



The 2014 United Nations Human Development Report, which measures the key dimensions of a population's quality of life, ranked Afghanistan in 171st place out of 188.

Infant mortality in Afghanistan is high, with around 70 deaths per 1000 live births; this ratio is 23 times higher than in Italy. Meanwhile, the mortality rate among children under five is 97 deaths per 1000 live births.

Over the past forty years Afghanistan has been ravaged by conflict, causing high numbers of civilian casualties, many of whom were maimed by explosive devices and landmines. Despite the increasing clearance activities, Afghanistan is still one of the world's most heavily land-mined countries. Currently, the Government only controls a small part of the territory; many of the southern and central provinces experience fighting and bombing on a daily basis. The resulting instability in the country has also produced large numbers of refugees.

In addition, recent estimates indicate that in Afghanistan over 9 million people have limited or no access to health facilities, which are insufficient to meet the needs of the population. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), there are only two doctors, five nurses and midwives, and less than one pharmacist per 10,000 inhabitants. By comparison, in Italy, there are 38 doctors, 54 nurses and midwives, and 11 pharmacists per 10,000 people.

Increasing episodes of violence against healthcare - 119 only in 2016 - produce effects that extend far beyond the moment of the attack and its immediate aftermath. Attacks on medical facilities not only affect the personnel and infrastructure directly targeted, but also the population depending on them for receiving adequate health care.

EMERGENCY began its intervention in Afghanistan in 1999 with the opening of a Surgical Centre for war victims in Anabah, a village in the Panjshir valley. Over the years, the Centre has become the only point of access to healthcare for the population of a very large area, inhabited by about 250,000 people. In 2002, the admissions criteria were expanded to include traumatology, general surgery (emergency and elective), internal medicine and paediatrics.

The hospital compound was expanded to include a Maternity Centre in June 2002. There are no other facilities offering free-of-charge gynaecological, obstetric, and neonatal care in the region.

EMERGENCY staff perform over 1,300 surgical consultations (an average of 43 per day) and over 650 medical consultations (an average of 20 per day) every month. In 2016, 7% of these surgical consultations and 22% of surgical operations were related to war wounds.

Every month EMERGENCY staff perform over 1,800 paediatric consultations and commonly deal with cases of dehydration, gastroenteritis, pneumonia, asthma, tonsillitis, bronchitis, and urinary tract infections. Malnutrition, a consequence of poverty but also of incorrect feeding practices such as bottle-feeding, is also a major problem in the local area.

A new, expanded Maternity Centre has been built in order to accommodate the constantly increasing number of deliveries and admissions registered at the Centre every year. Construction works began in September 2015 and concluded in December 2016 with the Centre's inauguration.

EMERGENCY has also created a network of 18 First Aid Posts (FAPs) and Primary Health Centres (PHCs) to serve the Panjshir, Parwan and Kapisa provinces. Patients in need of hospitalisation or further investigation are transported to the Surgical and Paediatric Centre, or the Maternity Centre, by EMERGENCY's ambulance service.

EMERGENCY's Hospital in Anabah has been recognised as a national training centre for the specialisation in gynaecology, paediatrics, and surgery. In 2016, four residents in gynaecology, five residents in paediatrics and seven residents in surgery - in rotation with Surgical Centre in Kabul - worked at the Centre.

**Activities:** Surgery for war and landmine victims, emergency surgery, general surgery, traumatology, internal medicine, paediatrics.

**Facilities:** Emergency department, outpatient department, 2 operating theatres, sterilisation, intensive care unit, surgical-medical wards, physiotherapy, radiology, laboratory and blood bank, pharmacy, classrooms, playroom, auxiliary facilities, maintenance department.

**Number of beds:** 56 beds

**International staff:** 1 coordinator, 1 surgeon, 1 paediatrician, 3 nurses, 1 paediatric nurse, 1 biomedical technician, 1 logistician

**National staff:** 255 medical and non-medical staff.

**From the beginning of activities to December 2016:**

Outpatient consultations (surgery and internal medicine): **246,853**

Outpatient consultations (paediatrics): **93,267**

Admissions: **41,948**

Surgical operations: **26,762**

**From January to December 2016:**

Outpatient consultations (surgery and internal medicine): **23,706**

Outpatient consultations (paediatrics): **22,578**

Admissions: **3,453**

Surgical operations: **2,447**