

# 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. 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>](#)



Aerial view of PRCS IDPs camp at Chilmisdass Gilgit.  
Photo: Pakistan Red Crescent Society.

**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 latest reports, 20,000 people have been evacuated from the downstream area. To date, 23 camps have been set up to accommodate the 16,000 individuals of Gilgit and Hunza, which were evacuated in anticipation of outburst. PRCS is managing and running one camp with 209 families and supporting three other camps.**

According to the latest update, more than 2,000 people have been registered in the camp established by PRCS at Chilmisdass Gilgit. After being declared a red zone, the Chilmisdass camp shifted to a safe location in a Special Education Institute near the Karakorum University.

Following the land slides, a 22km stretch of Karakorum highway has also been blocked, thereby impeding road access to upstream areas for the last four months. Relief goods were therefore being transported through boats and helicopters to these areas. However, boat services have been stopped due to critical high water levels and the threat of rapid gush out of the lake. There is a critical need of food, non-food items and health services to the upper stream areas, whose estimated population is 25,000 people. The water level continues to rise in the lake and has alarmingly reached a depth of 109 metres. According to the latest update the water has started to overflow through the spillway initially at a rate of 300 Cusecs.

PRCS has been in the forefront of the response and preparedness efforts in all the affected area through its provincial and district branches as well as disaster response cells. Plans are at advanced stage in the Headquarters to define the PRCS operational plans and caseload based on the worst case scenario.

### The Situation

A series of landslides hit Hunza valley in Gilgit Baltistan province on 4 January 2010. According to local authorities, two villages were slid away in the river with landslides. The landslides blocked Hunza River and

created an artificial dam, where water level was rising at initially 2.7 to 3 feet per day. The total water deposit has reached 368 feet and the dam has stretched from 15 km to 22 km. Since January, Frontier Works Organization (FWO) has been working to excavate a spill way to reduce the risk of massive flooding. The spillway has been completed and any excavation work has been stopped now.

Assisted evacuation has taken place from Gilgit and Hunza and around 16,000 individuals have been evacuated from there and relocated to 23 camps at safe location in Gilgit and Hunza. As of 29 May 2010, water has started to flow through the spillway at 100 cusec which is likely to increase to 250-300 cusec as the weather warms up. However, if the dam breaks, more than 41,000 individuals are feared will be affected in Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa (KPK; formerly known as North West Frontier Province).

According to the information shared by the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS)/International Federation assessment team, 25,000 people in the upstream areas are isolated due to the blockage of Karakoram highway. These people are being reached through helicopters operations with necessary relief materials and services. A total of 1,652 people are permanently displaced from two villages around the landslides and another caseload of 924 people from three villages have been evacuated due to the rising water levels in the lake. Around 20,000 people have been moved from low lying and high risk areas. The situation has resulted in the entire socio-economic setup of the affected areas being severely disrupted.

Furthermore, the provincial disaster management authority (PDMA) of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa has notified four Districts with an estimated vulnerable population of 41,300 people. These areas are at risks and are expected to be affected in an event of a dam breach. However, efforts are in progress in shifting the most vulnerable communities to safer areas. With the lake overflow coupled with the onset of the Monsoon, it is highly unlikely, even in the best case scenario (no dam breach and controlled outflow from the Hunza Lake), that the affected population can return to their original areas in the next three months.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

PRCS has been assisting the affected communities from the first day of the landslide disaster through the district branch staff. The PRCS Gilgit Baltistan branch responded with immediate distribution of non-food items to families in January 2010. On 30 April 2010, the district government requested PRCS to establish a camp for affected people. Initially there was a need to accommodate 195 displaced families. However, with changing needs are rising with every single day. PRCS has established internally displaced people (IDP) camp in Chilmis Gilgit. To date, 345 families have been registered and 209 families are residing in the PRCS IDP camp. PRCS has been providing food, non-food items, health services and psychosocial support to the affected people.

PRCS Gilgit Baltistan branch has erected 239 tents in Chilmis.

A survey from Australian Expert declared Chilmis as potential red zone and 209 resident families shifted to another location. A total of 104 families shifted to Special Education Centre (SEC) near Karakoram International University (KIU) and 86 families shifted to KIU Girls Hostel. Nineteen tents have been pitched in the vicinity to accommodate rest of the 19 families. The water and sanitation team is assessing needs and if the situation continues, then latrines and washrooms could be constructed for these 19 families. The in-camp support provided by PRCS, with the support of the International Federation, is tabulated 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 (NFI).
4	Chilmis	PRCS camp	293	868	NFI kit: Blankets, tarpaulin sheets, jerry can, kitchen set, hygiene kit, hurricane lamp and stove.

<b>Total number of households/ people targeted</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>4,519</b>	
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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. National disaster management authority (NDMA) requested PRCS to provide 2,500 non-food items kits for out of camp distributions. The stock has been dispatched (logistic support of World Food Programme) to PRCS Gilgit Baltistan district branch, which is in close coordination with the provincial disaster management authority (PDMA). PRCS has utilized the disaster preparedness stocks to cater this need. The district management authority has requested PRCS for additional support of tents and non food items at the following locations:

- Cheeta colony Gilgit: (49 tents, 73 NFI kits)
- Nagar Chalt Hunza: (45 tents, 45 family hygiene kits)
- Zulfiqarabad Jutial Gilgit: (17 NFI kits)

In response to the evolving situation, PRCS health teams are providing assistance to the in-camp IDPs. To date, assistance has been provided to 914 patients. On the request of local authorities, PRCS health teams have traveled by helicopter to remote and inaccessible areas of Gulmit, Shumshal and Passu. These areas are inaccessible by road and the people trapped there are in great need of medical services. PRCS, along with the government, is making its utmost efforts to facilitate assistance the population of upper Hunza who are otherwise cut off from the main services and remain isolated. The PRCS national headquarters has also deployed medicines for 2,000 individuals for a three-month period. A water and sanitation team has also been deployed to the area to monitor the water and sanitation facilities at camp and provide the necessary support.

Apart from catering to the needs of the Gilgit Baltistan people, PRCS has prepared Kohistan, Battagram, Haripur and Mansehra contingency plans and the PRCS branches in these districts are ready and at standby to assist the people if need arises.

The International Federation's country office is closely assessing the situation and is prepared to extend any support to the national society. The programme/Movement coordinator accompanied the assessment team for a detailed assessment of the affected areas. The initial contingency plan and budget have been agreed upon by the International Federation and PRCS management for providing support to 500 in camp families and 2,000 out of camp families for three months. The International Federation has been utilising the contingency reserves from the earthquake appeal ([M05E0022](#)) for this operation.

A disaster management delegate is being deployed from the International Federation South Asia regional office to support PRCS/International Federation country team in the preparedness for scaling-up the response to the landslides and floods. Similarly, support may be solicited to the International Federation and Movement partners for the replenishment of the PRCS disaster response stocks that are currently being utilised.

## Coordination

Apart from holding regular Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Coordination meetings, PRCS is in close coordination with the local government and district authorities as well as all the other key stakeholders for smooth running of the Hunza operation and to accommodate and facilitate the expected IDP families.

PRCS, with the support of the International Federation and Movement partners, are currently working on a detailed plan for worst case scenario, keeping in view the emerging disaster situation in Gilgit and Hunza. The International Federation will support, for a PRCS-driven operation. After the notification from PDMA, on the vulnerable districts which are expected to be affected if the dam breaks. The PRCS-International Federation disaster management teams are also working with the district branches of Mansehra, Kohistan, Shangla and Battagram for contingency plans of evacuation. According to an assessment of PDMA an estimated 41,300 families are most likely to be affected in the four districts of Pakhtoonkhwa province.

## 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>](#)**

