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#### NOTE

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
On:	9 February 2022
To:	Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA)
Subject:	Health conditions in Afghanistan
	- presentation by La Chaîne de l'Espoir

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Following the COHAFA meeting of 9 February, delegations will find in Annex presentation made by La Chaîne de l'Espoir<sup>(1)(2)</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> La Chaîne de l'Espoir (CDE), identification number in the EU Transparency Register: 86799015561-32.

<sup>2</sup> This document contains a presentation by an external stakeholder and the views expressed therein are solely those of the third party it originates from. This document cannot be regarded as stating an official position of the Council. It does not reflect the views of the Council or of its members.

COHAFA 09.02.2022  
Dr Eric CHEYSSON

## Situation Overview : The Afghan healthcare system

*La Chaîne de l'Espoir*

## Afghanistan's fragile health system at risk of collapsing

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## A healthcare system that was already fragile

- 3,500 health facilities that are unevenly distributed, underequipped, understaffed, underfunded.
- Shortage of health workers (8.7 doctors, nurses and midwives per 10,000 inhabitants)
- 70% of the previous government budget came from international aid, on which health infrastructures relied heavily
- Sehatmandi Project (WB, EU, USAID) : 2,300 primary and secondary health facilities
- Regular attacks on health structures (jan –aug 2021 : 38 attacks)



## Major issues since August 2021

- An unprecedented economic and financial crisis : inability for Afghans and NGOs/organizations to access funds
- Suspension of funding from international donors and all on-budget aid to Afghanistan, including the Sehatmandi program
- Unpaid wages to health workers
- Shortage of medical supplies and equipment, fuel and basic necessities
- Population unable to afford health care in the private sector
- Health workforce migration → brain drain with long term impact



Food distribution In Kabul © Oriane Zerah, 2022





Bread distribution in Kabul © Oriane Zerah 2022

## Current health needs

- **18,1 millions** people in need of health care, almost half of the population (OCHA)
- Acute malnutrition crisis, with more than **9 million** people facing famine (OCHA). More than **one million of children** are at risk of dying (UNICEF).
- **Six epidemics** are currently affecting the country: measles, malaria, dengue, polio, acute watery diarrhea and Covid 19
- Women, children and displaced people are the most vulnerable → (OCHA: without support, there could be **10 maternal, 55 neonatal, and 112 child deaths** every day in 2022)



A child treated at the FMIC © Rahim Rakstar, 2022





## The French Medical Institute for Mothers and Children (FMIC) in Kabul



Built in 2002-2005

4 Partners : AKDN, French and Afghan governments

- Phase 1: Pediatrics
- Phase 2: Maternity
- Phase 3: adults

Since its opening, the FMIC has performed :

- 28,730 surgeries apart from heart surgery\*
- 6,022 heart surgeries\*



\*August 2021 data



## Essential role of La Chaîne de l'Espoir

### ❖ Granting access to care for the most vulnerable :

CDE provides fully covered access to surgical care for the most vulnerable (women, children and people from displaced camps) through the Women and Children House  
→ Over **10,000 beneficiaries between 2008 and 2020**

### ❖ Training and formation :

- The CDE also provides training and support to hospital staff → **17,180 health professionals** have been trained since 2006.
- **743 missions** of French and European volunteer doctors since 2006



© Oriane Zerah

\*August 2021 data



### • **Our response to the current health crisis**

1/ Increase in the volume of surgical care activity in the Women and Children House.

2/ Providing healthcare to Afghans living in the Kabul Informal Sett

3/ Implementing **nutrition project**

#### • **Current issues we face**

- Logistical and supplies issues
- 90 staff out of 200 resigned due to migration : brain drain could increase in the coming period
- Funds transfer
- Lack of interlocutors with the current health authorities can lead to misunderstandings and some issues (in the access to free treatment, training programme, training missions...)



\*August 2021 data





# What prospects for the Afghan healthcare system?

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## Race against time : Key issues to address

- Aid from the international community, including the EU and its Member States, must be **massive and sustainable**. **Economic sanctions should not prevent the delivery of care**
- Humanitarian response on health needs used to focus on primary and secondary care → **access to surgical care is also crucial to meet the needs of the Afghan population**
- We must increase efforts on **reaching the most vulnerable populations**, by taking advantage of the relatively stable security situation.
- The international community should ensure **access to health care for women and that women health workers shall be allowed to work, without restrictions**.



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# Together, we can save lives.

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