



Pakistan Humanitarian Forum

The Pakistan Humanitarian Forum was formed in 2003 to coordinate and strengthen the efforts of International NGOs working in disaster management. The forum comprises 35 of the largest international NGOs operational in Pakistan.

www.pakhumanitarianforum.com.pk

Embargoed until 21 April

Pakistan Crisis Far From Over: Lack of Funding Threatens Life-Saving Aid to 1.3m People

Nearly a year since more than three million people were displaced by military operations in north-west Pakistan, the crisis is far from over. More than 1.3 million people are displaced, dependant on emergency relief to survive, yet funding for the emergency response is drying up, according to a group of leading aid agencies working in the country.

Dwindling contributions from the international community, who have so far pledged less than a third of the funds needed for the first half of 2010, are now forcing humanitarian organizations to close essential life-saving programmes in Pakistan's Swat valley and surrounding areas, as well as in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). For the people benefiting from these programmes, this means less access to basic services such as water, sanitation and healthcare, according to the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF).

"The crisis is far from over and hundreds of thousands of people are still in desperate need", said Caitlin Brady, chairperson of the PHF and acting country director of the International Rescue Committee (IRC). "Already many people are not getting the help they need, and we're now faced with having to close more programmes for lack of money".

Some of the displaced have been unable to return to their homes since military operations against armed opposition groups surged last April. Others have been displaced by more recent operations such as the military offensives in the FATA, which have forced more than 200,000 people to flee from their homes.

The humanitarian situation in districts including Hangu, Kohat, Dera Ismail Khan and Tank as well as in the Peshawar Valley is becoming increasingly desperate. About 90 per cent of those displaced are either renting or are staying with friends or relatives. Many houses are being shared by up to 10 families, with inadequate access to water, sanitation and healthcare. Others are staying in camps that are often overcrowded and where health and sanitation facilities are poor.

Hajra, aged 25, fled fighting in her village in Bajaur Agency, near the Afghan border. She left on foot, carrying nothing but what she was wearing, and made it to a camp in the Peshawar valley. Yet when she arrived with her two daughters, she found herself unable to access assistance due to difficulties getting registered. She is currently relying on distant relatives to share what little they have:

"I don't have a tent for my family to live in. We are staying with extended relatives. My children are not well and there is no nearby hospital. We don't have tents, we don't have bedding, no flour or oil. There is nothing. We have left our village without any belongings. We haven't received any aid here. We are living in other people's tents and helpless.

The UN, the Government of Pakistan and NGOs earlier this year called for \$537 million to meet the needs of the 1.3 million displaced and to support two million returnees to rebuild their lives, yet so far donors have contributed just over \$170m. Of that, the US has donated almost \$100 million, while other donors have provided just over \$60m between them.

The lack of funding means that aid agencies working in Pakistan are being forced to take tough decisions. Programmes under threat include:

- A health and nutrition project for internally displaced people and host families in DI Khan, being implemented by Merlin. The project is providing healthcare to more than a million people, but is due to close at the end of May
- An emergency hygiene and sanitation project (constructing household latrines and distributing hygiene kits) targeting 4,000 IDPs in Kohat. The project is being implemented by Oxfam, who has been drawing on its own emergency funds, but will likely have to close by the middle of May.
- A livelihoods support programme being implemented by Save the Children in Swat and Bunir, assisting 24,000 returnee families to start earning a living again.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. For more information or to arrange interviews please contact PHF on phf.policy@gmail.com or +92 308 555 9451 / +92 308 555 7278.
2. The UN's Central Emergency Response Fund has provided \$10 million for the response. Other donors have provided just over \$60 million between them: \$18m from the UK (down 44% from its commitment last year), \$19m from Japan (down 34%), \$11.5m from the European Commission Humanitarian Office (down 83%), \$6.4m from Canada (down 77%), \$2m from Germany (down 92%), and \$1.8m from Finland. France, Switzerland and Luxembourg have each made commitments of between \$700,000 and just over \$1m. Other donors that made significant commitments to last year's appeal – the UAE, Norway, Australia, Spain and Italy – are yet to provide any commitment for humanitarian assistance in Pakistan in 2010
3. Broadcast quality footage filmed in Jalozai, Bunir, and Swat (between April 8 to 12); footage includes interviews with displaced people and Pakistan Humanitarian Forum chairperson, Caitlin Brady, acting country director of the International Rescue Committee. Footage available via <https://drop.io/pakistanupdates> (password 'pakistanupdates') or email the PHF at phf.policy@gmail.com.
4. Members of the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum include: ACTED (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development; Action Against Hunger (ACF) Pakistan; Action Aid Pakistan; American Refugee Committee; Catholic Relief Services; Care International; CESVI Pakistan; Church World Service Pakistan/Afghanistan; Concern Worldwide; Cordaid Pakistan; Emergency Resource Centre; Focus Humanitarian Assistance Pakistan; Handicap International; HAP International; Helping Hand for Relief And Development; International Catholic Migration Commission; The International Rescue Committee; International Relief and Development; Islamic Relief; Medical Emergency Relief International (Merlin); Malteser International; Medecins du Monde Pakistan; Mercy Corps; MSF Holland; Muslim Hands International; Oxfam Novib; Oxfam GB; Plan Pakistan; Qatar Charity; Relief International; Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation; Save the Children; Shelter for Life; Tearfund; Trocaire; World Vision Pakistan.