



Afghanistan: Facts and figures – January to December 2016

The ever growing needs of the Afghan population suffering from the conflict has been exacerbated by the shrinking access of humanitarian aid workers in numerous parts of the country. Intensification of conflict related violence, growing insecurity, lack of access, attacks on health facilities and health workers, are among the main issues that have made 2016 a difficult year for Afghan people and the humanitarian community. Despite it all, the ICRC has remained true to its commitment to the people of Afghanistan, as it has throughout the last 30 years of its continuous presence in the country.

The ICRC's work in Afghanistan focuses on visiting detainees to monitor their living conditions and treatment as well as on assisting people affected by the ongoing conflict, by providing basic aid and medical care, improving access to water and sanitation, reconnecting families separated by conflict and working in cooperation with the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS).

Visiting detainees and maintaining family contact

In 2016, the ICRC:

- carried out 130 visits in 35 detention centres (housing over 30,617 detainees);
- visited 1,682 people in detention, arrested in relation to the conflict, of whom 1,214 were visited for the first time;
- exchanged over 10,915 Red Cross messages between detainees and their families, with the support of the Afghan Red Crescent Society;
- helped families of detainees in the Afghan National Detention Facility in Parwan to re-establish and maintain contact with relatives through more than 11,358 phone calls and more than 4,772 family visits;
- organized 85 family visits for detainees held in Pul-i-Charkhi prison;
- received 389 queries from families about arrested out of which 260 cases were successfully solved and received 426 queries about 972 people sought by their families;
- facilitated the transfer of more than 1,355 mortal remains of fighters and civilians to their families.

Supporting health care

In 2016, the ICRC:

- transported 1,542 war-wounded patients to medical centers;
- Organized first aid training for 1,752 persons in direct contact with wounded people;
- Provided first aid and stabilization material (1,929 war wounded packages for 30 major to 300 minor Wounded) to first aid workers and health staff in direct contact with weapon-wounded people;
- supported Mirwais and Sheberghan Hospitals, which admitted 72,767 patients to their surgical, medical, obstetrics and gynecology wards, carried out surgical operations on 22,324 patients and provided 429,490 outpatient consultations;
- deployed a mobile surgical team to support five different hospitals (Ghazni, Farah, Maimana, Jalalabad and Kabul) over a three weeks period, with the provision of theoretical and on-job training sessions, donation of various medical materials and direct participation in the care (surgeries, nursing care and physiotherapy);
- sent different expatriate specialists to train and built capacity of health partners: a pair of emergency specialists were present in Sheberghan hospital for two months to train the staff of the emergency department. In Mirwais Hospital, a team of four specialists (one midwife, one gyneco obs, one pediatrician and one paediatric nurse) came to strengthen the gyneco obs and paediatric departments, as well as several specialists (including X-ray technicians, bio-med engineer), all those with continuous support to the management of the hospital;

- donated drugs, disposables and medical equipment, and provided organization and support for training, on the job training, and financial and managerial support to 47 ARCS clinics. In those clinics, over 914,461 outpatient consultations were performed and more than 420,282 doses of vaccine for childhood diseases administered;
- carried out 274 visits in 10 detention centers (housing approximately 24,719 detainees);
- provided technical, financial support and medical supplies to the Ministry of Public Health's clinic for detainees in Kandahar and Herat Provincial Prisons. 42,779 curative consultations were organized in those prisons;
- supported the Scabies and Vector control campaigns in three detention centers (housing approximately 3,793 detainees).

Providing limb-fitting and physical rehabilitation services

In 2016, the ICRC:

- registered 9,753 new patients, of whom 1,317 were amputees;
- assisted a total of 136,280 patients in the seven ICRC Ortho Centers;
- made 20,455 prostheses and orthoses;
- provided 284,075 physiotherapy treatments to patients;
- granted micro-credit loans to 505 patients to start their own small business ventures;
- facilitated vocational training for patients. 194 graduated in 2016, and 189 are ongoing;
- made 7,685 home visits through the Home Care program, which is assisting 1,834 patients with spinal cord injuries, and train their families.

Providing assistance

In 2016:

- 152,656 displaced people (21,808 households) met some of their immediate needs through National Society/ICRC-supplied household essentials and one month's worth of food rations;
- about 32,000 detainees in 88 places of detention improved their living conditions with ICRC supplied materials like blankets, patous and socks in order to help them cope with the harsh winter;
- 1,148 vulnerable households supported themselves and their families (8,036 people) by repairing vital infrastructure, such as irrigation canals and roads in exchange for cash. The improved facilities enabled the wider community to boost their food production and incomes;
- using ICRC-provided supplies, equipment, tool kit and training, 232 agricultural/pastoral farmers (benefiting some 1,692 people) resumed their income- and food-generating activities;
- with the help of deworming and treatment programmes facilitated by ICRC-equipped veterinary workers, some 24,614 households benefited from healthier and more productive livestock;
- about 235 livestock farmers (1,645 people) benefited from ICRC livestock vaccination programme in the Northern region aimed at improving the livestock health and production, all together a total of 182,000 cattle, sheep and goats vaccinated against foot and mouth disease and Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR);
- in addition, ICRC supported 94 veterinary workers who provided services to enable pastoral farmers as well as nomadic herders to benefit from healthier and more productive livestock;
- some 642 vulnerable (primarily female headed) households increased their income by selling the animal products from poultry and sheep provided by the ICRC;
- the ICRC assisted victims of IHL violations and/or their families (289 households/2'794 people), helping offset the financial consequences of the violation and cover their needs; for example, for food and other essentials, medical treatment, and funeral costs.

Improving water and sanitation services

In 2016:

- more than 125 Water Management Committees (WMCs) have been trained in the basic operation and maintenance of the systems, and 2,566 hand pumps (theoretically serving 359,320 people living in 10 districts of 9 provinces) have been repaired, with an increase of 10% compared to the previous year. Additionally 5,345 people benefited from the improvement of hand-dug wells, or renovation of distribution networks;

- living conditions for detainees and prison staff have improved following ICRC repairs in Kabul's Pol-e-Charkhi (PiC) Central Prison, benefitting nearly 10,000 detainees, as well as for over 1,000 detainees in Helmand's Provincial Prison who now have access to improved kitchen facilities. In addition, around 800 detainees in Herat Provincial Prison and 500 in Khost Provincial Prison benefit now from improved water supply;
- continued progress with several engineering activities to improve conditions for patients and staff of the ICRC-supported Mirwais Regional Hospital (MRH) with 550 beds (after the renovation of the structure to house the paediatric and neonatal facilities has been completed), and Sheberghan Provincial Hospital (SPH) with 150 beds. In MRH, the renovation of Centralized Dispensary (former Laundry) continued and the refurbishment of the Female Wards K&L (former Paediatric Department), with approx. 850 m² of hospital floor area, started. In SPH, the construction of a new emergency ward continues. It is anticipated to take approximately 4 more months. The improvement of the water supply systems in Jalalabad Regional Hospital (JRH) with 600 beds, located in the capital of Nangarhar province, and improvement of the water supply system improvement Ghazni Provincial Hospital (GPH) with 120 beds, located in the capital of Ghazni province is on-going.

Working in partnership with the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS)

In 2016:

- the ARCS, with ICRC support, trained 17 ARCS staff and volunteers on the Safer Access Framework (SAF) to disseminate the SAF approach and mitigate security risks for staff and volunteers in the field. Further on, ARCS SAF trainers conducted 14 SAF awareness sessions for 364 ARCS staff and volunteers;
- the ICRC supported ARCS through a SAF workshop to assess gaps and challenges pertaining to ARCS acceptance, security and access to beneficiaries, and plan concrete action to reduce the security risks the ARCS faces when carrying out its humanitarian activities in a conflict environment;
- the ARCS shared its experience and good practice on the SAF with National Societies from Asia Region during the SAF and Health Care in Danger round table in Colombo;
- the ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies supported ARCS to organize a partnership meeting in Doha for 11 Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. During the meeting, ARCS presented its new Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 and explored, with partner National Societies, possibilities of supporting the ARCS to carry out its humanitarian activities for vulnerable beneficiaries in Afghanistan.

Promoting compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL)

In 2016, the ICRC conducted briefings on international humanitarian law (IHL) for more than 40,660 people, including:

- Members of civil society;
- Community elders;
- People benefitting from our work;
- Religious scholars;
- Political authorities;
- Afghan army personnel;
- National police personnel;
- Personnel of local police;
- Personnel of the National Directorate of Security;
- Members of the armed opposition;

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