

MERCY MALAYSIA ACTIVATES ITS AFGHANISTAN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN

KUALA LUMPUR, 8 October 2021 – MERCY Malaysia has activated its Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan that details strategic objectives and priorities for the provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan including core relief as well as immediate, mid and long-term solutions.

President of MERCY Malaysia, Dato' Dr. Ahmad Faizal Perdaus said, "Afghanistan is facing escalating crisis in the form of food insecurity, COVID-19 pandemic, and drought conditions that are further exacerbating humanitarian needs. 4.9 million people remain in protracted displacement in Afghanistan as reported by the United Nations. One in three Afghans are facing critical levels of food insecurity and health vulnerabilities. On top of this, more than half of Afghan children under five years old are expected to face acute malnutrition. We have to act fast, out of compassion and humanitarianism."

"MERCY Malaysia's first humanitarian mission in Afghanistan was in 2001, extending emergency medical response in the throes of natural disasters and unrests that forced many of its people to seek shelter in relief camps. MERCY Malaysia believes in the imperatives of the Core Humanitarian Principles where human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found, with particular attention to the most vulnerable populations," added Dato' Dr Faizal.

"At this point in time, the projected funding requirement that would enable MERCY Malaysia to activate the Immediate Phase (6 months) of the Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan is RM2 Million. To date, MERCY Malaysia has RM450,000 in the **Afghanistan Relief Fund** to initiate with local partners in Afghanistan humanitarian aid to vulnerable groups including the internally displaced persons (IDPs). The local partners not only will ramp up urgent response and interventions but facilitate community-based empowerment that MERCY Malaysia has long advocated."

The MERCY Malaysia Afghanistan Response Plan encompasses the following:

1. Food Aid

Core support for the delivery of life-saving emergency food assistance across Afghanistan, providing vulnerable populations with locally, regionally, and internationally procured in-kind food assistance; cash transfers for food; and food vouchers.

2. Healthcare and COVID-19 support

The components under this support include Primary healthcare, COVID-19 Support, Mental health and psychosocial support and Child- and women-friendly space.

3. Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

The current drought has resulted in water scarcity, also causing sanitation and hygiene concerns. Among interventions that would be undertaken include supplying clean water through water tanker at IDP camps, distribution of hygiene kit to affected families and hygiene awareness campaigns.

The MERCY Malaysia Afghanistan Response Plan provides a framework for Immediate response (3 - 6 months), Mid-term response (6 - 12 months) and Long-term response (3 years). To ensure access for efficient delivery of aid, as well as to build local organisations' capacity, MERCY Malaysia is partnering with Afghanistan NGOs, which are members of the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN).

MERCY Malaysia has always taken a community empowerment and capacity building approach in aiding the people of Afghanistan. MERCY Malaysia first entered Afghanistan in 2001. Other than delivering emergency medical response, it also operated the Mother and Child Healthcare Centre in the city of Kandahar that focused on Obstetrics and Gynaecology and reproductive health services which were lacking in the city. The facility was converted to a Comprehensive Health Centre (CSH) to respond to the pressing needs for healthcare services including disease control. CSH employed a staff of nineteen Afghans.

Since then, MERCY Malaysia has provided more than 20 programmes in Afghanistan ranging from Disaster Risk Management Programmes to the setting up of the Kandahar Vocational Training Centre which offered skills training as well as micro-business seeding programme for women. These programmes were operated in collaboration with various local and multilateral organisations.

As a non-profit international humanitarian organisation, MERCY Malaysia relies on funding and donations from organisations and individuals to continue provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable communities.

To support the MERCY Malaysia **Afghanistan Relief Fund**, donations can be made via direct transfer to the MERCY Humanitarian Fund (Maybank 5621 7950 4126) or MERCY Malaysia (CIMB 8000 7929 08).

Zakat and Sadaqah contribution can also be made to the MERCY Humanitarian Fund via Maybank Islamic Account No: 5642 5858 7606

or go to www.mercy.org.my

All monetary donations are tax-exempted.

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