



THE ICRC IN AFGHANISTAN



WHO WE ARE

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) protects and assists people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence worldwide. Our programmes in Afghanistan are designed to mitigate the direct and indirect consequences of decades of armed conflict and new occurrences of violence on people's daily lives, as well as to restore or improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable. In addition to providing direct support in times of emergency, we also engage in humanitarian dialogue with influential people and organizations and partner to create and organize training programmes.

Whenever possible, we employ sustainable approaches in our operations, such as working with communities to come up with

environment-friendly and climate-smart solutions to make the best use of limited land, water and other resources.

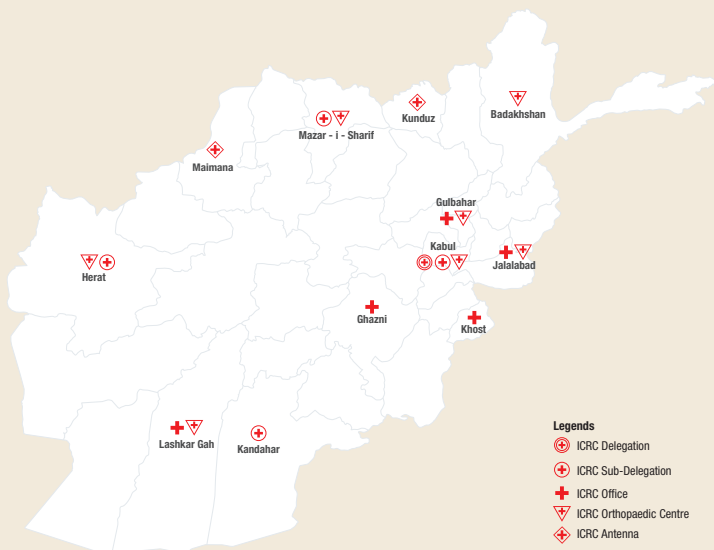


OVER 40 YEARS IN AFGHANISTAN

We started working in Afghanistan in 1979, providing assistance to the war-wounded and to those who were displaced by the conflict in Afghanistan and in Peshawar and Quetta. We established a permanent delegation in Kabul in 1987.




WHERE WE WORK





WHAT WE DO


SUPPORT HEALTH CARE


We assist health authorities with material, financial and technical support to continue providing access to health services to the people of Afghanistan. We raise awareness and support actions that uphold respect for health-care workers, patients, facilities and transport used for medical purposes. These measures ensure prompt and appropriate medical care. Our programmes include:


 support to 47 ARCS-managed primary-health-care facilities across the country through training, medicines and consumables, support to specialists, and renovation.

 support to ARCS emergency response teams during natural disasters, outbreak of diseases and other health emergencies.

 first-aid training for first responders to treat injuries in a prompt and safe way.


 first-aid training-of-trainer workshops to build sustainable training capacity of first responder groups.


 support to emergency departments of select hospitals for water and energy supply, besides donating emergency room equipment and medical supplies to help them manage an unexpected influx of injured people.


 providing medical items to health facilities for their emergency response to mass casualty incidents.




To ensure the long-term sustainability of health-care staff, we also provide technical, financial and training support in the following ways:

 we support the Ghazanfar Institute of Health Sciences, Kabul, and its eight branches with running costs, materials for training, oversight and curriculum reviews, as well as food for students (male and female).

 we strengthen the clinical competencies of health-care workers in providing triage and emergency room care in select hospital emergency departments so that patients get timely care.

 we work with the health authorities' internal training department, training schools and emergency response and preparedness department to strengthen the training capacity of emergency departments.

 we provide training in nutrition, pharmacy administration, leadership and management, Health care in danger (HCiD) and maternal-child health for primary-health-care staff in ARCS clinics.

PHYSICAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

We provide technical and management skills training at seven physical rehabilitation centres. We also help to improve their infrastructure to be sustainable and easily accessible for both the staff and patients. Some of the highlights of our programme are:



providing prosthetic and orthotic services and physiotherapy services for tens of thousands who have lost their limbs or suffer other disabilities.



providing rehabilitation services and assistive devices for children with disabilities in particular club feet and cerebral palsy.



promoting social reintegration of people with disabilities through vocational training, microcredit loans, sports and education for children with disabilities.



visiting paraplegic patients' homes to provide physiotherapy as well as to advise their families on how best to care for them.



providing management support to the physical rehabilitation centres in Kabul, Jalalabad, Gulbahar, Faizabad, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat and Lashkar Gah.

PROTECTION OF PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR LIBERTY

We have been visiting detention facilities in Afghanistan for over 40 years in compliance with our humanitarian mandate. Central to the ICRC's detention-related activities is the confidential and bilateral dialogue that we have maintained with detaining authorities. This dialogue promotes humane living conditions for detainees and the dignified treatment of people deprived of their liberty, including their contacts with families.

Some highlights of our programme are:



regular visits to places of detention under different authorities where, through discussions with the authorities and detainees as well as through our observation, we gauge how detainees are held and treated. After each visit, we share our findings and recommendations with the authorities concerned.



supporting detainees and their families to re-establish contact, both in Afghanistan and abroad. In some cases, we facilitate visits of family members to their detained relatives.



facilitating training sessions, workshops and capacity-building sessions for prison staff on general prison management and food chain management.



providing hygiene and winter materials to help detainees. Whenever necessary we also help to repair or upgrade the infrastructure including water and electricity supply systems and sanitary facilities.



providing technical and financial support for the development and implementation of the Prison Health Services programme. We particularly support the provincial prison clinics in Sarpoza and Herat so that inmates have access to medical care. Where needed, we support the authorities to



respond to health emergencies such as disease outbreaks.



assisting both male and female inmates with various kinds of vocational programmes to help them reintegrate into society upon release.



capacity-building of the Office of the Prisons Administration's construction unit and hygiene and maintenance committees of prisons through training and by providing tools and spare parts for maintenance.



PROTECTION OF CIVILIAN POPULATION

We monitor the humanitarian situation and, whenever concerns emerge about respect for international humanitarian law (IHL) and the protection of civilians, we discuss them with weapon bearers confidentially and bilaterally to ensure that they make changes to their behaviour to prevent any abuse of people's rights.

We also talk to community members to better understand their protection concerns and together identify appropriate responses to mitigate the humanitarian consequences.



PROMOTE HUMANITARIAN RULES AND PRINCIPLES

We promote acceptance and support for principled humanitarian action and respect for rules that limit human suffering in armed conflicts and other violence. We raise awareness of basic humanitarian principles and engage with authorities and other parties on issues of humanitarian concern.



RESILIENCE TO WEAPON CONTAMINATION

We help identify, assess and respond to the risks of weapon contamination and minimize civilian casualties caused by explosive ordnance. Our activities include:

community sessions to enhance Risk Awareness and Safer Behaviour.

capacity-building of Afghan Red Crescent Society volunteers to spread preventive messages.

providing assistance to lessen the financial strain on families impacted by weapon contamination. Some victims or families receive cash grants to help start small businesses and earn their livelihood.



RESTORING AND MAINTAINING FAMILY LINKS

In cooperation with the Afghan Red Crescent Society, we trace family members separated by armed conflict, other violence, natural disasters or migration to clarify their fate and whereabouts.

The Restoring Family Links services also help restore and maintain family contact through different means such as Red Cross messages (containing brief family news) and video calls. When needed, we also facilitate the reunification of separated children with their family members.



DIGNIFIED MANAGEMENT OF THE DEAD

We work in coordination with different parties for the dignified management of the dead. Our work includes:



strengthening the technical capacity of the medico-legal services and other parties involved in the recovery and identification of victims.



strengthening of medico-legal services through donation of material or by upgrading and repairing morgues.



supporting the Afghan Red Crescent Society in retrieving and transferring the mortal remains of violence-related victims.



ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNITIES

We help vulnerable communities meet their basic needs, rebuild their livelihoods and develop resilience. Our support includes:



multipurpose cash grants for the most vulnerable families to meet their basic needs and prevent harmful coping mechanisms.



cash grants to help small-scale farmers affected by years of conflicts and droughts resume farming. We also provide training on resource management and best planting

practices to build communities' resilience against climate shocks.



cash-for-work projects, providing income opportunities and restoring essential infrastructure for irrigation and protection of land.



cash grants for pregnant and lactating women to afford a nutritious food basket and prevent malnutrition. In addition, a community-based referral system to competent health services is established for undernourished children and women.



WATER AND ENERGY TO AFFECTED AREAS

We help to improve access to clean water and electricity for vulnerable communities in both rural and urban areas, boosting people's sense of well-being, ability to earn a livelihood and protecting their dignity. We help set up water management systems that prioritize conservation, reduce wastage and address the negative impacts of water scarcity and climate change. Some highlights of our activities include:



working closely with the communities in rural settings and with the authorities on projects such as construction of new solar-powered systems, household bio-sand filters and repair and maintenance of faulty handpumps, enhancing local expertise to improve the water system and help communities manage the water resource in the face of climate change.



supporting authorities to improve the management of water resources by installing chlorine dosing pumps, contributing to water supply continuity and installing pumping units, renovating and expanding water networks and incorporating sustainable energy methods by connecting water stations to the grid and renewable energy sources. By





providing necessary spare parts, tools and equipment for maintenance, we ensure the long-term viability of the urban water service.



helping improve the quality of the power service by supplying consumables, spare parts, transformers, and generators and providing assistance in building distribution powerlines that supply electricity to vital infrastructure such as water stations and hospitals.



helping restore electricity and water supply systems during emergency.



PARTNERING WITH AFGHAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

Building on the experience and capacity of the Afghan Red Crescent Society to respond to emergencies and crises following years of conflicts and natural disasters, we work towards preparing the National Society for new challenges.

The following are some of our activities:



enhancing the National Society's institutional and operational capacity, including support for the National Society Development plan, financial support, induction programmes, train-the-trainer

workshops and on-the-job coaching tailored for staff at both its headquarters and branches.



strengthening security risk management practices by establishing security protocols, enhancing the capabilities of staff and volunteers, ensuring effective radio communication systems and developing standard operating procedures.



capacity-building of ARCS staff and volunteers.



working together on tracing missing people, restoring and maintaining contact between separated family members, providing economic support to vulnerable communities and raising awareness on weapon contamination.



providing financial and technical support during emergencies in coordination with other Movement partners to respond in a timely and effective way.



coordinating with the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) and other partner National Societies to improve coordination mechanisms and develop common approaches and tools for relevant, principled and effective humanitarian response.

OUR PRINCIPLES

The ICRC, the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) and the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) are part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Our work is guided by the following principles:

HUMANITY

We address human suffering anytime and anywhere.

NEUTRALITY

We do not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

IMPARTIALITY

We help those with the most urgent needs, regardless of who they are – civilians, fighters no longer participating in hostilities, or people detained in connection with a conflict or other violence.

INDEPENDENCE

We do not represent any government or international authority and maintain our autonomy so that we are always able to act in accordance with the principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE

The Movement is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by a desire for gain.

UNITY

There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country and it must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

UNIVERSALITY

The Movement, in which all National Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

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