

# Information bulletin



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Pakistan: Floods

Information bulletin n° 03  
GLIDE [FF-2008-000123-PAK](#)  
12 August 2008

This bulletin is being issued for information only. One week after monsoon rains throughout Pakistan created floods situation in different parts of the country, flood water in most of the affected communities has receded. The Pakistan meteorological department has predicted scattered thunderstorms and rain in upper Punjab, including Islamabad, upper North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Kashmir, and at isolated places in southern Punjab and southeast Sindh during the next 24 hours.

Relief operations and provision of basic health services by the government and national and international NGOs in the affected areas are currently underway. Top priority at present is the provision of safe drinking water and regular monitoring of water quality, as well as strengthening of Disease Early Warning System in flood affected areas in Peshawar district (NWFP) and implementation of the same in Rajanpur district (Punjab province) to prevent potential outbreak of communicable diseases. The Pakistan Red Crescent Society's (PRCS) national and provincial disaster response teams have completed their assessment and have distributed food and non-food items to affected communities. The PRCS/International Federation health teams have also provided basic health care and treatment to affected people. The PRCS' 2008 floods contingency plan, which was activated, and the formation of an Emergency Operations Committee by the national society, which met regularly following the floods, enabled the joint team of the PRCS, International Federation and partner national societies working in the country to meet the immediate needs of the affected population.

The Pakistan Red Crescent Society, with the support of the International Federation, determined that external assistance was not required, and therefore did not seek funding or other assistance from donors for its flood relief operation.



Pakistan Red Crescent Society personnel distributing non-food relief items in Rajanpur district, Punjab (Photo: Mubashir Fida/International Federation)

## The Situation

Floods have subsided in the most affected areas of Pakistan. The Pakistan meteorological department has predicted scattered thunderstorms and rainfall in upper Punjab, including Islamabad, upper North West Frontier Province (NWFP), Kashmir, and at isolated places of southern Punjab and southeast Sindh during the next 24 hours. Several families who were rendered homeless by the floods continue to stay on roads and other safer places. Safe water supply remains a problem. Relief operations by the government and NGOs are currently underway, providing families with food and non-food relief items, clean and safe drinking water as well as basic health services.

### Punjab

The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS)/International Federation national disaster response team, which visited affected areas has reported that the floodwater has started receding in the three worst hit union councils in Rajanpur district (Haji Pur, Bakar Pur and Fateh Pur), as well as in the Eozman area hit by hill torrents and in

DG Khan district. The PRCS/International Federation team struggled through floodwater, mud and piles of debris to reach affected communities and distributed 200 packs of non-food items/family kits and 1,000 bags of flour (20 kilograms of flour per bag) to affected families in the areas visited. The non-food items consisted of tents, tarpaulin sheets, stoves, hurricane lamps and jerry cans. According to the team, some of the affected families have gone back to their damaged houses while the rest, whose houses were washed away, have opted to stay on roads or on the banks of irrigation channels.

Irrigation water that was used as drinking water before the floods has been contaminated and is unsafe for drinking. Water borne diseases pose a threat and some people have already been infected with scabies. Health facilities are functional in Rajanpur district. The provincial government and health unit have provided sufficient stocks of medicine and have delivered 200,000 purification tablets in various affected areas. The public health engineering department is working to clean and chlorinate the water storage tanks. A total of 44 medical camps are being run by health authorities in the affected areas. Oxfam and UNICEF are supporting the government with water and sanitation programmes for clean and safe drinking water to contain water borne diseases. While a large part of the agricultural land has been damaged, in particular cotton crops, food security does not pose a problem with the government supplying cooked food and dry rations to the affected families.



**People returning home with relief items distributed by the Pakistan Red Crescent Society in Rajanpur district, Punjab (Photo: Mubashir Fida/International Federation)**

### **NWFP**

Government agencies, along with international NGOs continue to closely monitor the situation in NWFP with 25,000 families or 200,000 people reportedly affected in 130 villages in the northern suburb of Peshawar and in some parts of Khyber Agency. The flood also affected 900 Afghan families living in Khurasan refugee camp, where most of the houses were damaged. To date, the PRCS/International Federation distributed non-food items to 900 families. More relief goods will be distributed to affected families in the coming days. Non-food items consisted of tents, blankets, tarpaulin sheets, jerry cans, hygiene kits, kerosene stove, toilet soap and children clothes.

The PRCS/International Federation has also established one medical team with two ambulances, six medical officers and medicines with the support

of the Canadian Red Cross and German Red Cross. The team attended to 25% of the total load of 3,000-4,000 patients daily and treated 3,522 patients during the first five days. Common diseases treated were diarrhoea and skin infections such as scabies, boils and allergies. The team also gave tetanus toxoids to 44 male with injuries and measles immunization to 10 other patients. In addition, the team distributed 10,000 chlorine tablets and 700 bed nets to the beneficiaries.

The provincial government has identified 18 sites and established their camps from the 10,000 tents provided by UNHCR. The camps are currently being used as relief distribution centres. The local government is providing 2,500 kilograms of cooked rice daily to the affected population. Dry food rations packs are likewise being distributed to beneficiaries. The district government, on the other hand, has deployed seven water tankers in the area to travel long distances to distribute clean drinking water. In addition, UNICEF has installed water bladders in camps (of internally displaced persons) while World Health Organization (WHO) provided two cholera kits and 10,000 chlorine tablets. The provincial health department has formed 11 medical teams consisting of 60 doctors and paramedical staff. National Family Planning and PHC programme has established eight medical camps in the area. Female health workers are providing health education on safe water drinking and hygiene promotion to the affected communities. An alert of Acute Water Diarrhoea (AWD) was received from Putwar Bala area. The alert was investigated by a joint team of WHO, Save the Children and the government health department but no outbreak or increase in AWD was found except for the six sporadic cases. It is feared, however, that communicable diseases could pose a threat in the camps if appropriate preventive measures are not immediately addressed.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The PRCS' NWFP branch carried out distributions for 900 families to date. The relief goods distributed consisted of 900 tents, 1,800 blankets, 900 tarpaulin sheets, 1,000 jerry cans, 300 hygiene kits, 300 kerosene stoves, 6,016 soaps and 400 children clothes. In addition, the NWFP branch has earmarked 500 tents, 2,000 hygiene kits, 500 plastic sheets and 10,000 purification tablets for further distribution. The International

Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will also provide an additional 2,000 blankets for the affected population. The PRCS/International Federation/Canadian Red Cross and German Red Cross health team deployed in the area to attend to about 25% of the total daily load of 3,000- 4,000 patients, has so far treated 3,522 patients during the last five days. Common cases handled by the team were diarrhoea, skin infections and fever. The team also gave tetanus toxoid to 44 males with injuries and measles immunization to 10 other patients. In addition, the team distributed 700 long lasting insecticide treated bed nets to pregnant women and families with children below five years old. A total of 10,000 chlorine tablets were likewise given to beneficiaries.



**A Pakistan Red Crescent Society team distributing wheat flour to affected people in Rajanpur district, Punjab (Photo: Mubashir Fida/International Federation)**

In Rajanpur district, Punjab, the PRCS has distributed 100 non-food items/family kits and 1,000 bags of flour to affected families in three worst-hit areas in union council and in Aozman area. The non-food items consisted of tents, tarpaulin sheets, stoves, hurricane lamps and jerry cans. Another 100 packs of non-food items were distributed to affected families in Taunsa village in DG Khan district.

The PRCS' branch in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) has distributed non-food items to 190 families. The health team assigned in the area has treated and provided medicines to 600 patients. The branch is coordinating with the ICRC for relief distribution and medicines.

In the northern areas, the PRCS has distributed the following non-food items to affected families in Sakardu district: 50 tents, 350 blankets, 100 plastic sheets, 50 hygiene kits, 50 jerry cans, 50 kitchen sets and 50 hurricane lamps.

## How we work

*All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

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