

SITUATION UPDATE



International Medical Corps staff members distribute blankets to affected families in Samangan province.

On November 3, a 6.3-magnitude earthquake struck northern Afghanistan, with tremors felt as far away as Kabul, as well as in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The quake, with the epicenter between Khulm and Mazar-i-Sharif, caused widespread destruction as families slept. Updated assessments confirm 26 deaths, 1,172 injuries and 3,027 families affected across six provinces, with Balkh and Samangan hardest hit.

According to UNICEF, 874 homes have been destroyed and 2,153 damaged across the affected region, leaving thousands exposed to freezing temperatures and reliant on temporary shelter or the generosity of neighbors. Though major roads remain open, roads in districts such as Feroz Nakhchir, Hazrat Sultan, Khulm, Marmul and Sholgara are experiencing severe structural vulnerabilities.

Assessments from 26 communities reveal significant disruption to daily life: 91 schools and learning spaces have been damaged, 18 water sources are unusable and hygiene conditions have deteriorated sharply, with most communities lacking soap and functional handwashing facilities. Psychological distress among children and caregivers is rising and winterization gaps are widening while temperatures continue to drop. The humanitarian situation is shifting from immediate shock to urgent recovery in the race against winter.

International Medical Corps Response

International Medical Corps has been a trusted partner to communities in northern Afghanistan for more than two decades, delivering critical health and humanitarian services across the provinces of Baghlan, Balkh, Faryab, Jawzjan and Samangan. Throughout this time, we have worked tirelessly to strengthen local health systems, enhance service delivery and ensure that vulnerable populations have consistent access to quality healthcare and psychosocial support, particularly during emergencies and periods of crisis. Our longstanding presence reflects a deep commitment to building resilience and improving health outcomes for those most in need.

Following the earthquake, International Medical Corps swiftly mobilized our mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) teams to provide critical assistance to affected communities in Samangan and Balkh provinces. From November 4–25, our teams delivered a comprehensive package of lifesaving and resilience-building services to address urgent needs and promote well-being among vulnerable populations.

FAST FACTS

- On November 3, a 6.3-magnitude earthquake struck northern Afghanistan, killing 26 people, injuring 1,172 and affecting more than 3,000 families across six provinces. Balkh and Samangan were hardest hit, with nearly 3,000 homes destroyed or damaged, leaving thousands exposed to freezing temperatures and in urgent need of shelter, clean water, healthcare and winterization support.

OUR FOOTPRINT

- International Medical Corps has been operating in Afghanistan since 1984, providing primary and secondary healthcare, training, health education, emergency response, mental health and psychosocial support, nutrition services, protection services, community empowerment, and water, sanitation and hygiene services.

OUR RESPONSE

- International Medical Corps has deployed four mobile teams to deliver essential and comprehensive mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to earthquake-affected communities in Balkh and Samangan provinces. Our teams have provided 351 MHPSS counseling sessions, conducted 2,266 awareness-raising sessions, distributed 200 winter blankets and organized 68 focus group discussions. In addition, we have distributed 2,700 liters of clean drinking water and 347 dignity kits.

During this period, we provided:

- 351 MHPSS counseling sessions, offering individualized psychological support to those affected by the disaster;
- 2,266 awareness-raising sessions, equipping community members with essential knowledge on coping strategies and available services;
- 68 focus group discussions, fostering dialogue and peer support to strengthen community resilience;
- 2,700 liters of clean drinking water, ensuring access to safe hydration in areas where water sources were compromised;
- 347 dignity kits, helping women and girls maintain personal hygiene and dignity during displacement; and
- 200 winter blankets, protecting families from harsh weather conditions and reducing health risks.

These interventions reflect our commitment to addressing both immediate and longer-term psychosocial needs while supporting recovery and resilience in earthquake-affected communities. International Medical Corps remains committed to collaborating with local partners and donors to ensure that vulnerable populations receive the care and resources they need to rebuild their lives.

We maintain strong collaboration with key humanitarian coordination bodies, including OCHA, the Shelter and Non-Food Items Cluster, the Health Cluster, the MHPSS Technical Working Group and provincial offices of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority. Through these partnerships, we ensure that our response is timely, well-coordinated and integrated—delivering essential health services and psychosocial support to meet urgent needs while promoting a holistic approach to recovery for affected communities in Afghanistan.



A staff member conducts an awareness-raising session in Samangan province for affected women.



An International Medical Corps counselor conducts an MHPSS session with a woman affected by the earthquake in Samangan province.