



Afghanistan: ICRC activities, January to March 2016

ICRC Our work in Afghanistan includes visiting detainees to monitor their living conditions and treatment, carrying out other protection work, restoring links between separated families, helping communities affected by the conflict, providing basic first-aid training and medical care, improving access to water and sanitation, promoting international humanitarian law and working with the Afghan Red Crescent Society. The ICRC has been present in Afghanistan for almost 30 years.

Below is an overview of the ICRC's work in Afghanistan during the first quarter of 2016.

Visiting detainees and maintaining contact between separated families

- Carried out 38 visits to 25 detention centres and prisons countrywide.
- Visited and individually monitored nearly 430 detainees falling under the ICRC's mandate, of whom we met 182 for the first time.
- Helped five Afghan ex-detainees to travel home, and facilitated the voluntary repatriation of three foreign ex-detainees.
- Exchanged over 690 Red Cross messages between detainees and their families, with support from the Afghan Red Crescent Society.
- Helped families of detainees in the Prison and Detention Facility in Parwan to re-establish and maintain contact with relatives through more than 3,080 phone calls, over 60 video calls, and more than 1,170 family visits.
- Organized 17 family visits for detainees held in Pul-i-Charkhi Central prison.
- Received 79 queries from families about the arrest or disappearance of relatives and 83 tracing requests from abroad, of which 64 were successfully resolved.
- Facilitated the transfer of more than 290 bodies of combatants and civilians to the families of the deceased.

Supporting health care

- Conducted first-aid training for 626 people who have direct contact with the wounded on the battlefield.
- Provided stabilization materials and 526 first-aid packages to first aiders and health staff in contact with weapon-wounded fighters and civilians.
- Transported 564 war-wounded patients to health facilities.
- Supported Mirwais and Sheberghan hospitals (run by the Afghan Ministry of Public Health) which admitted 17,720 patients to their surgical, medical, obstetrics and gynaecology wards. These two hospitals carried out operations on 5,246 patients and provided more than 110,785 outpatient consultations..
- Provided technical support, financial support, and medical supplies to 47 Afghan Red Crescent health facilities. These facilities conducted over 223,480 outpatient consultations. They also administered more than 118,400 doses of vaccine to protect against common childhood diseases..
- Carried out 71 medical-related visits to nine places of detention countrywide.

- Provided technical support, financial support, and medical supplies to the Ministry of Public Health's clinics for detainees in Kandahar and Herat Provincial Prisons, where staff conducted 9,940 consultations.
- Donated disposables and medical equipment to three places of detention countrywide, delivering 56 different items in all.

Providing limb-fitting and physical rehabilitation services

- Registered 2,500 new patients, of whom 323 were amputees.
- Assisted a total of 33,303 patients in the seven ICRC physical rehabilitation centres.
- Made 5,210 prostheses and orthoses.
- Provided 73,390 physiotherapy sessions.
- Granted micro-credit loans to 132 patients so they could start their own small business ventures.
- Facilitated the vocational training of 196 patients of whom 45 completed their training between January and March.
- Made 2,088 home visits through the Home Care programme, which is assisting 1,695 patients with spinal cord injuries, and provided training to their families.

Providing assistance

- Over 44,400 internally displaced persons from conflict-affected regions received food, blankets, jerrycans, tarpaulins, hygiene items and other household supplies in partnership with the Afghan Red Crescent Society.
- 107 families received cash assistance for emergency medical treatment and funeral expenses for relatives injured or killed in the conflict.
- After receiving training, people from 30 vulnerable families in Helmand were provided with hens and poultry supplies to help them earn an income.

Improving water and sanitation services and infrastructure

- Between January and March 2016, over 89,800 people in rural areas and suburban settlements gained access to water of adequate quality in Balkh, Farah, Faryab, Herat, Kapisa, Kunduz, Laghman, Logar and Paktya Provinces as a result of repairs to hand pumps or the renovation of wells and distribution networks.
- Work has started on the construction of a water tower in Farah Provincial Prison. The tower will be 12 metres high and will have a capacity of 30 cubic metres. Design work has started on a waste water treatment system for Herat Provincial Prison.
- Distributions of soap, cleaning materials, buckets and other hygiene items are on-going in dozens of places of detention throughout the country and will continue until the end of April, benefiting approximately 38,500 detainees and prison staff.
- An extension to the ICRC-built family visitor building in the Prison and Detention Facility in Parwan is under construction.
- In March 2016, the ICRC-built Faizabad Physical Rehabilitation Centre was expanded to include a women's area, a car servicing zone (as an income-generating project) and a wheelchair-friendly basketball court.

- Progress continued on various engineering activities at Mirwais hospital in Kandahar, which is run by the Ministry of Public Health and supported by the ICRC. Construction work on the new laundry building was completed in February; the renovation of the paediatric and neonatal facilities is ongoing,
- In Sheberghan Provincial hospital in Jawzjan, (also run by the Ministry of Public Health and supported by the ICRC), the technical design was completed for the construction of a new emergency ward.

Promoting compliance with international humanitarian law

- Conducted briefings on international humanitarian law for more than 15,000 people, including members of civil society, community elders, religious scholars, representatives of political authorities, national army and police personnel, personnel of local police units, staff of the National Directorate of Security, members of the armed opposition and people receiving ICRC assistance.

Working in partnership with the Afghan Red Crescent Society

- The Afghan Red Crescent Society conducted a two-day Training of Trainers workshop for 17 Afghan Red Crescent staff and volunteers, with support from the ICRC. The aim was to develop awareness of the 'Safer Access' framework, which is designed to mitigate security risks for staff and volunteers in the field.

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