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# Operation Update Report Afghanistan: Drought

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

<b>Emergency appeal n°:</b> MDRAF007	<b>GLIDE n°:</b> <a href="#">DR-2021-000022-AFG</a>
<b>Operation update n° 2; date of issue:</b> 2 September 2021	<b>Timeframe covered by this update:</b> 10 April – 31 August 2021
<b>Operation start date:</b> 10 April 2021	<b>Operation timeframe:</b> 15 months <b>End date:</b> 30 June 2022
<b>Funding requirements:</b> CHF 15 million	<b>DREF amount initially allocated:</b> CHF500,000
<b>N° of people being assisted:</b> 280,000 (40,000 households)	
<b>Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners currently actively involved in the operation:</b> Afghanistan Red Crescent (ARCS) is working with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Participating National Societies with presence in Afghanistan.	
<b>Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation:</b> <u>UN Agencies/IO:</u> United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), and World Bank. <u>Government Ministries:</u> Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL), Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), and Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR). <u>(Intern)national Humanitarian NGOs:</u> multiple (inter)national humanitarian NGOs are either planning or have already commenced their drought response operations. To name a few of them: International Rescue Committee (IRC), Save the Children, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), People in Need, Community Action for Healing Poverty Organization, Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization, Organization for Relief Development, etc.	

## Summary of operation update:

*The ARCS has been implementing the operation according to the current strategy outlined in [Operations Update No.1](#), with the aim to reach drought-affected households in 13 provinces. On 3 August 2021, the IFRC launched a [revised Emergency Appeal](#) with the targeted population increased to 280,000 individuals and the funding requirement to 15 million Swiss francs to support the ARCS in delivering assistance and support to drought-affected households in 15 months. Given recent developments in Afghanistan, drought-affected households have also been impacted by multiple shocks, including displacement. Recognizing the compounding effects of these factors, the ARCS and IFRC have agreed to revise the operation strategy. As such, further revision of the Emergency Appeal – and its related Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) – is underway. The upcoming revision will increase the funding requirements, expand the operation's scope to address multiple shocks (drought and displacement) and the impending winter, increase the number of households to be provided with assistance, and extend the timeframe of the operation. The updated operation strategy will be outlined in the upcoming revised Emergency Appeal, which will be issued before mid-September.*

## A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

### Description of the disaster

Afghanistan is facing a drought, which was officially declared on 22 June 2021. Dry conditions started in October 2020 and affected snow accumulation during winter. Snow accumulation is critical for water access because spring and summer snowmelt of glaciers provides communities with cool, fresh water that is used for agriculture among other needs. This is the second drought to impact Afghanistan in four years. The rain-fed and irrigated agriculture/livestock

are impacted the most. This year, according to the government, the country's wheat crop will be reduced by nearly two million tons and more than three million livestock<sup>1</sup> are in danger of death due to lack of fodder and water.

The compounding impacts of drought and conflict which escalated in July and first half of August have exacerbated the hard living conditions in a country that is also grappling with COVID-19 and poverty. Though COVID-19 cases have reduced in recent weeks, socio-economic impacts of the pandemic will continue to be felt for months, with the risk of new waves still existing. The combination of multiple shocks, including displacement, has resulted in a complex humanitarian crisis that has not only increased vulnerabilities but also severely impacted the living conditions and livelihoods in most part of the country. The impacted populations are relying on humanitarian assistance including food assistance, lifesaving health care, and means to restore and protect their livelihoods. As of early August, around 11 million people are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity due to the combination of conflict, COVID-19, high food prices, and rampant unemployment<sup>2</sup>. These numbers are likely to increase due to developments of recent weeks though data is yet to be confirmed as the situation is evolving.

## Summary of current response

### Overview of Operating National Society

ARCS – the leading local humanitarian organization, auxiliary to the public authorities and with nation-wide outreach and access – continues to implement programmes and operations through its network of 34 provincial branches, including in the 13 provinces covered by this operation. The provincial branches in Badghis, Baghlan, Balkh, Daikundi, Farah, Faryab, Ghor, Herat, Jawzjan, Kandahar, Nuristan, Sar-i-Pul and Urozgan are receiving support and guidance from regional branches and the headquarters in Kabul.

ARCS is closely coordinating with the public authorities, its International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners, UN agencies, and other (inter)national humanitarian actors both at national and sub-national levels. Based on the income received towards this Emergency Appeal, ARCS has so far provided emergency food assistance – using cash as a modality – to 3,500 drought-affected households (approximately 24,500 people) in Badghis, Baghlan, and Faryab provinces. In addition, outside this Emergency Appeal, ARCS has also provided short-term emergency food assistance to 7,670 households (approximately 53,690 people) affected by multiple shocks in four provinces: Balkh, Faryab, Ghor, and Kandahar. The National Society had also completed household-level assessments and selected 2,100 drought-affected households (approximately 6,300 people) to receive emergency food assistance during August. However, distributions have been delayed by challenges relating to accessing money due to disruption of banking services.

In addition to the above, ARCS continues to implement other programmes and operations with support of IFRC:

**Mobile health teams (MHTs):** ARCS is operating 36 MHTs with support of IFRC. The MHTs continue to deliver primary healthcare services in remote districts of Afghanistan. The 36 MHTs are part of more than 140 health facilities operated by ARCS. Between 1 January and 31 July 2021, ARCS reached 1.7 million people with health services delivered by its 46 basic health centres (BHCs), 22 sub-centres (SHCs), 71 MHTs, one hospital, and more than 20,000 community health volunteers. Some ARCS facilities have been re-assigned to assist internally displaced people.

**COVID-19 response:** With support of IFRC and other Movement partners, ARCS is implementing a response to address needs of people affected by COVID-19. Overall, from 1 January until 31 July, ARCS reached 615,345 people with various services including COVID-19 screening and referrals. ARCS is operating a COVID-19 hospital in Kabul which delivered a range of services to 15,850 people between 1 January and 31 July 2021. Over the past four months IFRC has provided ARCS with essential personal protective equipment (PPE), 100 hospital beds with mattresses, 182 oxygen concentrators, 100 oxygen cylinders, 50,000 litres of oxygen and an oxygen generation plant. IFRC is also providing financial support for COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

**Community-Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA):** From 1 January until 31 July 2021, the CBHFA project of ARCS, supported by IFRC, reached 185,690 people (94,704 male and 90,986 female) with health education, first aid, awareness message and referrals.

**WASH in Schools (WINS):** ARCS and IFRC are supporting 12 schools in Herat, Khost, Kapisa, Parwan and Kabul provinces to have access to safe drinking water and appropriate sanitation facilities. The programme is also providing hygiene kits for schoolchildren.

**Response to flooding:** In Nuristan, which in late July was impacted by flash floods that washed away an entire village, ARCS is delivering relief to 4,200 people using 265,440 Swiss francs released from the IFRC [Disaster Relief Emergency Fund \(DREF\)](#). Furthermore, ARCS continues to aid households that were affected by floods that impacted in six provinces (Bamyan, Herat, Panjshir, Sar-i-Pul, Takhar, and Wardak) in May 2021. This is via a [DREF operation](#).

<sup>1</sup> Drought Declaration Message of H.E. President of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, Video Message, 22 June 2021

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/document/ipc-afghanistan-acute-food-insecurity-analysis-report-mar-nov-2021>

## Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement actions in country

The IFRC Country Delegation for Afghanistan, established in 1990, continues to support ARCS in the following: humanitarian operations related to disasters and crises caused by natural hazards; health services in hard-to-reach areas; longer-term resilience building programmes; coordinating support by IFRC membership to ARCS; enhancement of ARCS organizational development; and representing ARCS internationally.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been present in Afghanistan since 1986 and continues to be operational through its main delegation in Kabul, as well as through its field-based offices in Kabul, Gulbahar, Khost, Ghazni, Kandahar, Lashkargah, Farah, Herat, Maimana, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kunduz and Jalalabad.

In addition to IFRC and ICRC, other Movement partners with presence in Afghanistan are Canadian Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Turkish Red Crescent and Qatar Red Crescent.

A Movement Coordination Agreement (MCA) establishes coordination mechanisms at strategic, operational, and technical levels facilitated by ARCS, ICRC and IFRC. Participating National Societies making contributions to Movement activities in Afghanistan are encouraged to endorse and contribute to implementation of the MCA.

## Other Participating National Societies

Red Cross Red Crescent partners who have so far contributed to this Emergency Appeal are British Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, Hong Kong Branch of the Red Cross Society of China, Japanese Red Cross Society, the Netherlands Red Cross, and Red Cross of Monaco.

## Overview of other actors' actions in country

ARCS and IFRC are coordinating with the public authorities, UN agencies and other humanitarian organizations to avoid duplication and build synergies. This includes active engagement in relevant Clusters including the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC). Following official declaration of the drought in June, the wider humanitarian community is supporting response interventions within the framework of the Humanitarian Response Plan 2021. In July 2021, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Afghanistan urged donors to step up support for Afghanistan.

## Needs analysis and scenario planning

### Needs analysis

The analysis presented in Operations Update No. 1 remains valid. A notable change relates to escalation of conflict between July and mid-August, which compounded the humanitarian situation for drought-affected households as some were displaced while access to markets was disrupted. The impact of recent developments on drought-affected households will be determined through assessments, that are yet to be undertaken, since the situation is evolving.

### Operation Risk Assessment

The risk assessment presented in Operations Update No. 1 remains valid. During the reporting period, though, a rise in hostilities made the work of humanitarian organizations increasingly difficult. ARCS retained access across the country, but in some areas, hostilities sporadically affected capacity to move staff and supplies from location to location. This was due to the difficulties and dangers from operating in the vicinity of ongoing hostilities, rather than restrictions imposed by any parties.

## B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

### Proposed strategy

The strategy presented in Operations Update No. 1 is what has been followed by ARCS in implementing the operation to date. The operation is aiming to reach drought-affected households in 13 provinces: Badghis, Baghlan, Balkh, Daikundi, Farah, Faryab, Ghor, Herat, Jawzjan, Kandahar, Nuristan, Sar-i-Pul and Urozgan.

In view of recent developments in Afghanistan, drought-affected households have also been impacted by multiple shocks, including displacement. Recognizing these compounding factors, ARCS and IFRC have agreed to revise the operation strategy. As such, the revision of the Emergency Appeal – and its related Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) – is underway. The revision will increase the funding requirements, expand the operation's scope to address multiple shocks (drought and displacement) and anticipation of winter, increase the number of households to be provided with assistance, and extend the operation timeframe.

The revised Emergency Appeal, to be issued before mid-September, will outline the updated operation strategy.

## C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

	<h3>Livelihoods and Basic Needs</h3> <p><b>People reached: 24,500</b>            Male: 12,495            Female: 12,005</p>	
<b>Outcome 1: Communities, especially in disaster and crisis affected areas, restore and strengthen their livelihoods</b>		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i># of drought affected people assisted through emergency food security and livelihood restoration activities</i>	224,000	24,500
<b>Output 1.1:</b> Skills development and/or productive assets and/or financial inclusion to improve income sources are provided to target population (off-farm livelihoods).		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i>% of beneficiaries reporting their livelihoods restored within three to six months after receiving support</i>	80	0
<b>Output 1.2:</b> Basic needs assistance for livelihoods security including food is provided to the most affected communities.		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i># of households drought affected people of all ages and sex who receive adequate food / cash responses, in a timely manner</i>	12,000	3,500
<b>Output 1.3:</b> Household livelihoods security is enhanced through food production, increased productivity and post-harvest management (agriculture-based livelihoods).		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i># of households drought affected people of all ages and sex who receive adequate food / cash responses, in a timely manner.</i>	20,000	0
<b>Progress towards outcomes</b>		
<p>No major changes from what was reported in Operations Update #1.</p> <p>ARCS had completed household-level assessments and selected 2,100 drought-affected households (approximately 6,300 people) to receive emergency food assistance during August. However, distributions have been delayed by challenges relating to accessing money due to disruption of banking services following recent developments in the operational context. Distributions will be done as soon as financial institutions resume their operations.</p>		

	<h3>Health</h3> <p><b>People reached: N/A</b>            Male: N/A            Female: N/A</p>	
<b>Health Outcome 2: The immediate risks to the health of the affected populations are reduced through improved access to medical treatment</b>		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i># of referrals to medical centres by volunteers</i>	720	0
<i># of beneficiaries treated/assessed for first aid by volunteers</i>	720	0
<b>Health Output 2.1:</b> Improved access to health care and emergency health care for the targeted population and communities.		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i># of volunteers trained in basic first aid and injury prevention in targeted areas.</i>	720	0
<i># of active volunteers providing first aid and injury prevention in the targeted areas</i>	720	0

<b>Progress towards outcomes</b>		
No changes from what was reported in Operations Update #1.		
<b>Health Outcome 4: Transmission of diseases of epidemic potential is reduced</b>		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
% of targeted community's knowledge increased, and they are able to prevent communicable disease by recognition the mode of transmission	80	-
<b>Health Output 4.1:</b> Community-based disease control and health promotion is provided to the target population.		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
# of volunteers trained and mobilized on hygiene promotion, ECV, HHWT, behavioural change communication and COVID-19 prevention	720	-
<b>Health Output 4.2:</b> Transmission is limited through early identification and referral of suspected cases using community-based surveillance, active case finding, and/or contact tracing.		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Intervention is monitored and supervised	Yes	-
<b>Health Output 4.3:</b> Improved knowledge about public health issues among [target population] in [area].		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
# of volunteers trained and mobilized to conduct awareness rising campaigns	720	-
# of households reached with key messages to promote personal and community hygiene	6,000	-
<b>Progress towards outcomes</b>		
No changes from what was reported in Operations Update #1.		
<b>Health Outcome 7: National Society has increased capacity to manage and respond to health risks.</b>		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Coordination with relevant humanitarian actors ensured	Yes	-
<b>Health Output 7.1:</b> The National Society and its volunteers are able to provide better, more appropriate, and higher quality emergency health services.		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Coordination with relevant humanitarian actors ensured.	Yes	-
<b>Progress towards outcomes</b>		
No changes from what was reported in Operations Update #1.		

	<p><b>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</b></p> <p>People reached: N/A Male: N/A Female: N/A</p>
<b>WASH Outcome 1: Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne and water related diseases in targeted communities.</b>	
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b> <b>Actual</b>
% of targeted population have access to clean water, sanitation and with increased knowledge of personal hygiene according to Sphere standards	80      -
<b>WASH Output 1.1:</b> Continuous assessment of water, sanitation, and hygiene situation is carried out in targeted communities.	
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b> <b>Actual</b>
# of assessments/monitoring visits undertaken and shared	1      -
<b>WASH Output 1.2:</b> Daily access to safe water which meets Sphere and WHO standards in terms of quantity and quality is provided to target population.	

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of households provided with jerry cans (2 per HH), water filters (1 per HH) and Aqua tabs	6,000	-
<b>WASH Output 1.4:</b> Hygiene promotion activities which meet Sphere standards in terms of the identification and use of hygiene items provided to target population.		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of volunteers trained on household water treatment (HHWT)	720	-
# of people reached by hygiene promotion activities	42,000	-
<b>WASH Output 1.5:</b> Hygiene-related goods (NFIs) which meet Sphere standards and training on how to use those goods is provided to the target population.		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of households provided with hygiene kits	6,000	-
# of households provided with soaps	12,593	-
<b>Progress towards outcomes</b>		
No changes from what was reported in Operations Update #1.		

	<h3 style="color: red;">Protection, Gender and Inclusion</h3> <p><b>People reached: 24,500</b>  Male: 12,495  Female: 12,005</p>	
<b>PGI Outcome 1: Communities become more peaceful, safe and inclusive through meeting the needs and rights of the most vulnerable.</b>		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
<i>% of affected people disaggregated by sex, age and disability including those with vulnerability who report that they are informed in planning and distribution/services</i>	80 (224,000 people)	24,500 people
<b>PGI Output 1.1:</b> Programmes and operations ensure safe and equitable provision of basic services, considering different needs based on gender and other diversity factors.		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
<i>% of people (reached through the operation) reporting satisfaction from received services disaggregated by sex, age and disability</i>	80 (224,000 people)	24,500 people
<b>PGI Output 1.2:</b> Programmes and operations prevent and respond to sexual- and gender-based violence and other forms of violence especially against children.		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
<i>% of the total 120 staff and volunteers are trained to respond on SGBV/PSEA using SOPs and in child protection activities</i>	70	30
<b>PGI Output 1.3:</b> NS educational and advocacy programmes raise awareness on humanitarian challenges, cultivate humanitarian values and develop relevant interpersonal skills		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
<i># of educational and advocacy events conducted in national society addressing issues of exclusion and discrimination.</i>	3	0
<b>Progress towards outcomes</b>		
No changes from what was reported in Operations Update #1.		

	<h3 style="color: red;">Disaster Risk Reduction</h3> <p><b>People reached: N/A</b>  Male: N/A  Female: N/A</p>	
<b>DRR Outcome 1: Communities in high-risk areas are prepared for and able to respond to disaster.</b>		
Indicators:	Target	Actual

% of the targeted population increased the resilience level and prepared to respond disaster.	80	-
<b>DRR Output 1.1:</b> Communities take active steps to strengthen their preparedness for timely and effective response to disasters.		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
# of ARCS staff/volunteers trained on DRR/CCA & EWS	200	-
% of the targeted population have communities risk knowledge.	80	-
# of sessions conducted in drought affected communities.	50	-
Progress towards outcomes		
No changes from what was reported in Operations Update #1.		

## Strategies for Implementation

**S1.1:** National Society capacity building and organizational development objectives are facilitated to ensure that National Societies have the necessary legal, ethical and financial foundations, systems and structures, competences and capacities to plan and perform

<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i>ARCS capacity building and organisational development initiatives organized</i>	Yes	Planned

**Output S1.1.4:** National Societies have effective and motivated volunteers who are protected.

<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i>National Societies have effective and motivated volunteers who are protected</i>	Yes	Ongoing

**Output S1.1.7:** NS capacity to support community-based disaster risk reduction, response and preparedness is strengthened

<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i># of national/provincial level trainings conducted for staff and volunteers of ARCS</i>	10	6

**Outcome S2.1:** Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured

<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i>Effective and coordinated international disaster response ensured</i>	Yes	Ongoing

**Output S2.1.3:** NS compliance with Principles and Rules for Humanitarian Assistance is improved

<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i>ARCS compliance with principles and rules for humanitarian assistance is improved</i>	Yes	Ongoing

**Output S2.1.6:** Coordinating role of the IFRC within the international humanitarian system is enhanced

<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i>ARCS engage with other humanitarian actors for coordinated humanitarian intervention</i>	Yes	Ongoing

**Outcome S3.1:** The IFRC secretariat, together with National Societies uses their unique position to influence decisions at local, national and international levels that affect the most vulnerable.

<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i>IFRC and NS are visible, trusted, and effective advocates on humanitarian issues</i>	Yes	Ongoing

**Output S3.1.1:** IFRC and NS are visible, trusted and effective advocates on humanitarian issues

<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i># of involvement within the humanitarian system on advocacy for the crisis</i>	TBC	0

**Output S3.1.2:** IFRC produces high-quality research and evaluation that informs advocacy, resource mobilization and programming.

<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
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# of evaluations conducted	1	0
# of detailed assessment conducted	1	0
# of paper/report published (for RCRC)	4	0
<b>Output S4.1.3:</b> Financial resources are safeguarded; quality financial and administrative support is provided contributing to efficient operations and ensuring effective use of assets; timely quality financial reporting to stakeholders		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i>ARCS compliance with financial procedures and reporting requirements improved</i>	Yes	Ongoing
<b>Output S4.1.4:</b> Staff security is prioritized in all IFRC activities		
<b>Indicators:</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<i>Regular monitoring of safety and security of staff members</i>	Yes	Ongoing
Progress towards outcomes		
No changes from what was reported in Operations Update #1.		

## D. Financial Report

The current Emergency Appeal remains severely underfunded with only CHF 856,725 received against funding requirements of CHF 15 million (translating to a 6 percent coverage). The donor response can be accessed at <https://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/Active/MDRAF007.pdf>. All the income received to date has been fully allocated, with a bulk of it already spent on emergency food assistance using cash as a modality. The financial report will be provided in the next operation update. ARCS and IFRC call on partners and the international community to show support and solidarity by contributing to the Emergency Appeal. Funding is crucial to enabling ARCS to deliver urgent assistance to children, women and men who have been affected by the severe drought compounded by displacement and with threat of a harsh winter looming.



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- [Emergency Plan of Action \(EPoA\)](#)

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**For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)**

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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, **encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities** by National Societies, with a view to **preventing and alleviating human suffering**, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.