

IDPS, DISASTER & FOOD SECURITY

IDPs & Disaster

Navy, Mobilink Initiate Flood Relief Efforts in Balochistan: Balochistan

Mobilink, in continuation of its efforts to reach out to flood-affected areas across the country, has partnered with the Pakistan Navy to provide relief to flood victims in Balochistan. The Pakistan Navy will organize logistics, transportation and distribution, using both air and land transport. Mobilink's initial flood relief activity, organized in September, had focused on victims in the vicinity of Rojhan, DG Khan and Rajanpur. As a result of this quick and coordinated action, the Mobilink Foundation was the first to provide relief through supplies of food and water to nearly 12,000 flood-affected people in southern Punjab. Mobilink is now working with the Pakistan Navy to initiate flood relief efforts to counter flood-related devastation in District Jaffarabad, which is one of the worst floods-affected with access to the area being hindered by standing flood water, inundated road infrastructure and a precarious security situation. Mobilink Foundation, torchbearers, and Mobilink's employee volunteer force, will be engaged for physical distribution of food and water supplies for over 14,000 people occupying temporary shelters in the area. The Mobilink Foundation, established in 2007, is a non-profit organization, which provides support for the local community in the areas of health, education, environment and humanitarian assistance.

Daily Times - October 12, 2012

NDMA Distributes Food and Shelter in Flood Hit Areas

The Minister for Climate Change, Rana Farooq Saeed said that the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has so far distributed 200, 000 food bags and 50, 000 tents among the peoples of affected areas in Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan. Further, he was said that one food bag was sufficient for the one family to fulfill the one month needs of a normal family. NDMA had imparted disaster risk management of training to a total of 16, 539 persons including 2, 090 females. NDMA had allocated Rs. 5 billion to help the victims of disasters, while Punjab and Sindh had allocated Rs. 5 billion each for the purpose, while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan had allocated Rs. 3 billion each to cope with any emergency.

Pakistan Today - October 13, 2012

Relief Efforts

1.2m flood victims will be provided rations for a month, followed by two one-month rations for 700, 000 of the most severely affected flood victims by the World Food Programme (WFP).

The Express Tribune - October 16, 2012

IDPs protest ration denial at Jalozai: KPK

Scores of internally displaced persons from Bara tehsil of Khyber Agency protested at Jalozai camp in Nowshera to protest denial of monthly ration by Provincial Disaster Management Authority. IDP Yar Zaman Malikdinkhel told that PDMA officials had stopped distribution of ration to hundreds of displaced persons though they're registered with the camp. He said these IDPs had been provided with ration for many months and that suspension of ration supply

would stress them out, especially ahead of Eidul Azha. Another IDP, Gula Khan Akkakhel, said he and 15 members of his family had been registered with Jalozei camp but PDMA had informed them that only the head of the family would get ration every month from now onwards. Mulla Khel, a member of Bara IDPs shura, demanded that the relevant authorities conduct a fresh survey of all IDPs so that those who missed the registration exercise or were having own families after marriage at the camp, could be enrolled as genuine cases for assistance. Also, dozens of Bara women sheltering in Jalozei camp joined male members of their families in protest against non-payment of the Benazir Income Support Programme assistance. It is for the first time that women stepped out for the protest. Officials at the camp, however, told them that they were not part of BISP and could only convey their grievances to the relevant authorities in Islamabad. PDMA Adnan Khan denied suspension of ration supply to registered IDPs by the authority. He said under the rules, only head of a registered displaced family could claim ration and medical facilities. Mr. Khan said ration had been denied to some unregistered IDPs.

Dawn – October 20, 2012

Flood Aftermath

455 people have been killed in the monsoon floods this year.

The Express Tribune – October 19, 2012

Unless the Flood Tax Is Collected, Sindh's Rehabilitation Might Ebb Away

The bubble of the much-talked about "flood surcharge" burst as quickly as it came up. An auditor general report for the fiscal year 2011-12 reveals that most officials in Sindh either did not bother to deduct the one-time levy or misappropriated the amount they collected. After two consecutive years of flooding in Sindh, the president decided that a flood surcharge would be levied. This was given legal cover through an ordinance on March 15, 2011. It came to 15% on payable income tax to be deposited with the federal treasury. The money was supposed to be spent on helping flood survivors get back on their feet. This work was supposed to be done from March 15 to June 30 last year. However, most bureaucrats and district officials either ignored the task altogether or took the money.

- The worst cases emerged from Tharparkar where roads and buildings district officers paid Rs119 million and Rs87 million to suppliers, but failed to deduct the flood surcharge worth Rs1.86 million from the bills
- In Naushero Feroze, buildings and education works officers spent Rs18 million during the year 2010-11. While the income tax was collected from the suppliers, the 15% surcharge amounting to Rs166, 430 was not deducted, according to the audit report. The district management did not respond to questioning
- In Tando Muhammad Khan, the roads, works and buildings officers did not deduct Rs645, 920 as the flood surcharge. When asked why not, the buildings officer told auditors that the tax would be collected from next year. Roads officials blamed the timing of the ordinance on their failure to collect the money. The works department claimed it had deposited the money but there were no receipts to prove this
- In Sukkur, officials responsible for education, works and services and road spent Rs38 million and deducted Rs2.3 million in income tax from contractors and suppliers. But they failed to collect the Rs0.3 million flood tax on the same amount. The district education officer did not even collect Rs90, 000 in professional taxes from the contractors during the 2010-11 fiscal years. While officials claimed to have received the

amount, they could not submit any papers to prove it, despite repeated reminders from the auditors.

- It was much the same in Dadu, where road officials showed Rs3.2 million as collected in income taxes from some contractors. When asked by the auditors about the flood surcharge (Rs0.49 million), their reply was: "The amount would be recovered."
- The situation in Matiari was even worse. The officials not only avoided collecting the flood surcharge (Rs352, 973) from income tax payers, they even did not collect Rs575, 419 in income taxes. During 2010-11, the district administration paid around Rs11.6 million to contractors and suppliers from whom income tax was not recovered. Similarly, the Matiari DCO spent Rs1.425 million but withholding sales tax amounting to Rs210, 744 were not collected from suppliers
- In Badin, the DCO and the Civil hospital medical superintendent paid Rs10.3 million to various suppliers but the income tax amount of Rs330, 362 was not collected. The audit team held the district officials responsible for the failure to collect government revenues

The Express Tribune - October 19, 2012

PRCS Distributes Winterized Shelters among Sindh Flood Victims: Sindh

The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has started distribution of winterized shelters among the flood-affected people in Sindh so as to save them from the approaching winter. The PRCS is also providing clean drinking water in Jacobabad, Kamber-Shadadkot with a capacity of 3000 liters per hour as well as food and non-food items besides medical cover. Chairman PRCS Major General (retd) Ch Muhammad Nawaz Khan distributed the shelters and relief items among the flood victims, said a PRCS statement issued. Over 16 medical teams of Red Crescent are working in flood affected areas and have so far treated over 40,000 patients, mostly suffering from scabies, diarrhea, and malaria. Seven mobile health units are operating in Jacobabad, Shikarpur, Khairpur, Sukkur and Kamber-Shadadkot and each unit comprises a doctor, a lady medical officer, a dispenser, a lady health visitor, two health promoters and one EPI technician. Medicines worth Rs one million have been provided to each MHU. The PRCS in collaboration with International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC), other partner national societies and local donors is assisting a total of 52, 500 affected people (7,500 families) with food, non-food items, emergency health service and shelters.

Daily Times - October 24, 2012

Food Insecurity

Release of Subsidized Wheat from Tomorrow: Punjab

The Punjab government decided to start releasing subsidized wheat after the millers increased flour price for fourth time in the last six weeks. According to the release policy, as defined by Food Secretary Irfan Ali, the government will charge Rs. 1,075/40 kg - Rs. 35 less than the current market rate in the open market. At current rate, the government will have to bear a subsidy of Rs. 300/40 kg. It has announced liberal releases - whatever a miller wants to purchase - in five districts Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan, Sahiwal, Faisalabad and Bahawalpur. They form heavy wheat-producing districts. Other four districts - Rawalpindi, Sagodha, Gujranwala and Lahore - will have quota restrictions.

Dawn - October 07, 2012

Brisk Trading Pushes Prices Up

Commodities market became livelier during the week ending on October 12 with formal launching of sales of sacrificial animals as men, women and children watched with enthusiasm 'cattle walk' on decorated ramps at Mawaishi Mandi, a temporary market of sacrificial animals off Super Highway. As 88-kg heavy he-goat and 1425kg magnificent bull lured the watchers, animal sellers readied themselves for securing the best price for their animals. But alongside, they also struck deals with commodities traders for ensuring supply of wheat, maize, gram, jowar (sorghum/milo) and gram flour. Retailer shopkeepers across the city also made additional pre-Baqra Eid buying of these and other food items including pulses and spices. The prices moved northwards. Prices of Chakki atta (or wheat flour produced at small grinding mills and containing a higher percentage of bran) rose to Rs400 per 10kg registering a big increase of Rs3-4 per kg. Chakki owners said they had to raise the price because Sindh Food Department was not releasing their quotas of subsidized wheat and they had to buy wheat from the open market at no less than Rs3050 per 100kg. Ongoing exports of wheat and additional demand by Tandoorwalas (bread makers) are believed to have been responsible for the recent price hike. Prices of vegetable oil and ghee also increased under review in anticipation of an increase in their demand after Baqra Eid when people make meat-based dishes.

Farooq Memon, advisor of Karachi's Retailer Grocers Association said that the per kg retail price of vegetable oil and ghee rose by Rs. 4 and Rs. 2 respectively from Rs. 154 to Rs. 158 and from Rs. 154 to Rs. 156. In the wholesale market prices of 16-kg containers of vegetable oil and ghee also increased accordingly, by Rs. 95 per container - from Rs 1,690 to Rs. 1,785. Increase in international prices of palm olein (which also reflected in daily quotes at Pakistan Mercantile Exchange Ltd during the week under review) has been at the heart of the higher cooking oil and vegetable ghee prices. But traders said that in addition to increased demand from retailers, increase in transportation cost of cooking oil tankers carrying the cargo from mills to markets was also responsible for the price hike. Transportation charges of all kinds of food and non-food commodities move up in what can be termed as the boom effect in hauling business due to engagement of commercial vehicles in transportation of sacrificial animals from cattle breeding areas to cities and from the market to buyers' places. Whereas brisk activity was seen in trading of food commodities in Jodia Bazar and other markets in the city with prices of high-demand items moving up, thousands of meat sellers were readying themselves for a shift in business dynamics. "Meat selling remains suspended for at least ten days after the Baqra Eid is over.

Far from the maddening crowd involved in the trade of sacrificial animals in one way or the other, fishermen were also making moves to brave the lull in business immediately before and after the three-day Baqra Eid. "Fish selling almost stops a week before Baqra Eid and doesn't recommence before two weeks after the Baqra Eid, Such is our trade," said Rohan, a young fish seller at Moosa Colony, a big retail fish market in Karachi. Poultry meat sellers also face a similar situation. They too face a big drop in sales as eateries either remain closed several days after Eid holidays or they see a big decline in the number of visitors. If we piece together, these and similar activities, or lack of them, of different segments of commodities' market, a bigger picture emerges of interconnectivity of local and seasonal trade and of interdependence of rural-urban markets. If, arrival of sacrificial animals stirs activities in commodities market in Karachi, back in cattle farming areas in rural Sindh and Punjab, dispatch of the animals to Karachi also entails a lot of activities.

Those who rear sacrificial animals for at least up to two years in case of cows and their calves and for at least six months in case of sheep and goats, feel rewarded when trucks arrive in their areas to lift the animals for transporting them to Karachi where, according to conservative estimates, an estimated one million sacrificial animals are slaughtered on every Baqra-Eid. In-charge of Karachi's Mawaishi Mandi Noman Ahmed says "These animals are seen off by village kids in their own simplistic and innocent ways. But for their elders, the departure of animals towards cities means income. The activity generates a variety of jobs ranging from caretakers of

animals to those who get involved in transportation of animals and fodders from villages to cities." Changes in commodities market dynamics during and after Baqra-Eid bring about key changes in the income levels of various segments of the market. Attaching some price tags to the sets of activities of one segment or the other is essential for documentation of Sindh economy and, perhaps, for analyzing the benefits of seasonal interaction of the rural-urban market participants.

Dawn – October 15, 2012

Helping Hand: Balochistan

11, 460 metric tons of wheat has been pledged by the provincial government of Balochistan to provide relief to these affected by devastating floods in the province whereas, 23, 000 metric tons of wheat have been pledged by the provincial government of Sindh to the UN World Food Programme.

The Express Tribune – October 17, 2012

Pakistan Facing Acute Malnutrition: WHO

The level of malnutrition in Pakistan has crossed the World Health Organization's (WHO) critical threshold for acute malnutrition. About 15.1% of Pakistanis suffer from malnutrition, according to the National Nutrition Survey Report 2011, which is higher than WHO's threshold of 15%, health experts. Dr Ayoub Aljawaldehy, Regional Adviser to WHO on nutrition, said the major factors behind the alarming rate of malnutrition in Pakistan are increasing population and food insecurity, and lack of access to clean water. Poor breast-feeding practices, unawareness on balanced diet among mothers and natural calamities also contribute significantly to malnutrition. He urged the government to work for the provision of subsidized food and access to clean water for the lower income group and stressed on the importance of breastfeeding, even when mothers are malnourished themselves. Dr Khizar Tauseef, WHO focal person on nutrition, advised people to use fortified flour and iodized salt to avoid malnutrition. The trend of having tea immediately after food intake causes lack of absorption of iron in the body. Consumption of fast food and soft drinks also contributes towards malnutrition.

The Express Tribune – October 19, 2012

Food Imports Decrease By Over 9% in Two Months: A Report by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

Food imports into the country witnessed decrease of 9.02 percent during the first two months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The food imports into the country were recorded at \$818.011 million during July-August (2012-13) against the imports of \$899.062 million recorded during July-August (2011-12), according to the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics released here.

- The major products that contributed in negative growth included tea, imports of which decreased by 24.72 percent during the period under review. Tea imports into the country were recorded at \$42.541 million in July-August (2012-13) against the imports of \$56.512 million during July-August (2011-12).
- Imports of spices decreased by 8.71 percent by falling from \$14.863 million to \$13.568 million whereas the imports of palm oil decreased by 12.22 percent by going down from \$466.360 million to \$409.360 million

- Imports of sugar were recorded at \$1.334 million during the period under review against the imports of \$6.160 million last year, showing negative growth of 78.34 percent
- The food items that witnessed positive growth included milk, cream and milk food for infants, imports of which increased from \$28.602 million last year to \$34.545 million during current year, showing growth of 20.78 percent
- The imports of dry fruits and nuts increased by 6.48 percent by growing from \$15.767 million to \$16.788 million whereas the imports of soya bean oil increased from \$24.343 million to \$29.755 million, showing increase of 22.23 percent
- The imports of pulses (leguminous vegetables) increased from \$83.823 million to \$93.293 million, showing increase of 11.30 percent
- The imports of all other food items decreased by 12.73 percent by going down from \$202.632 million in July-August (2011-12) to \$176.827 million in July-August (2012-13)
- During the month of August 2012-13 the food imports into the country witnessed decrease of 12.71 percent and 11.50 percent when compared to the imports of August 2011 and July 2012 respectively
- Food imports in August 2012 stood at \$384.064 million against the imports of \$439.965 million and \$433.947 million in August 2011 and July 2012
- It is pertinent to mention here that overall imports into the country during the period under review witnessed decrease of 1.99 percent. The imports into the country were recorded at \$7.346 billion in 2012-13 against the imports of \$7.495 billion

The News – September 21, 2012

Heavy Rains Raise Prospects for Rice Crop

Until recently, farmers feared that the 6.1 million tons production target for rice, Pakistan's second-largest export product, would be missed by a considerable margin this year. Much to their relief, the recent and heavy rains have resulted in improved availability of water - an important input for the crop. Paddy farmers are now hopeful of recouping some of their losses and of crossing the 5.5 million tons mark in the current year. The estimates are provisional, as the crop has still around a month to reach maturity. Some growers express greater optimism: they feel that production may even cross six million tons, as dams and rivers have filled up with water after heavy precipitation, precluding any water shortage in the period. In the wake of widespread water shortages, farmers have been forced to adopt alternative methods such as tube wells to water their crops. This had raised their cost of production considerably. Many farmers had been unable to adopt such measures, as the electricity crisis and high diesel prices had rendered most tube wells unviable. Pakistan can potentially produce 10 million tons of rice annually, but the government's uneven policies and bureaucratic intervention have restricted it to half that figure," said Agri Forum Pakistan Chairman Muhammad Ibrahim Mughal. In 2008-09, Pakistan's rice production touched seven million tons, but production has been declining since. Our aim should be at least 7.5 million tons annually. One million acres of untilled land from the abandoned cotton crop could have been utilized by rice growers, but this didn't happen. Only 0.2 million acres of out the million are being used to cultivate the rice crop: farmers are reluctant due to the water shortage. The rains have turned out to be a big blessing for rice growers; otherwise, production would have dipped to a dangerous level, hurting exports and Pakistan's balance of payments.

The Express Tribune – September 25, 2012