in Herat and Samangan provinces.

The **Swedish Red Cross** supported the National Society through the provision of winter heating assistance and solar panels as well as MHPSS support.



The Afghan Red Crescent distributing cash assistance to 200 families affected by the recent flash floods in different districts of the capital in Kabul in September 2023. (Photo: IFRC)



Communities with higher long-term resilience through risk reduction, improved health and livelihoods, and adaptation to climate change and migration

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In 2023, the National Society focused on enhancing the health and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programming capacity of its personnel, strengthening the delivery of primary and emergency health care services, strengthening the implementation of mental health and psychosocial support, scaling up community-based health and first aid (CBFHA), institutionalizing commercial first aid, expanding risk communication and community engagement (RCCE), and scaling up WASH initiatives.

To enhance the National Society's staff capacity and to contribute to the National Society development objective, the Afghan Red Crescent conducted training sessions on CBFHA which focused on equipping trainers with skills and knowledge in evidence-focused community-based health and first aid programme. It strengthened the delivery of primary health, immunization, maternal and child health and emergency health services through static and mobile health facilities in 17 provinces. Training of volunteers in first aid played a crucial role in strengthening the capacity of the National Society to provide emergency transfer of casualties and patients to appropriate health facilities. These volunteers were equipped with the necessary skills to provide immediate medical assistance, stabilize patients and facilitate safe transfers to healthcare facilities. The National Society trained volunteers in psychosocial first aid (PFA) and distributed first aid kits to 31 public schools for health emergencies and to promote a safe learning environment. To scale up community-based health and first aid programme, the National Society trained volunteers on first aid, psychosocial first aid, equipping them with life-saving skills and knowledge. These were followed by first aid services, awareness on epidemic control measures, hygiene promotion and risk communication and community engagement activities. These targeted training enabled the National Society to make substantial progress in improving access to healthcare services, promoting wellbeing and fostering a culture of health and preparedness in the communities.

Health and hygiene awareness sessions and household visits were instrumental in disseminating crucial health messages and fostering behavioural change. The awareness sessions covered key topics such as menstrual hygiene management, reproductive health, household water treatment, and communicable and non-communicable diseases, contributing to expanding risk communication and community engagement and COVID-19 vaccination support to the Ministry of Public Health. The Afghan Red Crescent has made progress in institutionalizing commercial first aid through meetings and orientations with the National Society health department. These engagements helped lay the foundation for the integration of commercial first aid practices into the National Society's operational framework.

The National Society's WASH initiatives focused on improving hygiene practices in schools. The improvement of hygiene practices in schools through initiatives such as provision of clean water, sanitation facilities, hygiene education and distribution of hygiene kits supports the wellbeing of students and aligns with national health priorities related to promotion of hygiene and health in educational settings.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the Afghan Red Crescent in its efforts to strengthen health and wellbeing of vulnerable people in Afghanistan. This includes support for the National Society in conducting training in areas such as water, sanitation and hygiene, community-based health and first aid, epidemic awareness, psychosocial first aid, among others. To bolster the National Society's efforts under WASH, the IFRC supported the National Society through the procurement of hygiene kits which were aimed at improving menstrual hygiene management and support the overall wellbeing of schoolgirls.

The **Danish Red Cross** has assisted the National Society in conducting psychosocial support outreach activities and to establish Child Friendly Spaces in provinces such as Helmand, Herat, Kandahar and Nangarhar.

The **Norwegian Red Cross** has supported the National Society in providing health services to the affected communities.



Migration and displacement

Communities with higher long-term resilience through risk reduction, improved health and livelihoods, and adaptation to climate change and migration

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In order to support returnees in Afghanistan, the Afghan Red Crescent has set up mobile health teams at the Torkham border crossing point, constructing Rubb halls for a comprehensive Humanitarian Service Point (HSP), provided accommodation tents for staff and volunteers, increase the supply of medical and non-medical consumables, established sanitation facilities at hubs, and provided clean drinking water and food for both responders and patients. The National Society held regular community meetings and consultations with returnees and internally displaced people to ensure that their needs, preferences and priorities are discussed. The information related to available assistance programme, their eligibility criteria, and how they can access support services are shared with returnees to ensure that they are kept informed and updated regularly. The Afghan Red Crescent has been working regularly with authorities on migration and displacement solution and is a member of the committee established by authority.

Through the operationalization of the IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF), the National Society has implemented a comprehensive multi-sectoral response to assist 50,000 Afghan returnees. This includes establishing humanitarian service points at key border crossings, deploying ambulances, and distributing winterization kits. Additionally, the National Society is setting up health facilities and a Connexus health camp in Nangarhar, with ongoing coordination for clean water supply.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the Afghan Red Crescent in its effort to enhance its operational capacity. This is done through training on quality, accountability and compliance systems for staff involved in operations. The IFRC also provides technical support for the National Society's objective of integrating community engagement and accountability (CEA) and protection, gender and inclusion (PGI) standards into migration programming to ensure equitable access to services.

The **Danish Red Cross** has supported the National Society to operate three Mobile Health Teams in Kandahar and Nangarhar, delivering essential health services to 7,518 Afghan returnees. These services include maternal and child health care as well as Mental Health and Psychosocial Support. Additionally, the Danish Red Cross supported the National Society in distributing 310 winterization kits at Torkham crossing point in Nangarhar and Takhta-Pul district in Kandahar, benefiting returnees from Pakistan.

The **Norwegian Red Cross** has assisted the National Society in by operating three Mobile Health Teams (MHTs) across various crossing points. Their efforts have reached 10,833 Afghan returnees with basic health services, including overseeing two childbirths at Torkham in Nangarhar province.

The **Qatar Red Crescent Society** has supported the National Society to provide essential food items to 260 households in Kandahar province. This assistance includes staples such as flour, rice, sugar, tea, beans, and cooking oil, ensuring nutritional support for vulnerable populations affected by displacement.

The **Turkish Red Crescent** has supported the National Society in distributing critical aid to Afghan returnees. This includes serving cooked meals to 55,500 individuals at Torkham border in Nangarhar province. Additionally, 1,000 households in Kandahar and Nangarhar received winterization kits comprising stoves and coal to endure severe winter conditions. Furthermore, food and household items were distributed to 1,500 returnee households, providing essential support during their resettlement process.



Mainstreaming of CEA and PGI minimum standards in migration and displacement programming

Progress by National Society against objectives

The Afghan Red Crescent's initiatives in 2023 under values, power, and inclusion have largely been concentrated around the operationalization of the Emergency Appeal. The National Society added protection, gender and inclusion (PGI) questions to returnees' assessment form, trained its volunteers and staff members on PGI and PGI minimum standards checklist. The National Society also formed a gender-balanced team to provide equal access to services for both genders. The Afghan Red Crescent has streamlined both PGI and community engagement and accountability (CEA) in all its activities. These include vulnerability criteria such as seniors with responsibility for children, households headed by widows or single mothers with young children, households with chronically ill members, households with a member with disability and households with pregnant and lactating women for prioritizing assistance in the communities.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the National Society's efforts through technical and financial assistance in areas such as focus group discussions (FGDs) with participants for their feedback and to understand their perception, preferences, and their plans during and after the training. The IFRC also supported the National Society in strengthening its capacity in PGI and CEA by supporting the National Society's efforts in training its staff and volunteers on these programmatic components.

Establish women-led support activities in Afghan Red Crescent to engage young women in service delivery

Progress by National Society against objectives

The Afghan Red Crescent ensures that women receive services from female staff and volunteers who are skilled and trained in various capacities. This approach includes deploying female medical personnel and volunteers to deliver primary health and care services through Mobile Health Teams (MHTs) and community health programs. Additionally, the National Society has mobilized 14 trained shelter volunteers from female-headed households in Khost and Paktika to conduct educational sessions on safe construction practices. Furthermore, female staff and volunteers play a crucial role in implementing cash-based assistance initiatives across all 34 provinces, while female facilitators provide vocational training to women in Kabul and Kandahar's women's shelters.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the Afghan Red Crescent by hiring female facilitators from professional organizations to provide vocational training specifically to women residing in Kabul and Kandahar marastoons (women's shelters).

Enhancing programme quality and accountability across migration and displacement interventions

Progress by National Society against objectives

The Afghan Red Crescent has implemented a series of measures to ensure quality and accountability in their humanitarian interventions. These include robust community and stakeholder engagement processes during the selection of intervention areas and beneficiaries. The National Society has also conducted exit surveys during the distribution of both cash and in-kind support to gather beneficiary feedback. It has established complaint and feedback desks at distribution points and prominently displayed banners in the local language detailing the types and quantities of items distributed or the total cash amount provided. The National Society volunteers regularly conduct household visits as part of community-based health interventions, disseminating health and hygiene messages and collecting feedback and complaints from households to share with project teams.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supports the Afghan Red Crescent in implementing community and stakeholder engagement strategies, exit surveys, and the establishment of complaint and feedback mechanisms at distribution points. The IFRC also provides technical support for midterm and final evaluations to assess the outcomes and impact of the interventions implemented by the National Society and its partners.

Implementing interventions to strengthen the economic resilience of widows

Progress by National Society against objectives

The Afghan Red Crescent has initiated a widespread cash distribution effort targeting 24,000 households across 34 provinces, prioritizing those headed by widows and other vulnerable individuals. In parallel, twenty women from Kabul and Kandahar marastoons underwent vocational training in the first half of 2023. Following completion, each woman was provided a grant as seed capital to kick-start their own businesses. These initiatives aim to empower women economically and enhance their livelihood opportunities in Afghanistan.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the National Society in providing cash assistance to vulnerable individuals. This consisted of efforts such as assessing vulnerability for cash distribution, capacitating the National Society staff and volunteers on delivering cash assistance, and assisting the National Society in collecting feedback to determine impact.

The **Danish Red Cross** supported the Afghan Red Crescent in Kandahar province by empowering 275 female-headed households through vocational training in tailoring and poultry farming. This initiative aims to enhance economic opportunities for destitute women and widows under the Afghan Red Crescent marastoon. Additionally, the Afghan Red Crescent MHPSS team conducted focus group discussions with women and girls, highlighting their need for social interaction spaces and interest in activities such as arts and crafts and vocational training. Efforts are underway to introduce tailored social activities, with 10 female volunteers currently supporting these initiatives in Nangahar, while the Kandahar team advocates for recruiting more female volunteers in child-friendly spaces.

The **Turkish Red Crescent Society** supported the National Society in renovating marastoons in Balkh, Herat, and Kabul provinces, aiming to improve facilities that provide essential services to vulnerable communities.

ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS



Strategic and operational coordination

IFRC membership coordination

IFRC membership coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situations and needs. It involves agreeing on common priorities, co-developing strategies to address issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian access, acceptance and space; mobilizing funding and other resources; clarifying consistent public messaging; and monitoring progress. This also means ensuring that strategies and programmes incorporate clarity in their humanitarian efforts, development assistance, and efforts to reinforce the auxiliary role of National Societies in their respective countries.

During the reporting period, in-country partners actively engaged within the framework of IFRC's New Way of Working. Some participating National Societies took on shared leadership roles in implementing the IFRC's Emergency Appeal operation, leveraging their expertise, knowledge, and technical capacities.

IFRC network partners in Afghanistan include the **Danish Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross Society, Norwegian Red Cross, Qatar Red Crescent Society, Swedish Red Cross, and Turkish Red Crescent Society.**

Movement coordination

The Afghan Red Crescent ensures regular exchanges with the IFRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross and participating National Societies, for the alignment of support and action between Movement partners. In times of emergencies, closer coordination is organized. This is carried out in line with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation ([SMCC](#)) principles, and the newly-adopted [Seville Agreement 2.0](#).

The ICRC works in collaboration with the Afghan Red Crescent and other International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners. It is responding to the humanitarian crisis by providing healthcare and rehabilitation support,

supporting healthcare infrastructure, assisting people in establishing livelihoods and incomes, helping families who have been separated to reconnect, and improving access to clean water, sanitation and energy.

External coordination

The Afghan Red Crescent maintains close coordination with the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority, the Ministry of Public Health, and local authorities as an auxiliary to public authorities, ensuring neutral and independent humanitarian action. It collaborates closely with the Ministry of Public Health to mobilize healthcare personnel, medicines, and medical equipment. The IFRC supports these efforts through briefing sessions and information sharing with government and institutional donors.

The IFRC and Afghan Red Crescent engage actively in advocacy, humanitarian diplomacy, and coordination with other humanitarian actors, including agencies within the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). IFRC participates as an observer in the HCT and contributes actively to the Inter-Cluster Coordination Team (ICCT) and relevant Cluster or Inter-Agency Working Group meetings. These platforms facilitate information sharing, planning, analysis, and strategic coordination.

Regular engagements with Kabul-based embassies and key stakeholders keep them informed about Afghan Red Crescent's latest developments. IFRC presents Afghan Red Crescent's new strategic priorities in these meetings, emphasizing a renewed focus on vulnerable groups in Afghanistan such as at-risk women, war widows, individuals with mental health conditions exacerbated by decades of conflict, children's health, and the most vulnerable children with congenital heart defects, among others.

The Afghan Red Crescent and its partners collaborate with the emergency shelter and non-food item cluster and authorities to plan support for shelter repairs and rebuilding. They adhere to agreed models and common minimum standards set by the Shelter Cluster, considering indigenous community practices, social cohesion, cultural norms, and traditions throughout shelter interventions.

Additionally, the IFRC contributes to developing key messages, translating them from English to Pashto in collaboration with Miyamoto International. These messages focus on Afghanistan's regional traditional construction practices and aim to disseminate critical information in the community. By leveraging local knowledge, materials, and culture, these technical messages promote resilient construction practices.



National Society Development

Progress by the National Society against objectives

The Afghan Red Crescent has focused on strengthening local branches through various initiatives. The National Society implemented extensive training programmes for staff and volunteers across various regions, developed a digital volunteer management platform, and enhanced branch development through specialized recruitment and regular field visits. The Afghan Red Crescent updated their disaster response teams with new equipment, data collection kits, and refresher training. The National Society also made progress in the development of the Red Crescent law, which enables the National Society to act as an auxiliary to public authorities neutrally and impartially, facilitating access to resources and exemptions for humanitarian interventions. A draft has been submitted for validation, marking progress in organizational development including legal base, governance and management.

The Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) approach is geared at assessing National Societies response capacities to respond to emergencies. This enables them to address fundamental gaps or challenges which prevents effective and efficient delivery of humanitarian services. The National Society has been undertaking the development of its multi-hazard contingency plan to guide its preparedness and response to primary threats across its territory.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the Afghan Red Crescent in its efforts to enhance its disaster response and preparedness capabilities. This was done primarily through support in areas such as the development of terms of reference for a digital volunteer management platform, supplying updated data collection kits, identification materials, internet connectivity, and conducting various training programmes. The IFRC organized a comprehensive national disaster

response team training and supported the Afghan Red Crescent in revising the Red Crescent law and developing a multi-hazard contingency plan, thus strengthening their institutional preparedness and operational effectiveness.



Humanitarian diplomacy

Progress by the National Society against objectives

The Afghan Red Crescent is enhancing its communication functions both internally and externally. This includes publishing online statements addressing critical issues such as the ban on women in education and the workplace and engaging privately with relevant authorities to advocate for change.

A communications training was conducted for National Society staff from 34 branches, focusing on enhancing their communication skills and strategic engagement in humanitarian diplomacy. This initiative aimed to empower the National Society to effectively influence aid policies at local, national, and international levels.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC collaborates closely with the National Society in advocacy and influencing missions, such as engagements in Doha, Qatar, with various embassies representing Afghanistan. These meetings focused on the humanitarian situation, evolving contexts, and strategic priorities, advocating for the prioritization of Grand Bargain commitments and support through well-established local actors. The IFRC also actively participates in media engagements, including interviews and sharing of images and video footage with RCRC partners and media agencies. IFRC deployed communication surge personnel to Kabul to strengthen communication and media outreach efforts, including social media posts, videos, and in-depth [stories](#) to raise awareness and support for humanitarian needs in Afghanistan.



Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

Progress by the National Society against objectives

During the reporting period, the National Society conducted seven finance development training sessions across various provinces, educating 115 staff on efficient processing of working advances and improved reporting. The Afghan Red Crescent has also institutionalized measures to enhance compliance and prevent fraud and corruption. This includes screening staff against UN sanction lists, conducting due diligence on contractors, and ensuring compliance with internal and external policies and donor requirements. Training on fraud prevention, IFRC's code of conduct, and integrity measures has been mandatory for all staff, reinforcing a culture of ethical conduct and accountability within the organization.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supports the National Society in institutionalizing risk management practices and safeguarding measures. The IFRC maintains a dynamic risk register aligned with IFRC's Risk Management Framework, updating it regularly to address safeguarding risks and other operational challenges.

In 2023, IFRC facilitated the engagement of a third-party monitoring firm to conduct independent monitoring of programs across all 34 provinces. It aimed to ensure programme effectiveness, accountability, and transparency by providing unbiased assessments and recommendations. The IFRC supported the National Society in establishing a hotline and other channels for community feedback promotes transparency and accountability. Additionally, the Afghan Red Crescent was supported in fast-tracking its [digital transformation](#) agenda at headquarters, regional and branch levels. The National Society aims to build up the governance, management and accountability systems, branch development, communication, and resource mobilization through engagement in digital transformation.



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network, with 191 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and around 15 million volunteers. Our volunteers are present in communities before, during and after a crisis or disaster. We work in the most hard to reach and complex settings in the world, saving lives and promoting human dignity. We support communities to become stronger and more resilient places where people can live safe and healthy lives, and have opportunities to thrive.

DATA SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

- **Missing data and breakdowns:** National Societies have diverse data collection systems and processes that may not align with the standardized indicators. Data may not be available for some indicators, for some National Societies. This may lead to inconsistencies across different reporting tools as well as potential under or over-estimation of the efforts led by all.
- **Reporting bias:** The data informing this Federation-wide overview is self-reported by each National Society (or its designated support entity) and which is the owner and gatekeeper, and responsible for accuracy and updating. IFRC tries to triangulate the data provided by the National Societies with previous data and other data in the public domain.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [IFRC Afghanistan 2023 Financial Report](#)

Note: For emergencies for which a financial report is not yet available, see: [MDRAF012](#) and [MDRAF013](#)

- [IFRC network country plans](#)
- [Subscribe for updates](#)
- [Live Disaster Response Emergency Fund \(DREF\) data](#)
- Operational information: [IFRC GO platform](#)
- National Society data: [IFRC Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)
- [Evaluations database](#)

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