

Alert

Pakistan – No. 23/2010

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Thousands stranded by Pakistan floods- ACT Alliance responds

Brief description of the emergency

Since 21 July 2010, widespread and unusually heavy monsoon rains hit most parts of Pakistan and further torrential rain is forecast over the next couple of days. The worst affected areas by the consequent floods are the Rajanpur district of Punjab Province; Dera Ismail Khan, Tank and Bannu districts of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa (formerly known as the North West Frontier Province); and Barkhan, Sibi, Kohlu and Dera Murad Jamali districts of Balochistan province in the south-west. As per the most recent census, Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa has a population of 17.7 million people and Balochistan has 6.5 million inhabitants.

Impact

Most of the land routes linking to the flood affected regions have been disrupted, leaving thousands of local residents marooned or displaced from their homes. Around 150 people have been reported killed in weather-related incidents. Other impacts include the loss of livestock and damage to agricultural crops and fields which will require attention for the recovery of the affected population from this disaster. The total estimated damages and affected population are yet to be determined due to inaccessibility due to rising flood waters and disruption to communication networks. Continuing heavy rains are aggravating the situation in the worst-affected districts.

Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa

Nearly 80 people have been killed in Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa as unusually heavy rains and thunder storms have led to land-slides, floods, electrocution and other weather-related incidents (Reuters, July 29th). Hundreds of houses have been damaged and many roads made impassable due to flooding and landslides. Hundreds of mud-made houses (Kachay Makanat) have been washed away by the heavy rains and floodwaters in tribal areas of the province.

Currently, there are an estimated 60,000 families affected in the districts of Nowshera, Peshawar, Charsadda and Swat. Several towns in Swat are currently isolated from the main city of Mingora due to damaged bridges. It is estimated that flood water levels in Swat vary between 6 to 10 feet deep.

Among the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa, the worst affected areas are Dera Ismail Khan (DI Khan) and Tank. In Tank, the village of Bagwal in Ranwal Union Council has been completely washed away leaving 139 families homeless. Around 300 people were evacuated by the military. The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has carried out a rapid assessment through its district branch in DI Khan where the Union Councils of Band Korai and Kech are among the worst affected. The flood has affected 11 villages in DI Khan. Out of these villages, six have been severely affected and inhabitants evacuated to safer locations (PRCS Assessment Report).

Balochistan

Assessments conducted by partners of ACT Alliance members Church World Service-Pakistan/Afghanistan and Norwegian Church Aid estimate 148,153 people affected in the five worst flood-affected districts since July 21st, as summarised in the table below. This estimate has been confirmed to ACT Alliance by the Deputy Director of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority of Balochistan Province. Around 70 people have been reported killed (Reuters, 29th July):

District	Affected Population	Source
Sibi	40,030	IDSP
Nasirabad	43,054	PEACE & District Revenue
Barkhan	17,132	CRS
Kohlu	45,850	CRS
Bolan	2,087	PEACE & District Revenue
Total	148,153	

Heavy downpours on 28 July washed away the railway tracks in several areas, while all other land routes to the province have cut off. This has further added to the hardship faced by thousands of people including students, tourists and patients stranded in different locations.

Immediate needs

Detailed assessments by one local partner of an ACT member in Sibi and Lehari Districts of Balochistan have identified the immediate need for food, water, tents, and other non-food items (kitchen kits, hygiene kits, mosquito nets) for thousands of people affected. The immediate needs identified by the PDMA and other local organizations in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa also include emergency health assistance.

National and International ResponseNational and Local Government

Pakistan Army together with the district administration have started evacuating people from the heavily flood affected areas. The government also started distributing food items among the affected population. However, the magnitude of the disaster will be beyond the capacity of the government agencies alone.

In Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority has released Rs. 1 million rupees as an emergency fund to handle the situation arising out of this disaster. Since July 28, the Combined Military Liaison Cell has also initiated evacuation procedures for the residents of low-lying areas in Swat. At present, the district administration has issued a mandatory evacuation order due to the continuous rainfall and increase in the volume of water in the Swat River. An Emergency Cell has also been established in the DCO Office in Circuit House.

In Balochistan, the National Disaster Management Authority is closely coordinating with the Pakistan Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) and has released 1,200 tents, 800 blankets and 2,400 plastic mats, which are being collected by the PDMA from Quetta Warehouse. The Army has also provided 9 tons of relief goods, while the civilian administration has also moved 6-8 trucks carrying relief items to the affected areas. Along with troops deployed, the government has deployed four medical teams and 3 military helicopters carrying 1.25 tons of relief goods today (July 29th) to the affected areas for recovery and relief operations.

Communities

The communities in general, have been very cooperative with the government efforts. They have appealed for immediate assistance for food and non-food items.

International and National NGOs

In response to the crisis and in preparation for the potential massive evacuation and relocation of residents, several international and national NGOs have prepared contingency plans and commenced with initial activities to be able to provide immediate and adequate assistance.

The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has carried out rapid assessment in Balochistan and has set up a medical camp in Sultan Kot. It has deployed food packs for 3,100 affected families (21,700 people) for three months with the support of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Another assessment team has been deployed to Punjab and Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. On the request of Rajanpur district government, PRCS has provided 50 tents for the flood-affected people. On request from the NDMA, PRCS has mobilised its teams in the affected areas and shall cater for the food / health care requirements of the affected population (approximately 15,000) for the next 3 months.

ACT Alliance response

Members of the ACT Pakistan Forum, **Church World Service- Pakistan/Afghanistan, Norwegian Church Aid** and **Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe** are coordinating their responses with each other and with the national and provincial level authorities and undertaking assessments with their local partners of the situation and needs.

CWS-P/A has made an internal assessment of available supplies for immediate relief and its Emergency Response Team is on stand-by, ready for deployment. CWS-P/A and NCA are also coordinating their local partners (Taraqi Foundation, NCBP, CRS, SPO and VEER) in the conduct of assessments.

The ACT Secretariat has been informed that a **Preliminary ACT Appeal** is under preparation and will be submitted early next week. Proposed interventions will include emergency food aid.

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to Jessie Kgoroadira, ACT Chief Finance Officer (jkg@actalliance.org).

Thank you for your attention.

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