

Information bulletin

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Pakistan: Hunza landslides and floods

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This information bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation. The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) will, however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.

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

Massive landslides hit Hunza (Gilgit Baltistan) on 4 January 2010, sliding two villages into the Hunza river. This resulted in the blockage of the river and the Karakorum highway, thereby creating an artificial dam. According to initial reports, 2,500 people were affected and made to reside in four camps, set up by local authorities in schools/colleges of Altit village or with host families. The Pakistan Red Crescent Society Gilgit Baltistan district branch was among the first organizations to start relief operation in the affected areas. The water level in the dam has been rising at an alarming rate and has now reached 340 feet high.



A local inhabitant of one of the villages that was directly hit by the catastrophe sitting near the sinking grave of his mother. Photo: local website.

The Situation

A series of landslides hit Hunza valley in Gilgit Baltistan province on 4 January 2010. According to local authorities, two villages slid into the river following the landslides. The landslides blocked the Hunza river and created an artificial dam, where water level is rising at a rate of 2.7 feet per day. The total water deposit has reached 340 feet high and the dam has stretched from three kilometres to 15.5 kilometres. Since January, the Frontier Works Organization has been working to excavate a spill way to reduce the risk of massive flooding. According to local authorities, the water is expected to start flowing into the spill way within the next 24 to 48 hours. The critical period is estimated to be between 15-30 May.

Initially the affected people were residing in camps set up by the local authorities or with the host families. Fearing a dam burst, more evacuations from vulnerable villages have started. The initial estimated population to be evacuated after 15 May 2010 is around 11,484 people (9,888 from Gilgit district and 1,596 from Hunza Nagar district).

Apparently, only 25 feet remains to be completed for the water to start flowing into the spill way. However, if the dam bursts, an estimated 25,000 people would be affected.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has been assisting the affected communities from the first day of the landslide disaster through the district branch staff. The PRCS branch responded with immediate distribution of non-food items to 200 families, and following a rapid assessment conducted on 11 January 2010 by the PRCS national headquarters' team with the support of the International Federation, further distributions of food items and jackets to 300 households were undertaken. To date, PRCS-International Federation have provided support to 3,318 individuals. Details are given in the table below;

Phase	Area of operation		Targeted households	Targeted people	Assistance provided
1	Altit	4 camps	253	2,024	Food packs, non food items, medicines, health and psychosocial support programme (PSP) services, restoring family links (RFL) services
2	Ainabad Shishkat	By helicopters boats	80	640	Food items, tents (40) and health services.
3	Altit	4 camps	141	987	Food and non food items.
Total number of households/ people targeted			474	3,651	

PRCS is currently working in close collaboration with the local government District Disaster Management Authority and all other key stakeholders for the smooth running of the operation. The Deputy District Commissioner of Hunza has provided PRCS a storage space in the Boys' Degree College Aliabad, to establish a warehouse for storage of contingency relief items. The stock position at the warehouse is as tabulated below:

Serial no.	Item	Quantity
1	Tents	250
2	Tarpaulin sheets	500
3	Jerry cans	250
4	Hygiene kits	250
5	Hurricane lamps	250
6	Kitchen sets	250

In response to the evolving situation, PRCS Gilgit Baltistan disaster management team is working with volunteers to provide possible assistance to the affected people. The branch has erected 200 tents in Chilmisdass. The PRCS water and sanitation focal person has prepared the plan and budget for providing water and sanitation assistance at Chilmisdass camp. Two PRCS health teams are already providing health support to the internally displaced persons. PRCS national headquarters is ready to deploy medicines for 2,000 individuals for a three-month period. The national society health team has a plan to establish a basic health unit in Chilmisdass near the PRCS internally displaced persons camp. There is a contingency plan to deploy two more health teams in the affected areas if the need arises. The local trained psychosocial support programme (PSP) volunteers are already providing necessary psychosocial support to the affected people. Moreover, the PRCS PSP coordinator is assessing the need for any further PSP intervention in the area.

PRCS, along with the government, is making its utmost efforts to facilitate the population of upper Hunza. For this purpose, government helicopters are operating regularly and boats have been provided in the lake for transportation of daily necessities of life to the population of 25,000 scattered in various villages of upper Hunza.

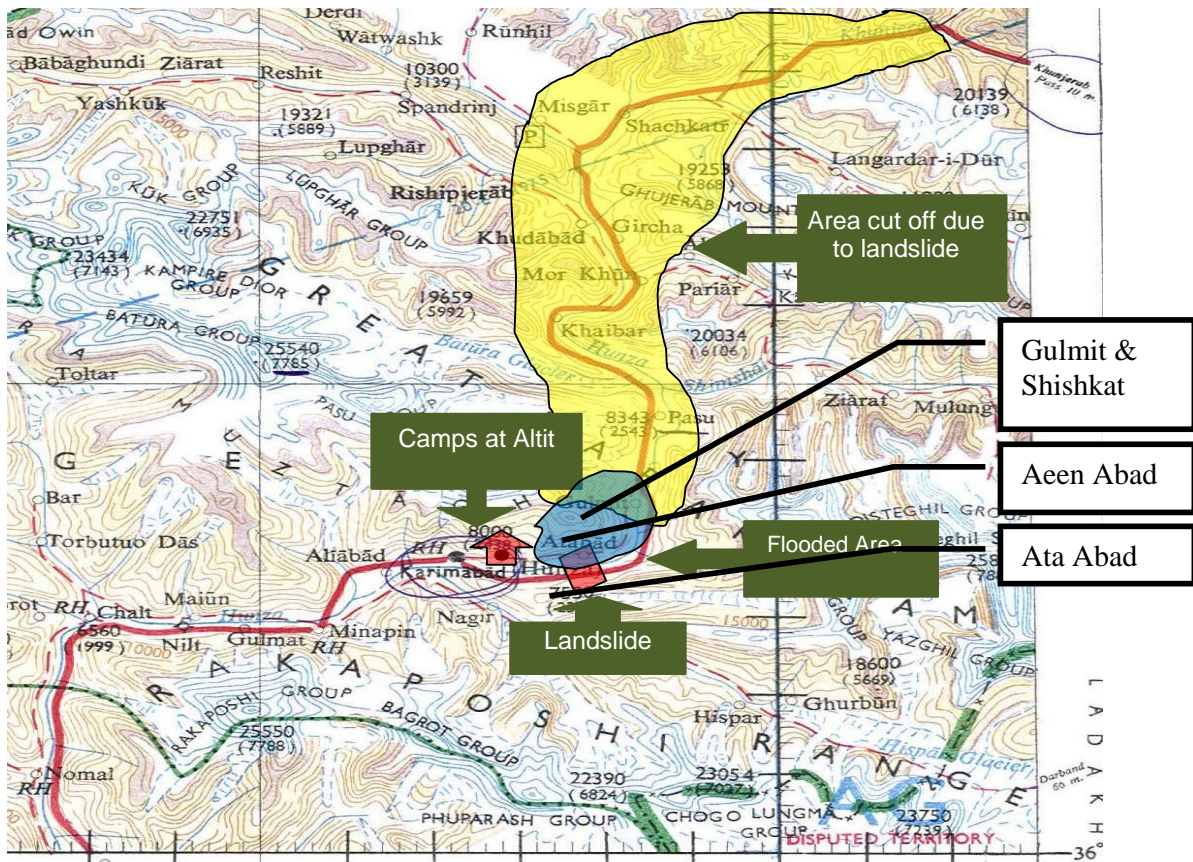
PRCS national headquarters, with the support of the International Federation dispatched 200 food packs to Hunza on 27 April 2010, which were distributed to in-camp Hunza internally displaced persons in Altit. But with the new expected displacements, the need for food and non-food items is still critical.

Gilgit Biltistan disaster management authority (GB DMA) is effectively coordinating the operational response measures incorporating district governments of Hunza, Gilgit and Diamir, Frontier Works Organization, Force Command Northern Areas (the Army headquarters in the region), Agha Khan Development Network (AKDN), FOCUS (part of AKDN dealing with emergency response), PRCS and other humanitarian actors. PRCS was initially assigned a target of catering one village encompassing 195 households (1,538 people) by the district government. However, the actual figure has gone up 253 households representing around 2,000 beneficiaries.



Federal Works Organization working to excavate the spill way. Photo: Local website.

The International Federation's country office is closely assessing the situation and is prepared to extend any support to the national society. Currently, the plans are under process on budget preparation and possible support needed by PRCS in the operations.



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.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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[<map below; click here to return to the title page or contact information>](#)



NASA Earth Observatory image created by Jesse Allen, using EO-1 ALI data provided courtesy of [the NASA EO-1 team](#). Caption by Michon Scott.