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Information bulletin

Pakistan: Severe winter

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Glide n° CW-2020-000003-PAK	Date of issue: 20 January 2020
Date of disaster: 11 January 2020	Point of contact: Muhammad Amin, Deputy Director CVA/Disaster Response, Pakistan Red Crescent Society
Operation start date: 13 January 2020	Expected timeframe: N/A
Category of disaster: Yellow	
Host National Society: Pakistan Red Crescent Society	
Number of people affected: 1,700 (245 households)	Number of people to be assisted: N/A
N° of National Societies currently involved in the operation: N/A	
N° of other partner organizations involved in the operation: N/A	

This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), is assessing the evolving situation for a potential activation of Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), pending on the evolution of the current rain, snowfall and landslides, and its impacts in the coming days.

[<click here to view the map of the affected area, or here for detailed contact information>](#)

The situation

Between 11 to 12 January 2020, several parts of Pakistan were in the grip of heavy rain, heaviest snowfall, flash floods, avalanches and landslides. Across the country, 74 people have been reported dead. Among them, 17 in Baluchistan and 57 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The provincial government of Baluchistan has declared a state of emergency in the districts of Mastung, Qila Abdullah, Kech, Ziarat, Harnai, and Pishin.

The heaviest snowfall – two feet – was recorded by the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) in Ziarat, while Quetta and Zhob each received more than a foot of snow. As for the rainfall, 56mm was recorded in Turbat, 40mm in Pasni and 26mm in Pishin.

Due to heavy snowfall, the highways: Quetta-Sibi, Quetta-Karachi and Quetta-Zhob, are blocked. Quetta, Ziarat, Harboi, Kan Mehtarzai, Muslim Bagh, Khanozai and Khojak Pass were blanketed in snow. In District Kharan, Panjgoor and Gwadar heavy rains were reported which resulted in flash-flooding in different areas of mentioned districts.



A public transport vehicle stuck in snow due to heavy snowfall in Baluchistan, January 2020. (Photo: PRCS)

In AJK, the worst affected district is Neelum (extreme north district of AJK) with more than 57 dead and several missing. Gilgit Baltistan, Astor Valley has received a record-breaking snow. The snow has paralyzed life in the region,

with residents in northern valleys restricted to their homes. Authorities say the ongoing snowfall is the heaviest since April 1996. Since the region is cut off from the rest of the country, local hospitals are facing shortage of medicines.

Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) is also in the grip of cold wave. Rain and snowfall continued in Hazara and Malakand divisions, Kohat, Orakzai and Chitral. All access roads to Chitral, including the Lowari Tunnel, are blocked while water and electricity supplies are also disrupted.

PRCS - headquarters team through dedicated volunteers is receiving situation reports from affected districts and delivering First Aid on the spot. The summary of losses in several affected provinces/districts is as highlighted below, whereas rescue/assessments are ongoing at the districts level. Snowfall, heavy rain and landslides have left a significant humanitarian impact with a loss of at least 74 human lives and more than 40 injured with many still missing.

Formal requests by district government through Deputy Commissioners of respective districts including situation of damages possibly with numbers/figures and required support in terms of food and non-food on immediate basis is expected.

Summary of losses in several affected provinces/districts as of 17 January 2020

Provinces/Districts	Deaths	Injured	Houses damaged		Others
			Fully	Partially	
AJK (Neelum)	57	42	47	78	17 shops, 1 mosque, 7 vehicles (LTV), 3 motorcycles. In upper Neelum (Lawat to Tao Butt), the roads are completely blocked for any type of traffic. Electricity and other communication systems are non-functional in upper parts of the valley.
Baluchistan (Quetta, Zhob, Qilla Abdullah, Pishin, Pasni)	17	-	-	-	PIA plane got stuck at Quetta airport on Monday (13 January) due to heavy snowfall and lack of de-icing facilities, road leads to Chamm at Khojak Top is closed for traffic.
KP	-	4	-	-	Links, roads are blocked in upper Swat, Chitral and Upper Dir. Lawari Tunnel road and all link/major roads are blocked due to heavy snow. Electric supply remained suspended. Main Karakoram highway is blocked at various locations.
Gilgit-Baltistan (Astora)	-	-	-	-	-
Total	74	46	47	78	

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

PRCS immediately responded to the incidents by starting their activities since 13 January 2020. The following are some of the key actions that have been taken between 13 to 14 January 2020:

- Collected basic information about the incidents and coordinated the activities with District authorities.
- A message was sent to alert the staff and volunteers at district/provincial level for any possible deployment.
- NHQ NDRT team is on high alert for quick deployment.
- Baluchistan branch coordinated with Provincial District management Authority (PDMA) and while engaging volunteers in the provision of first aid and helping stuck vehicles' passengers.
- Baluchistan branch distributed Non-Food Items (NFIs) from their own stock.
- NHQ coordinated with branches, shared updates and transferred funds for rapid need assessment.
- Coordination with District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Neelum and collection of secondary data.
- Coordination with Tehsil Administration, Tehsil Sharda, district Neelum.
- Coordination with Pakistan Army.

Based on the initial assessment conducted, the needs identified by PRCS are as below:

1. **Shelter and NFIs:** In AJK there is acute need of emergency shelter (winterized) and NFIs for the affected families.
2. **Food Items:** As 47 houses in the area are completely destroyed, and there is extreme need of food packs. The roads are blocked from Lawat to Taobut for every type of traffic which may increase the shortage of food in the affected area.
3. **Health and Wash:** Due to the significant damages of houses (partially/fully) there is need of hygiene kits,

jerrycans, household water filters to reduce the risk of any secondary disaster.



[Click here](#)

1. Click [here](#) to see the map
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Contact information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, **encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities** by National Societies, with a view to **preventing and alleviating human suffering**, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives.
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.

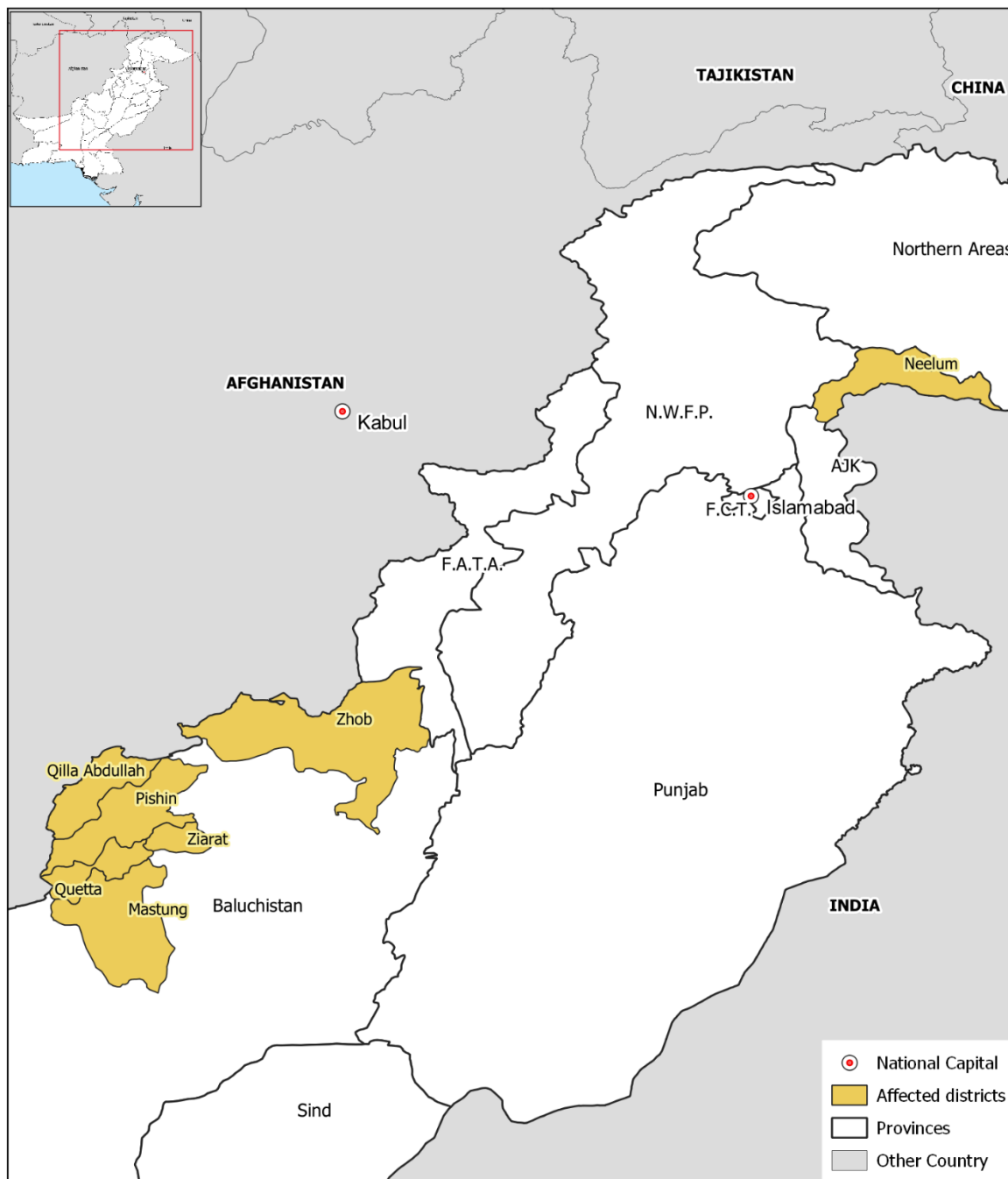


Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace**.



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