



# AFGHANISTAN



## 2025 IFRC network country plan

Funding Requirement **CHF 62.3M**

16 January 2025

### In support of the Afghan Red Crescent Society



**34**

National Society branches



**329**

National Society local units



**4,000**

National Society staff



**26,600**

National Society volunteers

### People to be reached



**140,000**

Ongoing emergency operations



**400,000**

Climate and environment



**1.4M**

Disasters and crises



**5.2M**

Health and wellbeing



**120,000**

Migration and displacement



**500,000**

Values, power and inclusion

### IFRC network multi-year focus

#### Emergency response

- Floods

#### Longer term needs

- Disaster preparedness • evolving disasters and crises • climate resilience • primary healthcare • sustained mental health care • livelihoods and socio-economic resilience • migration and identity • values, power and inclusion

#### Capacity development

- Finance development • digital transformation • disaster response readiness • auxiliary role • communications

### Key country data links

**INFORM Severity rating** **Very high**

**INFORM Climate Change Risk Index** **Very high**

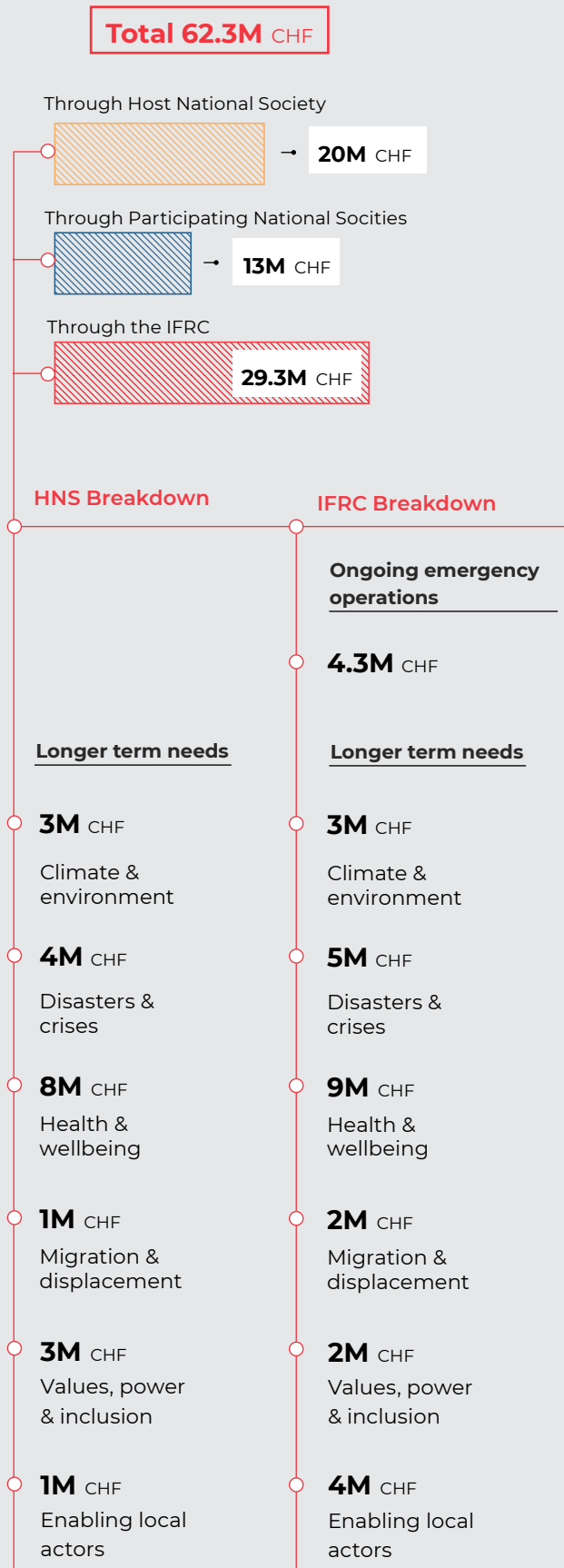
**Human Development Index rank** **182**

**World Bank Population figure** **41.5M**

**World Bank Population below poverty line** **54.5%**

# Funding requirements

2025



# Participating National Societies

- American Red Cross\*

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- Austrian Red Cross\*

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- British Red Cross\*

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- Hong Kong Red Cross, Branch of the Red Cross Society of China\*

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- Canadian Red Cross Society\*

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- Danish Red Cross

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- Finnish Red Cross\*

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- Irish Red Cross\*

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- Japanese Red Cross Society\*

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- Red Cross of Monaco\*

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- The Netherlands Red Cross\*

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- Norwegian Red Cross

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- Qatar Red Crescent Society

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- Singapore Red Cross\*

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- Swedish Red Cross\*

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- Turkish Red Crescent Society

*\*National Societies which have contributed only multilaterally through the IFRC in the first half of 2024.*

# IFRC Appeal codes

Emergency Appeal:  
**MDRAF015**  
 Afghanistan Floods

Longer-term needs:  
**MAAAF001**

*See back page for explanatory note on funding requirements*

## Participating National Societies bilateral support for 2025

National Society name	Funding Requirement	Climate	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing	Migration	Values, power and inclusion	Enabling local actors
Danish Red Cross	1.7M		●	●	●	●	●
Norwegian Red Cross	3.3M		●	●	●		●
Qatar Red Crescent Society	6M		●	●	●		
Turkish Red Crescent Society	2M	●	●	●	●	●	●

Total Funding requirement **CHF 13.0M**

## Hazards



Drought



Economic hardship



Floods



Earthquakes



Health emergencies

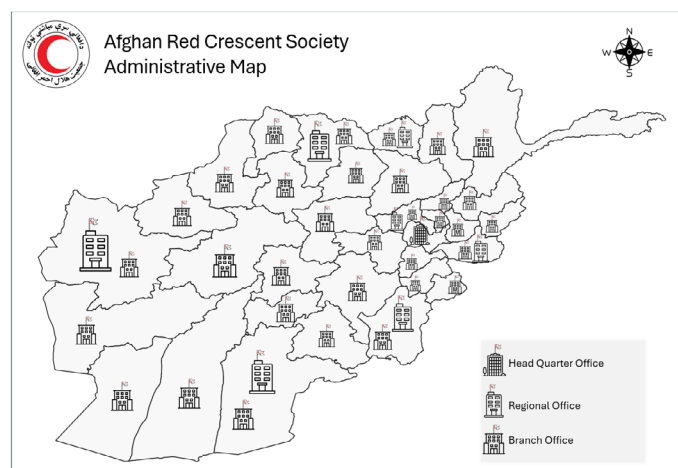


The Afghan Red Crescent providing primary healthcare and immunization services to people in Kandahar province

# NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

The **Afghan Red Crescent Society** was established in 1935 and admitted to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1957. Since its formation, the Afghan Red Crescent Society has established extensive local networks across the country, enabling it to reach vulnerable populations in all areas of the country, including remote and underserved areas. The National Society is supported by 4,000 staff and 26,600 volunteers. The National Society has a long history of providing lifesaving assistance to people across the country.

The Afghan Red Crescent Society has vast expertise delivering diverse types of humanitarian interventions during disasters and crises, and longer-term programmes, supported by the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (Movement) partners, as well as external partners. This includes programming related to disaster risk management, community resilience – including primary health care, community based healthcare and first aid, socio-economic support to war widows, sustained mental health care, and treatments for children with congenital heart defects. The National Society's volunteers play a critical role at all stages of programming from the design to the last mile delivery of services.



Map of Afghan Red Crescent Society offices and branches

Due to its application of principled humanitarian action, the Afghan Red Crescent Society enjoys an elevated level of acceptance and access to communities across the

whole country. At both national and branch levels, the National Society has teams of volunteers trained in disaster preparedness and response, as well as mobile health teams and community mobilizers. The Afghan Red Crescent Society also provides access to healthcare services through a network of over 370 facilities, which include a 50-bed hospital in Kabul, 46 fixed clinics, one comprehensive health centre, 36 health sub-centres and 101 mobile health teams and/or emergency mobile health teams, active in all 34 provinces in the country. The above 172 facilities (71 of which are fixed) are augmented by additional temporary facilities known as health camps. There are 45 health camps and 146 satellite health camps focused on polio eradication. The Afghan Red Crescent Society is also the only organization in Afghanistan that provides treatment for congenital heart defects. It employs community mobilizers as part of its community-based health and first aid (CBHFA) programme

Afghan Red Crescent Society's work for the next three years of this plan is guided by its Strategic Plan 2021-2025, which was updated in May 2022 to realign priorities with the evolving country context. The Strategic Plan, whose theme is "everywhere for everyone", has four goals:

- Goal 1: Communities with strengthened life-saving resources and capacities to respond to and recover from disasters, health emergencies, and conflict-generated shocks
- Goal 2: Communities with higher long-term resilience through risk reduction, improved health and livelihoods, and adaptation to climate change and migration
- Goal 3: Communities respecting the Fundamental Principles, and promoting diversity, human dignity, tolerance, non-discrimination, social inclusion and peace
- Goal 4: Afghan Red Crescent a reformed National Society delivering impartial, neutral, effective, sustainable, relevant, and accountable humanitarian services

In 2023, the Afghan Red Crescent Society reached 5.7 million people with long term services and development programmes and 71,000 people with disaster response and early recovery programmes.

# IFRC NETWORK ACTION

## JOINT SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Afghanistan spans 652,864 square kilometres of mainly mountainous terrain, with plains in the north and southwest divided by the Hindu Kush range. The country is divided into [five agro-climatic zones](#), from the rainy mountainous northeast to the hot, arid southern plateau. As of mid-2024, Afghanistan's population is estimated at [42.5 million](#), largely rural, multi-ethnic and multilingual. Ethnic groups include Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek and smaller communities such as Nuristanis, Aimaq, Turkmen and Baloch. Nearly [half](#) the population is under 15 years old, and rural residents constitute [74 per cent](#). The total fertility rate is four children per woman, with [life expectancies](#) of 62 years for men and 67 years for women.

Following the August 2021 end to decades of conflict, Afghanistan's security has improved, yet public services remain inadequate. Millions of widows struggle with limited income opportunities, compounded by disasters and displacement. Entering 2025, Afghanistan faces severe economic pressures; over half of the population (23.7 million) required [humanitarian assistance](#) in 2024, and the country grapples with ongoing economic decline exacerbated by conflict and frequent natural shocks. Humanitarian efforts struggle with funding gaps, focusing only on the most vulnerable, which leaves many needs unmet.

Widespread poverty and unemployment remain critical. The UNDP reports that [84 per cent](#) of Afghans live below the national poverty line, with over [90 per cent](#) unable to meet

basic food costs. Households frequently adopt severe coping strategies such as borrowing, selling assets or reducing spending on health and education. Without sufficient aid, many are forced into extreme measures, including [selling children](#).

Food insecurity affects a third of the population, with [14.2 million people](#) in crisis-level or worse, particularly in provinces such as Badakhshan and Herat. Health services are critically strained, especially in rural areas, while outbreaks of acute watery diarrhoea, dengue, pertussis and malaria have risen. Women face limited access to life-saving care due to movement restrictions, worsening maternal and reproductive health risks.

Since [October 2023](#), thousands of undocumented Afghans returned from Pakistan due to policy changes impacting 1.3 million.

Climate change drives extreme events such as droughts and flash floods, heightening Afghanistan's vulnerability to natural hazards, including [earthquakes](#), avalanches and landslides. Identified as one of the [top 10 countries](#) most vulnerable to climate change, Afghanistan faces recurring severe weather, contributing to further displacement. These compounding issues increase poverty, drive irregular migration and strain resources, disproportionately affecting women and girls who face limited healthcare, education and economic opportunities.

A declining humanitarian response capacity due to stricter regulations and competing priorities stresses the importance of strengthening national response structures and international partnerships. Building robust systems to address sudden crises is crucial as Afghanistan continues to face multi-layered challenges in 2025.



# ONGOING EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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

<b>Emergency Operation</b>	Afghanistan Floods
<b>Appeal code</b>	<a href="#">MDRAF015</a>
<b>People affected</b>	210,000 people
<b>People to be assisted</b>	140,000 people
<b>Duration</b>	12 months (15 May 2024 to 31 May 2025)
<b>Funding requirement</b>	Funding requirements through the IFRC Appeal: CHF 5 million Federation-wide Funding requirements: CHF 7.5 million
<b>Link to Emergency Appeal</b>	<a href="#">Afghanistan Floods Emergency Appeal</a>
<b>Operational Strategy</b>	<a href="#">Operational Strategy</a>
<b>Operational Update</b>	<a href="#">Operational Update No. 1</a>

On 10 May 2024, flash floods severely impacted northeastern Afghanistan, particularly in Badakhshan, Baghlan and Takhar. As of 12 May 2024, the Afghan Red Crescent Society reported over 230 fatalities, with many still missing and more than 9,500 families affected. The floods destroyed about 9,100 livestock and nearly 20,800 acres of agricultural land, worsening humanitarian needs in a region already struggling with flooding since 16 April 2024. The crisis is compounded by severe drought, economic challenges linked to international sanctions and climate change, which has rendered Afghanistan highly vulnerable despite its minimal contributions to the issue. Through this Emergency Appeal, the IFRC aims to support the Afghan Red Crescent Society in responding to the 2024 floods. The strategy focuses on immediate and medium-term recovery needs through integrated assistance, health services, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and protection measures. Integrated assistance will link emergency support to long-term recovery, offering cash assistance, essential items, shelter and livelihoods support. Health interventions will provide first aid, nutrition, mental health support and rehabilitation of WASH facilities. The approach emphasizes protection, gender and inclusion, ensuring equitable access to services while engaging various community stakeholders and implementing a feedback mechanism to address community concerns.

## Short description of the emergency operational strategy

Through this Emergency Appeal, the IFRC aims to support the Afghan Red Crescent Society in responding to the 2024 floods. The strategy focuses on immediate and medium-term recovery needs through integrated assistance, health services, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and protection measures. Integrated assistance will link emergency support to long-term recovery, offering cash assistance, essential items, shelter and

livelihoods support. Health interventions will provide first aid, nutrition, mental health support and rehabilitation of WASH facilities. The approach emphasizes protection, gender and inclusion, ensuring equitable access to services while engaging various community stakeholders and implementing a feedback mechanism to address community concerns. The highlights of the assistance are as follows:

### Shelter, housing and settlements

Essential items are distributed and affected communities receive cash or in-kind support to rebuild and repair homes. Guidance on climate-smart construction techniques is provided to enhance resilience.

### Livelihoods

Targeted households receive conditional cash support to restore livelihoods, along with technical training tailored to their needs.

### Multi-purpose cash

One-time cash assistance is provided to help affected communities meet essential emergency needs for one month.

### Health and care, including water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

Primary healthcare, immunization services and medicines are provided, along with awareness-raising sessions. Psychological first aid and mental health support are available, and community members receive first aid training. Hygiene support includes the installation of pit latrines, distribution of hygiene kits, and awareness sessions supported by information and communication materials.

Cross-cutting approaches: the operational strategy integrates **community engagement and accountability (CEA)** and **protection, gender and inclusion (PGI)** as pivotal elements, in an approach that recognizes and values all community members as equal partners, with their diverse needs shaping the response.

For the period 04 May 2024 to 21 June 2024, the following assistance was provided:

### Shelter, housing and settlements

Flood-affected households received emergency shelter support and essential items, including blankets, jerrycans, kitchen sets, and tarpaulins.

### Multi-purpose cash

Cash assistance was provided to affected communities to meet their basic needs.

### Health and care

Primary healthcare and first aid services were offered through mobile and fixed clinics, along with psychological first aid for affected individuals.

### Water, sanitation and hygiene

Hygiene promotion activities were conducted to support community health and well-being.

### Protection, gender and inclusion

Dignity kits were distributed to flood-affected communities to address essential needs and uphold personal dignity.



*Afghan Red Crescent Society volunteers providing relief and health services to people crossing the border from Pakistan through its mobile health clinics, in December 2023 (Photo: IFRC)*



## Climate and environment

Afghanistan is a predominantly mountainous, landlocked country, with plains in the north and southwest separated by the Hindu Kush mountains. The mountain ranges create five distinct agro-climatic zones: the mountainous north-east, with the highest average rainfall; the northern plains with moderate temperatures and rainfall; the central and eastern highlands with moderate rainfall; and the southern plateau with high temperatures and little rainfall.

Afghanistan's climate varies due to its topography, from arid to semi-arid in the northeastern regions with Hindu Kush Mountains to desert conditions in the southwestern regions. As a result, the country is vulnerable to recurrent extreme weather, in particular floods and droughts. Afghanistan ranks among the countries with the highest climate risk index score, showing high levels of hazard exposure, underlying vulnerability and limited coping capacities. Its climate is influenced by the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), which create irregular variations in temperature and influence extreme weather events, such as heatwaves, droughts and floods.

Temperatures are rising at a higher rate than the global average and the incidence of drought is likely to increase. The primary causes of drought in Afghanistan are meteorological (reduced precipitation) and hydrological (reduced sub/surface water). The recent drought has been the worst in three decades and has been affecting more than 80 per cent of the country.

Climate-related extreme weather events and natural hazards threaten people's livelihoods, increase poverty and food insecurity, and erode the resilience of communities, households and individuals. The agricultural sector is the most important livelihood source, employing 42.5 per cent of the population and contributing 25.8 per cent of GDP. However, rainfall decline, temperature increases and the impact of the recent drought have triggered water shortages that threaten crop yields.

At the same time, Afghanistan is also experiencing extreme cold and environmental degradation, with deforestation due to trees being cut to provide fuel and domestic animals overgrazing the ranges. The result is extensive soil erosion and long-term salination of the soil due to irrigation, reducing the fertility of much of the arable land. Polluted water supplies are also common, except in the high mountain regions, where few people live permanently.

Climate change and environmental stressors also contribute to widespread internal displacement and to changing migration patterns. Displacement and rapid urbanization risk

exacerbating food and livelihoods insecurity, place additional pressure on environmental resources and increase the vulnerability of marginalized groups.

### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Afghan Red Crescent Society aims to build communities with higher long-term resilience by enhancing risk reduction, strengthening health and livelihoods and supporting adaptation to climate change and migration. The National Society will also focus on developing community-led risk management and climate adaptation plans to strengthen livelihoods and mitigate the impacts of water and food shortages, health challenges and displacement.

### Planned activities in 2025

- Deliver humanitarian assistance to people affected by climate and environmental crises
- Implement climate-smart risk reduction projects at community level
- Engage youth and volunteers for climate risk awareness in schools and communities
- Support green response and community environmental initiatives
- Mainstream climate-smart approaches into its operations
- Engage communities in enhanced vulnerability capacity assessments (eVCA) and designing mitigation projects
- Pursue partnerships on climate resilience programme
- Institutionalize forecast-based action
- Work with the authorities on early warning early action measures
- Mainstream community engagement and accountability and protection, gender and inclusion minimum standards in programming
- Enhance programme quality and accountability across all programmes
- Build and enhance the climate action capacity of its staff and volunteers

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the Afghan Red Crescent Society in the development and implementation of climate-smart programming in both its long- and short-term activities and in the development of an integrated approach that incorporates risk reduction, early warning and early action, and reduces



the environmental footprint of interventions. The **British Red Cross** and **Japanese Red Cross** are both supporting the Afghan Red Crescent Society in this work.

The **Hong Kong Branch, Red Cross Society of China** and **Turkish Red Crescent** also support the Afghan Red Crescent Society.



## Disasters and crises

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

Afghanistan is highly prone to disasters, and has experienced avalanches, droughts, earthquakes, floods and landslides over the last decade. The country ranks fourth on [INFORM Risk 2024](#). There is high risk of loss of life and property from these recurring hazards - on average, 200,000 Afghans are affected by disasters each year. The recurring crises are compounded by the high levels of vulnerability and low levels of coping capacity in the country. On average, 200,000 Afghans are affected by disasters each year.

From 1 January 2023 to 30 July 2023, 22 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces were affected by disasters such as [cold wave](#) and floods. In early March 2024, Afghanistan experienced a cold wave due to unexpected heavy snowfall experienced in several provinces across the country. Heavily impacted provinces included Badakhshan, Badghis, Balkh, Farah, Faryab, Ghor, Herat, Jawzjan, Nuristan and Sar-e-Pul. Nuristan had, in late February, been affected by a landslide caused by heavy snowfall. Heavy rains and flash flooding affected more than 4,500 people in several provinces in spring 2023. Heavy rainfall also started in July 2023, causing [flash floods](#) in 19 provinces - Badakhshan, Daikundi, Ghazni, Helmand, Kabul, Kandahar, Kapisa, Khost, Kunar, Kunduz, Logar, Maidan Wardak, Nangarhar, Nuristan, Paktia, Parwan, Uruzgan and Zabul. According to reports from various sources, including Afghan Red Crescent Society and the Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), flash floods have led to the loss of 61 lives and affected 126,000 people.

Afghanistan is also in an active seismic region, with seismic activity a constant threat. Based on the Preliminary Earthquake Hazard Map of Afghanistan, the Chaman fault, Hari Rud fault, Central Badakhshan fault and Darvaz fault are most likely to contribute to seismic hazards. In March 2023, a [6.5 magnitude earthquake](#) hit Badakhshan Province in northeastern Afghanistan affecting more than 7,000 people. Again, in October 2023, a 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck 40 kilometres west of Herat City in Herat Province, western Afghanistan, with the shock and aftershocks felt in neighbouring Badghis and Farah provinces. The impact of the [Herat earthquake](#) resulted in over 2,000 deaths. Many of the affected families are either living in makeshift shelters or informal settlement sites – making them highly susceptible to adverse weather conditions, health risks, and other hazards.

## Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Afghan Red Crescent Society seeks to equip communities with strengthened life-saving resources and capacities to respond to and recover from disasters, health emergencies and conflict-driven shocks. It will focus on delivering immediate humanitarian assistance to people affected by natural and human-made disasters and health emergencies.

The Afghan Red Crescent Society also aims to implement longer-term community resilience building programmes that will have a lasting impact and will improve the resilience of individuals and communities. The National Society will also promote disaster and health risk reduction messaging in schools and as part of community-based activities, through the mobilization of youth and volunteers, in partnership with the Ministry of Education.

## Planned activities in 2025

- Deliver humanitarian assistance to people affected by evolving crises and disasters
- Implement household and community-managed [livelihoods](#) projects
- Implement safer [shelter](#) interventions at community level
- Implement [cash and voucher assistance](#) interventions to address multiple needs
- Engage youth and volunteers for integrated programming in schools and communities
- Mainstream [disaster risk reduction](#) into Afghan Red Crescent operations including shelter interventions
- Develop and update its [disaster risk management](#) strategy and disseminate it at all levels
- Pursue partnerships on integrated community-based programming
- Work with the authorities on resilience programming
- Mainstream community engagement and accountability and [protection, gender and inclusion minimum standards](#) in all programming

## Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the Afghan Red Crescent Society in the delivery of multi-sectoral response services in relief, [shelter](#), health and WASH, based on the context and needs analysis. It will support the National Society in scaling up livelihoods and [cash and voucher-based assistance](#), as a pivotal component of its disaster risk management strategy. The IFRC will also provide support the Afghan Red Crescent Society to make risk-informed decisions when planning its response and recovery activities and will ensure a focus on [disaster risk reduction with targeted communities](#). IFRC mechanisms such as the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (IFRC-DREF) and Emergency Appeals will also be drawn on as needed for the National Society to respond to disasters and crises. In March 2024, IFRC supported the National Society with a [DREF](#) allocation of CHF 499,885 to assist 11,200 people affected by the cold wave caused by heavy snowfall and extreme cold temperatures in

several high-altitude provinces of Afghanistan, for a timeframe of four months.

The IFRC will continue to support the enhancement of the National Society's capacities and systems for emergency response, in particular through ensuring access to relevant information for decision-making, through timely needs assessments, improved data gathering and information management, and operational learning. The support will cover the effective mainstreaming of community engagement and accountability and the application of the [minimum standards on protection, gender and inclusion in emergency contexts](#). Additionally, the IFRC will also work on reinforcing the National Society's accountability systems and logistics development, including setting up framework agreements with suppliers and supporting pre-positioning of stocks at local and regional levels.



## Health and wellbeing

Afghanistan faces significant gaps in the provision of basic healthcare across the country. Prior to 2021, public sector healthcare in Afghanistan consisted of more than 3,500 health facilities, largely supported through international development funding. With the future of funding unclear, many health facilities are struggling to sustain services, and the majority are under-staffed, under-trained and under-resourced, with 8.7 physicians, nurses and midwives per 10,000 population. The geographic distribution of health facilities in the country is also uneven and insufficient to meet the needs, especially in under-served rural areas.

Women with more complex health needs, and including pregnancy, are facing major access issues, due to fear and insecurity, mobility restrictions, long distances, lack of safe transportation (i.e., the need to use private cars rather than public transport), and the lack of trained female staff. Without solutions to maintain essential health services for women and girls, an estimated [10 maternal, 55 neonatal, and 112 child deaths](#) are expected each day. Additionally, one in every 100 children in Afghanistan is born with [heart problems](#), which means 128,000 all over the country. Most of those do not receive adequate medical care due to poverty and lack of interventional services and resources.

Decades of conflict and climate impacts have devastated Afghanistan's water infrastructure, with two-thirds of the country already facing severe water scarcity. Persistent drought has reduced water points in provinces such as Badghis, Ghor, and Faryab to critical levels, impacting aquifers and halving water availability in urban areas such as Kabul, where contamination from wastewater and rising salinity worsen access. A limited capacity for water management has

resulted in facility failures, leaving many to rely on unsafe sources, as 13 per cent of households use inadequate water sources, and 35 per cent lack improved sanitation. In rural areas, 73 per cent of people lack access to safe water, sanitation, waste management, and hygiene supplies, with the WASH cluster identifying 14 provinces with high-priority needs for these services and another 18 as medium-priority areas.

## Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Afghan Red Crescent Society seeks to enhance engagement with public authorities, particularly the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), through coordinated mechanisms at national, regional and provincial levels. The National Society participates in high-level commissions for emergency situations and will address health risks associated with climate change. The new Health Strategy aims to establish a more comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding with the MoPH, reinforcing the National Society's strategic contributions to achieving MoPH goals.

The Afghan Red Crescent Society also aims to scale up its primary health services by increasing the number of healthcare facilities and enhancing access to services, with a particular focus on immunization efforts, especially for polio eradication. Additionally, through its [first aid](#) initiatives, the Afghan Red Crescent Society plans to leverage its community-based health and first aid (CBHFA) volunteers to train and equip communities and schools in lifesaving first aid techniques. The National Society will also explore the expansion of commercial [first aid](#) as a sustainable income-generating activity. Through its water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions, the

National Society will target schools and communities at risk of or recently affected by waterborne diseases, with a focus on underserved areas, in line with the [One WASH approach](#). Its high-level objectives include to:

- Provide timely health care, first aid, WASH and emergency health capacities and response in most vulnerable communities
- Reduce impacts of water and food shortages and health issues through community risk management and climate adaptation plans
- Provide preventive and primary health care services to internally displaced persons and migrants
- Improve [psychosocial and mental health support](#) strengthens physical health and well-being of people

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### Planned activities in 2025

- Strengthen the delivery of health services through static and mobile health facilities
- Engage with the MoPH in formulating national health priorities and strengthening its auxiliary role for health services
- Scale up [community-based health and first aid](#) activities
- Institutionalize commercial [first aid](#) within the National Society
- Expand risk communication and community engagement
- Implement mental health and psychosocial support services ([MPHSS](#)) interventions in communities and schools, as well as for responders
- Scale up services of its mental health centres
- Scale up the water, sanitation and hygiene ([WASH](#)) programme in schools through the construction of facilities, provision of hygiene items for girls and hygiene promotion in nearby communities

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the Afghan Red Crescent Society in expanding its network of primary health service facilities and

mental health centres. This support includes maintaining and strengthening existing health facilities with a focus on community engagement and accountability ([CEA](#)), as well as protection against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment ([PSEA](#)). The IFRC will help the National Society develop a primary healthcare delivery model that relies less on external support.

Additionally, the IFRC will assist the National Society in engaging in joint planning and policy dialogue with external partners and the donor community, aligning efforts with its health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) priorities. The IFRC will also provide materials, engage contractors for WASH facility construction, and offer technical guidelines and training for staff and volunteers.

The IFRC will continue to aid the Afghan Red Crescent Society in expanding immunization services in hard-to-reach areas and among vulnerable communities to address significant gaps in vaccination coverage. Additionally, to enhance its impact in urban settings, the National Society will receive support from the IFRC to utilize its medical facilities as platforms for outreach vaccinator teams, facilitating semi-permanent vaccination camps in urban slums.

The **British Red Cross** and **Finnish Red Cross** will continue to support the Afghan Red Crescent in the expansion of its community-based health programme across provincial branches.

The **Danish Red Cross**, **Norwegian Red Cross** and **Qatar Red Crescent Society** will continue bilateral support to primary health facilities of the Afghan Red Crescent Society, with the **Canadian Red Cross Society** and **Swedish Red Cross** continuing similar support multilaterally via the IFRC.

The **Netherlands Red Cross** and **Singapore Red Cross** will continue support to mental health centres of the Afghan Red Crescent Society multilaterally via the IFRC.

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Under wider Movement support the **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** will continue to provide technical assistance to the National Society in the provision of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services as well as support to fixed health facilities including through provision of nutrition supplies.



Afghanistan has suffered conflict and insecurity for more than four decades and that, as well as recurring disasters and climate shocks, have meant that displacement has become a common coping strategy for many Afghan people over the generations. As of [December 2023](#), 4.2 million people were displaced as a result of the conflict and violence and 1.5 million as a result of disasters. The country has the largest number of [internally displaced persons](#) in South Asia, and the sixth largest worldwide.

In [October 2023](#), the Government of Pakistan announced plans to deport undocumented foreigners who did not leave voluntarily by 1 November. Afghans made up a significant portion of this population, with an estimated 1.3 million residing in Pakistan. This decision sparked a sharp increase in Afghan returns, driven by fears of arrest and deportation, as authorities began demolishing unauthorized settlements. Between [September 2023 and October 2024](#), approximately 747,200 Afghans returned to Afghanistan.

Along with the rest of the Afghan population, these internally displaced persons and returnees will face one of the world's most acute humanitarian crises, unemployment, poverty and food insecurity, with women and girls particularly vulnerable, with restricted access to services. With [5.9 million](#) Afghan people living abroad, one in 10 families depends upon overseas remittances. As agriculture becomes less viable due to extreme weather and drought conditions, migration from rural to urban areas is expected to increase.

### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Afghan Red Crescent Society seeks to build communities with enhanced long-term resilience by strengthening risk reduction, improving health and livelihood, and fostering adaptation to climate change and migration challenges. The Afghan Red Crescent Society also aims to prioritize the needs of internally displaced persons and returnees across its emergency interventions, by further integrating their needs into its sectoral response areas (disaster management and livelihoods support, health and WASH services). This will focus on delivering assistance to internally displaced persons and returnees in underserved areas. Additionally, the National Society will continue mainstreaming [community engagement and accountability](#), to enhance the resilience of internally displaced persons, returnees and host communities across all

emergency operations and longer-term interventions. This will include developing preferred feedback mechanisms and using feedback to inform decision-making on programmes. The National Society's planning, monitoring and evaluation team will also include disaggregated data on internally displaced persons and returnees when reporting on emergency preparedness, response and recovery activities.

### Planned activities in 2025

- Deliver humanitarian assistance to people on the move
- Implement interventions to strengthen the economic resilience of returnees
- Establish [humanitarian service points](#) in branches in the border provinces
- Engage young people from internally displaced, returnee and host communities as agents for behavioural change, including in promoting social cohesion
- Engage with the authorities on possible involvement in social protection
- Pursue partnerships on migration and displacement programming
- Work with the authorities on migration and displacement solutions
- Improve the migration and displacement programming capacity of its volunteers and staff

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the National Society in developing its cross-sectoral action plan and linked implementation and monitoring plans on displacement, in line with [IFRC's Global Migration Strategy](#). These will be disseminated within the National Society and training will be given at national and sub-national levels. The National Society will be supported to actively engage in technical and knowledge hubs, including the Red Cross Red Crescent Migration Leadership Group.

The **Netherlands Red Cross** will be supporting the National Society in the CEA component via the 510 initiative.

The **Singapore Red Cross** will provide support for marastoons (safe shelters for widows and their children).





## Values, power and inclusion

While the hostilities in the country have subsided significantly, the security situation still remains unpredictable. This is due to the lasting effects of years of large-scale armed conflict, including weapons contamination, ongoing sporadic violence and wider socio-economic and political tensions. Protection concerns, such as the exposure of civilians to unexploded ordnance, targeted attacks, and the wider economic concerns are leading to more vulnerable people resorting to harmful coping mechanisms to survive.

Following years of trauma, Afghanistan has one of the [world's highest proportions](#) of people with psychological, cognitive and physical disabilities. People with disabilities are likely to face high levels of stigma, discrimination, and marginalization and higher poverty rates.

After the transition of August 2021, there has been a specific increase in restrictions on women and girls accessing education. The suspension of education for girls above the sixth grade has added concerns about their future engagement and inclusion. Wider protection concerns are also on the increase in relation to the situation of women. While reliable data on the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence is scarce due to systemic weaknesses, engrained social norms, a fragile health system, and a lack of social safety networks, sexual and gender-based violence is still being reported. Family separation is also impacting the lives of women, with men leaving to find work in urban areas or neighbouring countries and other women being widowed by the conflict or disasters. This means that thousands of women are left as single-headed households.

The concept of women's economic empowerment was set in Afghanistan's policy agenda by the international community. Women's economic empowerment became a global policy priority with the introduction of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) aiming to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls (Goal 5), decent work and economic growth (Goal 8), and justice (Goal 16) all at once. Most Afghan women engage in unpaid work such as household tasks and childcare or taking care of elderly parents. The engagement in unpaid work prevents Afghan women from spending their time on farming and trading activities, training and continuing education, all of which can help them gain or improve professional skills.

### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Afghan Red Crescent Society aims to build resilient communities by enhancing [risk reduction](#), health, livelihoods and adaptation to climate change and migration impacts. It will strengthen protection, gender and inclusion (PGI) across all services to provide comprehensive support to vulnerable populations.

The Afghan Red Crescent Society also seeks to foster communities that uphold the [Fundamental Principles](#) of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, promoting diversity, dignity, tolerance, non-discrimination, social inclusion and peace. It will advance social inclusiveness, equity and peace, particularly in areas hosting returnees, internally displaced persons and migrants. It will also focus on integrating gender, diversity and humanitarian standards to empower women and promote humanitarian values, while focusing on the economic empowerment and integration of women and people with disabilities to enhance well-being and livelihoods.

Additionally, the Afghan Red Crescent Society aims to deliver impartial, effective and accountable humanitarian services. It will expand the capacity of its social welfare centres, locally called marastoons, to support vulnerable families, particularly those headed by women and increase the availability of these welfare centres across Afghanistan.

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### Planned activities in 2025

- Mainstream [community engagement and accountability](#) and [protection gender and inclusion minimum standards in emergency operations](#) and longer-term programmes
- Establish women-led support activities to engage young women in service delivery
- Improve access and inclusion for people with disabilities
- Promote [child protection safeguarding](#)
- Implement interventions to strengthen the socio-economic resilience of widows and women who head households
- Engage with authorities to explore its involvement in social protection for widows
- Strengthen safeguarding mechanisms within its structures and programmes

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will provide support to the Afghan Red Crescent Society in the provision of vocational training, livelihoods support, income-generating activities and savings groups for women and in the integration of [CEA](#) and [PGI](#) to enhance inclusion and protection to improve social cohesion. It will also provide technical support in the establishment of feedback mechanisms to ensure two-way communication channels, including face-to-face communication. Support will also be provided to set up referral pathways through trusted channels to allow for sensitive feedback and complaints through safe PGI and safeguarding focal persons. The IFRC will also support

the National Society in expanding the number and quality of its welfare centres or marastoons.

The IFRC will assist the Afghan Red Crescent Society in raising awareness on its gender policy and in the dissemination of the [minimum standards on PGI in emergencies](#). It will also be supported to develop a specific policy on the protection against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment ([PSEAH](#)) and child protection and to establish an internal system to address the misuse of power or unethical behaviour. Additionally, the IFRC will support the National Society to set up a training component

on [PGI](#), including on [PSEAH](#) and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. On a practical level, the Afghan Red Crescent Society will be supported to further promote the participation of women in the National Society's national and branch disaster response teams and in programming.

The **Australian Red Cross, British Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross and Kuwait Red Crescent Society and Turkish Red Crescent** will also support the Afghan Red Crescent Society in these initiatives.

## ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS

The Afghan Red Crescent Society is committed to pursuing institutional strengthening and carried out the self-assessment part of the Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification ([OCAC](#)) process in 2018. The self-assessment is intended to capture the strengths and weaknesses of National Societies as a whole in relation to a wide range of organizational capacities. The Afghan Red Crescent Society is also committed to the Preparedness for Effective Response ([PER](#)) process and is at the action and accountability phase. The PER approach is a continuous and flexible process that enables National Societies to assess, measure and analyze the strengths and gaps of its preparedness and response mechanism, and ultimately take necessary action to improve it.



### Strategic and operational coordination

#### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Engage with public authorities through formal agreements and partnerships to address health and disaster-related issues collaboratively
- Strengthen coordination with authorities, humanitarian communities and donors
- Focus on resource mobilization

#### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will provide support to the Afghan Red Crescent Society in the implementation of its Strategic Plan and the development of an operational plan. It will also assist the National Society in engaging with key stakeholders and coordinating with public authorities, the humanitarian community and donors, as well as with Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners.



## National Society Development

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### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Strengthen constitutional and legal base for principled humanitarian service delivery
- Develop youth leadership skills and increase engagement
- Strengthen local branches for community support
- Focus on volunteer development and effective engagement strategies
- Provide project management training for staff

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the Afghan Red Crescent Society in strengthening its response capacity and organizational development. It will guide the National Society in the development of its National Society development plan, facilitate skill development for staff and volunteers and assist in increasing its material capacity for sustainable services. The IFRC will also provide support to the Afghan Red Crescent Society in strengthening the capacity of its zone offices and branches.



## Humanitarian diplomacy

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### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Finalize a comprehensive [humanitarian diplomacy policy](#) to position itself as a leading local humanitarian actor in

Afghanistan, aimed at attracting medium- to long-term donor financing

- Improve its legal foundation and auxiliary role
- Develop a comprehensive communications strategy
- Promote its work in local and international media and disseminate stories that emphasize its impactful work as well as humanitarian needs
- Advocate with diplomatic missions and donor institutions to highlight humanitarian and development needs, influencing policy and funding allocation decisions for affected populations
- Leverage its position as a principled humanitarian organization to engage and influence communities in adopting safer health behaviours

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the Afghan Red Crescent Society to develop its humanitarian diplomacy and engage decision-makers, international partners and community organizations. It will provide technical support to the National Society to improve its communications capacity and to develop emergency communications. Additionally, the IFRC will support the National Society to continue engagement with authorities under the legal status agreement and foster respectful discussions to influence decisions and uphold the Afghan Red Crescent Society's auxiliary role.



## Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

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### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Streamline safeguarding initiatives through its newly established risk management, compliance and safeguarding unit
- Develop a policy for protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and translate relevant training materials into local languages

- Develop a common accountability framework for compliance
- Institutionalize fraud and corruption prevention practices, reinforce awareness on [integrity](#) and maintain training tracking systems
- Update the risk register quarterly and escalate significant risks to regional and global levels
- Focus on improving financial management capacity
- Engage third-party monitoring and expand feedback mechanisms

- Strengthen planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) capacities, and implement centralized data management systems
- Advance digital capabilities in governance, management, accountability systems, branch development as well as resource mobilization

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will provide support to the National Society in improving its business processes, submitting annual externally

audited financial statements and improving its financial management and accountability practices. Support will also be provided to the Afghan Red Crescent Society in integrating a risk management culture and developing a framework for identifying and assessing challenges effectively, alongside regular updates to the risk register. Additionally, the IFRC will support the National Society in the establishment of a data management system for decision-making and reporting.

## THE IFRC NETWORK

### The IFRC

The IFRC has had a country delegation in Afghanistan since 1990. It supports the National Society in disaster and crisis humanitarian operations, primary health care and immunization services, and longer-term resilience-building programmes. It coordinates the activities of IFRC network partners, represents the Afghan Red Crescent internationally, and supports its organizational development. It also supports accountability as a cross-cutting theme. In recent years IFRC supported the Afghan Red Crescent Society through a number of Disaster Response Emergency Fund (IFRC-DREF) and Emergency Appeals operations in relation to floods, droughts and earthquakes.

For the complex emergency operation, the IFRC provided membership coordination, and other services for the operation such as procurement, transportation, accommodation and security management services. It has also engaged two

financial service providers, which channel cash transfers to community members. A quality and accountability team has been put in place to ensure that community engagement and accountability measures are applied for close monitoring of implementation, and to enhance measures that will improve organization-wide performance. The IFRC is strengthening compliance and risk management activities, through the recruitment and empowerment of a talented, diverse and inclusive team.

The IFRC is supporting the National Society in joint advocacy, humanitarian diplomacy, and coordination with the authorities and other humanitarian actors – to ensure that humanitarian crises in Afghanistan are profiled. Collaboratively, they will also seek to influence policy and investment decisions, to ensure they address humanitarian needs.



Afghan Red Crescent Society providing humanitarian assistance to people impacted by climate and environmental crises, in January 2024 (Photo: IFRC)



## IFRC membership coordination

IFRC membership coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situations and needs; agreeing on common priorities; jointly developing common 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 in support of people in need, incorporate clarity of humanitarian action, links with development assistance, and efforts to reinforce National Societies in their respective countries, including through their auxiliary role.

The IFRC provides the membership with strategic coordination. In-country partners have been engaging within the framework of IFRC's Agenda for Renewal's "Way of Working" and will continue to do so going into 2025 and beyond.

An Emergency Response Taskforce is responsible for developing and monitoring the Afghan Red Crescent Society's operational strategy, with the National Society at the centre and the IFRC providing strategic coordination of the IFRC's membership. IFRC and Afghan Red Crescent Society also

maintain frequent partners' calls with participating National Societies to keep them updated on the current humanitarian context and operational situation on the ground and to highlight any new risks in security or operations.

The Afghan Red Crescent Society receives support from 11 National Societies:

**American Red Cross, Austrian Red Cross, British Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross Society, Hong Kong Red Cross Branch of the Red Cross Society of China, Danish Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, Irish Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross Society, Red Cross of Monaco, The Netherlands Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross, Singapore Red Cross, Qatar Red Crescent Society.**

Strong support from IFRC network partners ensures that the National Society receives financial, material and technical support at a local level. The **Danish Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Qatar Red Crescent Society** and **Turkish Red Crescent** all have a physical presence in Afghanistan. These partners bring a long-standing country knowledge and expertise in protracted crises, enabling them to work together to address the country's humanitarian challenges.

## Movement coordination

The Afghan Red Crescent Society 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](#). A Movement Coordination Agreement (MCA) was signed in June 2024.

**The ICRC** works in collaboration with the Afghan Red Crescent Society 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.

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## Coordination with other actors

The Afghan Red Crescent Society 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 Society 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 diplomatic missions and key stakeholders based in Kabul – or whose missions to Afghanistan are in Doha, Islamabad and other capitals – keep

them informed about latest developments within the IFRC network. IFRC presents the Afghan Red Crescent Society'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 Society 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.



**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 16 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.

## About the plan

The plan reflects the priorities of the host National Society, the IFRC and National Societies providing international support, for 2025 and subsequent years. It is aligned with [IFRC Strategy 2030](#), representing the collective ambitions of the IFRC membership, and is the result of a joint planning process and will serve for joint monitoring and reporting. It will be revised on an annual basis to adjust priorities and funding requirements to the needs in-country.

## Explanatory note on funding requirements and definitions

- The total funding requirements show what the IFRC network seeks to raise for the given year through different channels: funding through the IFRC, through participating National Societies as bilateral support, and through the host National Society from non-IFRC network sources. All figures should include the administrative and operational costs of the different entities
- Host National Society funding requirements not coming from IFRC network sources can comprise a variety of sources, as demonstrated when reporting on income in the [IFRC Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)
- Participating National Society funding requirements for bilateral support are those validated by respective headquarters, and often represent mainly secured funding
- IFRC funding requirements comprise both what is sourced from the IFRC core budget and what is sought through emergency and thematic funding. This includes participating National Societies' multilateral support through IFRC, and all other IFRC sources of funding
- Figures for the years beyond 2025 most often represent partial requirements that are known at time of publication. Many National Societies have annual internal approval processes for funding requirements, and lower figures do not mean a decrease in funding requirements in future years
- Missing data and breakdowns: data may not be available from all IFRC network members for funding requirements. This may lead to inconsistencies across different reporting tools as well as potential under-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) 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
- **Definitions:**
  - » **Local units:** ALL subdivisions of a National Society that coordinate and deliver services to people. These include ALL levels (provincial, state, city, district branches, sections or chapters, headquarters, and regional and intermediate offices, as well as community-based units)
  - » **Branches:** A Branch has its roles, responsibilities and relationship with the National Headquarters defined through the National Society's Statutes, including the level of autonomy given, especially in the area of its legal status, mobilising local resources and building local partnerships, and the decisions it makes. It has a local-level decision-making mechanism through its Branch members, board and volunteers, equally defined through the National Society's Statutes

## Additional information

- [IFRC network country plans](#) • [All plans and reports](#)
- Data on National Societies on [IFRC Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)
- Live data on active emergency operations on [IFRC GO platform](#)
- Live data on [IFRC-Disaster Response Emergency Fund Response and Anticipatory pillars](#)
- [Evaluations and research databank](#) • [Donor response reports](#)

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