

## DISASTER & IDP CRISIS

### Situation of IDPs

#### Orakzai, Kurram IDPs Start Settling In Kohat

Accusing the provincial government of discrimination, several non-governmental organizations have criticized the double standards being followed while taking care of more than 546,000 internally displaced persons from Orakzai and Kurram Agencies living in Kohat since 2007. The government established camps and provided regular food for Swat and Malakand IDPs when military operations were launched there but no camp was set up in Kohat for the people migrating from Orakzai, Kurram and Hangu. According to official record, 23,000 families have been displaced from lower Orakzai and 55,000 from upper Orakzai owing to fighting between security forces and militants. They are residing in different areas of Kohat. The report said that 9,944 registered families, consisting of 69,608 individuals, left Sadda tehsil of Kurram Agency for safer places recently. More than 300 displaced families of Kurram Agency have also settled in Kohat. Provincial Disaster Management Cell is not providing proper tents and food to those displaced persons despite their repeated reminders. Their request for shifting of all household items and tents, given to Swat IDPs, to Kohat has also been turned down. IDPs in Kohat and Hangu were not provided with relief items and food even before the start of the holy month of Ramazan. The enthusiasm of local philanthropists, who generously provide food and money especially during Ramazan, is also dying down with the passing of time.

Relevant departments are not utilizing their funds according to the requirements of needy people. In Hangu district, where camps have been established for IDPs unlike Kohat, the affected people have been protesting lack of medicines, food and gas for the last one year. After the twin suicide attacks on a registration centre in Kacha Pakha area of Kohat on April 17, 210, IDPs were entering Kohat without registration. There is no functional registration point in Kohat at present and IDPs from FR Kohat, Hangu, Orakzai and Kurram are entering Kohat freely. Most of these IDPs have bought properties and settled in Jarma, Muhammadzai permanently as they have little hope of returning to their hometowns. 21,000 families returned to Orakzai Agency in three phases but they were again fleeing the restive region. The government had told tribesmen in March 2010 when the operation was launched that Orakzai Agency would be cleared of militants within one year but clashes were intensifying there. An official, on condition of anonymity, said that three families were entering Kohat from the frontier region and other tribal parts every day. These new colonies of tribesmen need police stations and mobile vehicles to monitor their activities but the government has limited resources. The exodus of IDPs has resulted in population explosion in Kohat, putting extra burden on local transport and educational institutions. There is need for special centres to provide counseling to displaced children and rid them of the bitter memories of violence.

[Dawn – August 04, 2011]

#### Life Is Nasty For Thousands of Camp Dwellers

As dusk starts to fall at Jalozei Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camp, a queer calm engulfs the tents dotting the barren landscape. Occasionally, people scuttle past amid rows of tents in a hurry, carrying pieces of ice in shopping bags and other items for Iftari. The people of Jalozei camp are the forgotten lot of militancy in the north. They have seen many winters and summers far away from

the comfort of their homes, in tents. However, Ramazan, along with many blessings, brings nostalgia too. People here remember the past where shade, water, fruits and food were plenty while food stipends were a distant reality. In today's Jalozi, food stipends have been stopped too, severely hampering the food intake of many families living here. There are also complaints about its quality and quantity. It is almost a year, since these families arrived in this camp. However, Ramazan has been the most difficult time as fasting IDPs face dearth of food, electricity shortfalls as well as an acute shortage of drinking water. When these IDPs were first displaced, the whole nation opened their purses to help these homeless people generously. They now face homelessness, compounded with misery, due to lack of any institutional help. The authorities distribute flour, cooking oil and other edibles to some families, while others do not have access to even these. They are instead told by officials to go back to their hometowns, while the IDPs lament that the situation back home does not warrant their return. However, other people were more pessimistic. As iftari time draws nearer, people move inside their tents, to quench their thirst after another laborious day. Ramazan moves on, as these people muster up the courage to go with another fortnight of fasting, under a scorching sun, in this wilderness.

[The Express Tribune - August 17, 2011]

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### **Rains, Floods Make 60,000 Homeless: Officials**

Devastating rains have triggered floods in Pakistan, affecting at least 700,000 people and forcing 60,000 from their homes. Villages have been flooded and crops destroyed in Pakistan's bread basket of Sindh province, one of the worst-hit areas in the unprecedented floods of 2010 that affected 21 million people and caused losses of \$10 billion. At least 700,000 people have been affected by the floods caused by the recent rains in the six districts of Sindh province. Some 60,000 people have been rendered homeless, who have migrated to safer areas. 30 people had been killed in a week. Overnight one million people had been affected, but no details provided. Tens of thousands of people are still living in emergency camps after last year's floods and British charity Oxfam has accused Pakistan of failing to invest in prevention measures, making it vulnerable to further disaster. The Army and Navy are using helicopters and boats to rescue people who are trapped by the fresh floodwaters. The soldiers of the Army and Navy are relentlessly shifting people from the dangerous places to the safer areas. Pakistan's weak civilian government came under enormous criticism last year from victims of the floods who said ministers did little to help. The Army has also been working to rehabilitate itself after facing an unprecedented backlash over the covert American raid that killed Osama bin Laden on the doorstep of its top military academy. Pakistan's largest charity, the Edhi Foundation, called for a comprehensive relief effort to help those at risk. Edhi is providing food and necessary items to the people to survive, but that is not much and more people and organizations will have to intervene in the situation. Edhi is also trying to provide every family a shelter, which requires a large number of tents. The disaster management authority said crops had been destroyed and houses flooded. Badin is the most affected district, where more than half the total people have been displaced. Rains have also caused havoc in the districts of Tando Mohammad Khan, Mirpurkhas, Thar, Umerkot and Tando Allahyar. The meteorological office has forecast more rain in coming days.

[The News - August 18, 2011]

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### **Trauma Still Haunts Swat Children**

It has been more than two years since the Taliban were driven out of the Swat Valley. Their memories, however, still haunt the minds of school-going children. The Taliban may have banned education in the valley, but people, who believed in the power of knowledge, were determined to pursue it. The young innocent children are still traumatized by the barbaric practices of the militants. The phrase 'Taliban ragho' (the Taliban have come) is still fresh in their minds. They could not forget what they went through during the militants' rule. Once a girl was stopped; she was on her way to her college and was threatened to wear a veil with cap instead of a headscarf. However, life in Swat is gradually recovering from the dark days, and the number of school-going children is increasing with the passage of time. Despite all of that, children frequently question their parents about suicide bombers and the presence of security personnel in the area, while parents are unable to provide any answers to them. They don't know where the Taliban came from and what their motives were, but they were fluent in Pashto language, due to which children cannot forget their words and style of dialogue. Even though they were able to survive, are still living in fear and misery. It feels as if each bullet fired in the valley is graven in our chest. A resident of Swat said that we left our homes in a hurry when the security forces launched an operation against the militants. However, my 10-year-old son was not ready to leave his house without his books and schoolbag. Another resident said his eight-year-old son kept asking the reason for his schools destruction. A child protection committee had been constituted by local people to rehabilitate the children who had gone through a shocking phase in their lives. A non-governmental organization Save the Children Pakistan (SCP) is focusing on the issues being faced by children. SCP had established educational centres where the children were educated in a friendly environment to overcome the crisis. Swat people faced a number of difficulties due to illiteracy during migration. There were hundreds of people who could not fill their registration forms. On their return, they realized the importance of education. Some women requested educated people to teach their children, especially girls at home, since the education institutions were not catering to the needs of people.

[The Express Tribune - August 19, 2011]

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### **Forgotten 2005 Quake Victims Still Need Help**

Most people in Pakistan and around the world have forgotten the victims of the 8 October 2005 earthquake which killed 73,000 people in Pakistan-administered Kashmir and the Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa Province (KP). Other disasters have since intervened such as the 2010 floods, diverting attention and assistance. For the victims of the quake, itself forgetting is much harder. Some from a village in the Battagram District of KP have been able to get on with their lives, resuming work as a farmer. But moving on, or putting the past behind them, has been impossible for some victims. These include, in particular, those left permanently disabled. The aftermath will live forever with the children - many now teenagers - who have been paralyzed for life or the disabled women, who struggle to, live with dignity. Most of those paralyzed in the quake were women and children, since they were mainly in their homes while the men were at work when the calamity struck in the morning. The Foundation has been working with the North American-based Spinal Cord Injury Project for Pakistan Earthquake Rehabilitation organization to help the most vulnerable quake victims. Some 700 people suffered spinal cord injuries. The organization is supporting 33 women and children who most need help. These people have very little access to medical care as two to three people are needed to carry them to an often distant medical facility in the mountains. They are part of a SCIPPER Tele-Medicine Programme in which people in the USA call them once a month to get an update on their condition and to give them psychological support.

**WHEELCHAIR-FRIENDLY HOUSES:** A key need for many of the victims is wheelchair-friendly houses. About six such houses are complete. Ten will be ready soon, but there is a desperate need for funds for more to be built. Other victims have been far less fortunate. Some 14 paralyzed quake victims remain at the government-run National Institute of the Handicapped in Islamabad. Despite the hardships these people are fortunate to have support. Other quake victims are far worse off. There are many other quake victims in desperate need of help - but not enough people are coming forward to offer it to them.

[The News - August 17, 2011]

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### **Kohistan Flood Death Toll Reaches 48**

The death toll from the recent flood in Kohistan district reached 48 as nine more bodies were recovered. District Coordination Officer Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah told that the rescue teams had recovered nine more bodies from scattered places alongside the Kandia stream. He said 14 people were still missing and rescue teams were actively searching them. He said that food items for the affected people to meet their needs for the next three months had been dispatched to the area. The DCO said that the lists of the victims were being finalized so that the compensation amount could be distributed among the affected families after Eidul Fitr. Meanwhile, the Al-Khidmat Foundation has established its relief camp in Dassu, headquarters of the remote Kohistan district.

[The News - August 30, 2011]

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## **Relief & Rehabilitation Responses**

### **'People to Be Rehabilitated In Same Village'**

A large portion of the Talus village in the Ghanche district might have been swept away by a flash flood last week, but people there are unwilling to relocate. Chief Minister Mehdi Shah had earlier hinted at relocation of the villagers, terming the situation there "unfit for residence". However, Muhammad Jafar, a senior minister in the Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) government, said that the people would be rehabilitated in the same area. They don't want to be relocated, so government will work for their rehabilitation in the same village. Meanwhile, the government and non-governmental organizations have increased relief activities for the victims. A ration for one month has been distributed among the affected people of Talus. More than 80 houses in Talus village of Ghanche district were swept away by the flash flood and a 100 more were damaged. At least one person has been reported missing for the past three days.

[The Express Tribune - August 05, 2011]

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### **WFP Product to Aid Malnourished IDPs**

The United Nations agency World Food Programme (WFP) has introduced ready to use supplementary food items for distribution among internally displaced persons as well as last year's flood victims. The initiative is aimed at tackling the rising rate of malnutrition in Pakistan. Extensive consultation took place this year between WFP headquarters and its regional bureau as well as the Pakistan country office to address the issue. A product with high nutritional value called 'Achamum' was developed to aid those suffering from severe malnutrition. According to the Oxford Committee

for Famine Relief, (OXFAM) an alarming 36% of the country suffers from malnutrition, which has precipitated efforts to address the widespread problem. A UNICEF report published in light of last year's floods said that the malnutrition rate in Sindh alone was at 21%, where people, especially women and children, were suffering the most. According to a WFP official, more than 100,000 children were enrolled in the programme which was providing 'Achamum'. A recent survey indicated that 99% of those who have been treated through the product have risen above the line of malnutrition. After building up local suppliers' capacity, WFP introduced the new product into the market. Achamum is a fortified, energy-dense, lipid-based supplementary food that comes in individually packaged, ready-to-eat servings. The product has been developed specifically to provide supplementary energy and micronutrients to children aged 6 to 59 months who are suffering from moderate to acute malnutrition in protracted humanitarian emergencies. The plan is to produce approximately 1,000 metric tons of Achamum by the end of 2011 to reach as many beneficiaries as possible. Once the supply is in line with local demand, the product is to be introduced internationally, which will benefit local suppliers as well as the national economy. Once we have enough capacity in Pakistan, the product will be used in other neighboring countries and then exported to WFP programmes worldwide. However, this venture is expensive and it will take a long time before it is made available to other beneficiaries.

[The Express Tribune – August 8, 2011]

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### **Return of Kurram IDPs from August 25**

The internally displaced persons from central Kurram Agency have been directed to start packing for the return journey to their homes as security forces have cleared their militancy-hit villages of militants. Fata Disaster Management Authority Director General told that IDPs repatriation programme to central Kurram would start from August 25 as security forces have declared seven villages free of militants. In the first phase, some 700 families would be sent back to the seven villages. FDMA would arrange free transport for the returning IDPs. The entire area will be de-notified as a conflict zone by the end of August and all IDPs will be sent back to their homes very soon. However, the fate of over 21,000 displaced families, who had migrated to safer places from their hometowns owing to sectarian clashes in upper and lower Kurram, is still uncertain. The government is yet to take any concrete measures regarding their repatriation. They were still living miserable life in rented houses or staying with their relatives. Security forces had launched operation in central Kurram in the last week of June to flush out militants from mountainous and rugged terrain of the valley. Before launching the offensive, the government had notified 80 square kilometers area as conflict zone where army and paramilitary forces started joint operation. The operation was launched in the light of reports that a large number of militants, who were uprooted from other conflict-hit areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Fata including South Waziristan Agency, had set up sanctuaries in central Kurram. Thousands of families fled their homes as a result of army action. Authorities said that 11,223 families had been displaced of which 2,587 were registered in New Durrani Camp. The camp was set up in lower Kurram to accommodate thousands of displaced people. Majority of the displaced families are living with host families and some have taken shelter in government buildings.

[Dawn – Aug 18, 2011]

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## **22 Trucks of Saudi Food Relief Dispatched To Nine Cities**

In collaboration with a Saudi relief agency, 22 trucks carrying food relief for deserving people were dispatched to nine cities of Pakistan. There is a heart-to-heart relationship between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. The Iftar al-Saim Project is, in fact, a gift for the Pakistani brethren from their Saudi brothers. He also praised the endeavors of the Iftar al-Saim Project officials and the associated team. He said that Saudi Arabia would continue the provision of all possible assistance to their Pakistani brethren. On the occasion the Saudi government to Pakistan for their continued assistance on behalf of the Pakistani peoples in general and in particular the people of Bahawalpur. He said that King Abdullah remains concerned about the welfare of Pakistanis like brothers in the real sense and has generously provided assistance to Pakistan in every difficult situation. The former information minister said that the Saudi assistance is a reflection of the special feelings and thoughts of King Abdullah for the welfare of the Pakistani people, who are thankful to him for this kindness and generosity from the core of their hearts. The ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are akin to the relations of two real brothers. Pakistani and Saudi people are not only bound together through religion, but also by love and affection. The Saudi leadership has always taken keen interest in the welfare of Pakistan and its people and only those can do so who have strong bonds. The two countries are like members of the same family. Whether it was the deadly earthquake or devastating flood, Saudi Arabia has always considered the difficulties of Pakistan as its own and passionately extended all sorts of assistance and cooperation.

[Daily Times - August 18, 2011]

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## **Fehmida Pleads For WFP Help**

The district administration will look to the international organization to arrange for food for the rain-affected people as it flounders in the disaster. The request was sent through National Assembly Speaker Fehmida Mirza. Although the government has not yet collected accurate figures for the number of people displaced or losses to the crops and property, official estimates suggest over 85% of 1.8 million people have been affected. Every day the numbers of relief camps are increasing. Today the count has grown to 270 camps where around 71,000 displaced people are taking shelter. The speaker candidly acknowledged the lack of facilities such as food, water, health and hygiene at camps. There are many more (IDPs) living under the open sky on roads. The district government doesn't have the resources to fend for itself. The national and provincial disaster management authorities are responsible. They have failed to take up their responsibility. People should take the matter of the faulty design of the Left Bank Outfall Drain (LBOD) and the fallout of the project to the courts. The government has not sought compensation from the World Bank for damage. They had admitted flaws in the design of the LBOD. The speaker also criticized the federal government's approach towards the drain or, as she puts it, 'a perpetual nuisance' for residents. The LBOD has sprouted leaks at at least four points within Badin's boundaries. The artificial drain carries saline water and sewerage from Sindh and parts of Punjab towards the sea, and has flooded scores of villages. As the Sindh Irrigation and Drainage Authority, Sindh Irrigation Department and WAPDA slog it out over who bears responsibility for fixing LBOD, the drain is making the people of Badin and adjoining districts miserable.

[The Express Tribune - August 19, 2011]

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## Relief Goods for Flood Victims

The district administration of Rahim Yar Khan dispatched seven trucks loaded with flour bags, pulses, rice, ghee, sugar, red chilies and other items. MPA Chaudhry Muhammad Shafique told that these relief items were a gift for flood victim brethren of Sindh on behalf of the Punjab chief minister. He said that 35 trucks of relief items would be dispatched to the affected areas for the Sindhi brethren from the Bahawalpur division. Meanwhile, seven trucks of relief goods worth Rs. 2.1 million had been sent to the calamity-stricken people in Badin under the supervision of Punjab Prisons Minister Muhammad Iqbal Channar on behalf of the Punjab government and the Punjab Disaster Management Authority from Bahawalpur. Every truck comprises 300 bags of relief items and every bag includes 20kg flour, 2kg rice, 3kg pulse, 250 grams tea, 1kg salt, 1kg Iranian dates, 2kg sugar and packets of match boxes and soap. The minister said that Punjab had always played the role of an elder brother and helped the people in the hour of distress. Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif also dispatched trucks of relief goods for flood victims of Badin from Model Town. The chief minister said that flood affected Sindhi brethren would not be left unattended in the hour of need and all-out assistance would be extended to them.

[Dawn - August 20, 2011]

## 2010 Flood Aftermath & 2011 Preparedness

### Call for Rehabilitation of Flood Victims

Addressing a news conference, Zahida Detho of the Sindh Rural Participatory Organization, Shujaddin Qureshi of the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research and Parveen Magsi of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum said the camps were abandoned by district administrations after a number of people had returned to their areas. They said the government's plan to close the camps would amount to denial of people's rights. A charter of demands about flood-affected people has been drafted prepared in consultation with stakeholders. They urged the government to implement the charter as soon as possible. Ms. Detho said the government appeared to be deliberately delaying the work of rehabilitation. The camps were in poor shape and in unhygienic conditions with health and education facilities non-existent. Tents provided last year are tattered. Government has provided Watan Cards to only 30 per cent of flood victims and failed to fulfill its promise of providing shelter to these people. Although a number of houses were built for flood-affected people in Jamshoro, Shikarpur and Qambar-Shahdadkot districts these were given only to 10 to 15 per cent of affected people. Most of the affected people continue to live in the open. Floods had hit 19 of 23 districts in the province and displaced about seven million.

According to Dr Kaiser Bengali, 40 towns and 7,500 villages in eight districts were seriously affected and losses were calculated at Rs. 446.8 billion, including Rs. 122.1 billion suffered by agriculture sector. According to information received from Kandhkot-Kashmore, Shikarpur, Sukkur, Jacobabad, Larkana and Qamar-Shahdadkot, flood had damaged about 315 rice mills on the right bank of the Indus. Mr. Qureshi said that 2,000 people were still living in old camps near Sabzi Mandi in Hyderabad. The people who had returned to their areas were living in the tents they had brought with them from camps because mud-houses had been washed away. Other people were not ready to return to their homes because they owed money to their landlords whose land they had been tiling on the basis of crop-sharing. The government should either pay off the debts or get them waived. Members of minority communities suffered even more because they were not properly accommodated in camps by people of other faith. At present 10,000 people were living in camps in Karachi and they needed to be settled. The charter urges the government to ensure early

rehabilitation of the affected people and end discrimination in rehabilitation work. The government should invest in disaster risk reduction measures, including revamping of disaster management authorities and mapping of future flood hazards. The government should write off debts of farmers in flood-hit areas and provide assistance to peasants to start a new life. The flood-affected people should be immediately registered for social security and workers who lost their livelihood must be provided unemployment allowance.

[Dawn - August 1, 2011]

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### **For Survivors, Survival Wasn't the Only Fight**

Flood survivors who returned home a year ago are still in dire need of improved health facilities. There is a need to provide services at no or minimal cost as those who have returned cannot afford out-of-pocket health expenses. The purchasing power of those affected by the flood has decreased significantly. Although strengthening the quality of government-owned health facilities remains a big challenge, the UNFPA is working to provide free reproductive health services as a large number of pregnant women were particularly affected during the floods. Not only did they suffer from malnutrition and the trauma of loss, they also had to bear the fatigue of long journeys to safer areas or camps where they faced poor hygiene. In a country where complications in childbirth still account for a fifth of deaths of women of childbearing age, an estimated 500,000 pregnant women were among the total number of 20 million flood-affected people. According to current maternal mortality figures, one in every 89 Pakistani women is at the risk of death due to maternal causes. Therefore the fund's immediate response was to support basic reproductive health services for the displaced. Now, during the recovery phase, the fund is focusing on upgrading healthcare facilities to provide comprehensive emergency obstetric care. A vast majority of people have gone back but some are still here and in need of services. Those who have gone back are more aware of their health needs. The UNFPA has also focused at protecting displaced women and girls from violence, and had initiated a programme for this. Coordination mechanisms, co-led by the Pakistani government's department of social welfare, were set up both at the federal and provincial level. Referral systems were established for survivors to receive medical, legal, and psychosocial support. Twelve women-friendly spaces were also set up to reach women in affected communities.

[The Express Tribune - August 01, 2011]

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### **Flash Floods Wreak Havoc in Ghizer Village**

Flash floods triggered by lightning destroyed standing crops, hundreds of fruit trees, and a main water channel in Singul village of Ghizer valley, prompting terrified residents to vacate the area. Singul is about 60 kilometers from Gilgit and 30 kilometers short of Gahkuch, the headquarters of Ghizer district. Officials however said no loss of life was reported in the floods that struck the village. The incident couldn't immediately be reported owing to poor communication in the area as a result of the destruction. The situation was terrible ...it created panic in the village. The floods had destroyed dozens of orchards, besides standing crops, within no time, dealing a death blow to the economy of the already poverty-ridden people. A government official said the intensity of the flash flood was high but it caused no destruction to human life and the houses. The people have shifted to avoid a dangerous situation. The village fell into darkness as the flood destroyed a large fraction of a channel supplying water to the area's hydel power project. As a result, power supply was also disrupted to the district headquarters hospital where patients were under treatment. A

similar incident in a village in Baltistan had demolished over 150 houses this week, forcing people to spend night under open sky.

[The Express Tribune - August 04, 2011]

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### **Italy to Provide 57.75 Million Euros to Help Flood Victims**

Italy has announced that it would provide 57.75 million Euros as a soft loan for the Citizen Damage Compensation Plan (CDCP) so as to enable the government extend second installment to flood-affected families. In this regard, Italy's Ambassador Vincenzo Prati, as an Additional International Development Partner for the joint support to CDCP-II signed Concurrence Note to the memorandum of understanding (MoU) already signed on June 9, between the International Development Association, USA, and Pakistan. The Italian government has indicated its desire to contribute 57.75 million Euros as soft loan to this effect. The US has already provided \$190 million and United Kingdom \$100 million for the CDCP-II and with the contribution from Italian government would help reach the maximum flood-affected families. Over the course of the monsoon season in July and August, 2010, Pakistan experienced the worst floods in its recorded history. Heavy rainfall caused flash floods, disrupting livelihoods of nearly 20 million people, destroying/ damaging approximately 1.8 million homes and affecting 2.4 million hectares of cropped land. This flood mostly hit the poor households, which do not have savings or assets to sell to finance their own livelihood recovery efforts. Hence, they were in need of immediate financial help. The federal government with the active participation of foreign donors announced Rs. 100,000 as cash grant and immediately paid Rs. 20,000 to each family in the notified flood-affected districts across the country. Pakistan has envisioned the implementation of second phase of the CDCP aimed at complementing the governmental assistance to the victims by providing payment of Rs. 40,000 (\$460 million) to at least 1 million households. The federal government is planning to release the second installment of Rs. 20,000 to 40,000 flood-affected families in the month of October after verification of data by the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) for construction of their houses which were destroyed in floods 2010.

[Daily Times - August 05, 2011]

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### **One-Third Area of KP Vulnerable To Floods**

Almost one-third area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is permanently vulnerable to flash floods due to rapid changes in the weather pattern and inadequate risk mitigation measures. Massive changes in weather pattern are going to add to the vulnerability of major areas in the province as a result of monsoon hazards, which usually emerge as a result of heavy rainfall and subsequent flooding along the three main rivers including Swat, Kabul and Indus. Average rainfall in South Asia is expected to increase between 17 to 59 per cent and it can be associated with a doubling-up in the frequency of high rainfall events and variable monsoons. During the past decade, the monsoon coverage area has shifted nearly 100 kilometers westwards that has brought catchment areas of Swat, Kabul and Indus Rivers into its fold. This means the severity of floods caused by the three river systems is going to increase particularly after multiple cloud bursts, a new phenomena. Information gathered from different parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa suggests that heavily populated districts constitute catchment areas of major rivers where their tributaries proliferate, thus creating flash floods vulnerability. Charsadda, Peshawar and Nowshera, three main districts of the Peshawar valley constitute the catchment area for two major river systems including Swat and Kabul. These two rivers with 13 tributaries and waterways flow along most populated areas of these districts, as last

year floods affected 177,083 households in these three main districts besides impacting its agriculture sector that serves as food basket for the entire province.

Likewise, districts like Mansehra, Shangla, Swat, Dir Upper, Dir Lower, Malakand and Kohistan, which fall in northern mountainous region and Hazara division, according to experts are also prone to flash floods mainly because of almost 60 waterways including some major rivers flowing along these areas. Last year's floods affected almost 241,070 households in these areas. On southern parts of the province, districts like Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, Lakki Marwat and Kohat were also vulnerable to flash floods originated from the River Indus, Kurram, Gambilla and around 10 hill torrents. According to official record, 81,650 families were affected in the last year floods in these districts. Moreover, River Chitral in north and its 11 tributaries flowing in different parts of the Chitral district is also increases vulnerability of six major population centres including Booni, Sonoghar, Chuinj, Brep, Owir and Terich to the flash floods. Both River Swat and Kabul do not have a proper flood monitoring mechanism and that was why in case of major water overflow is detected late just close to the Tarbela lake. Except Dera Ismail Khan, there is no proper dyke along these major rivers, waterways and hill torrents that increases the vulnerability of the community to the floods. The irrigation department had prepared a plan for constructing spurs along these major rivers, but due to resource constraints it was yet to take off. Apart from lack of proper early warning system and flood protection walls, the encroachment has also appeared to be a major issue that also adds on to the vulnerability of the households to the floods.

Officials at Revenue Department confirm that encroachment along the major river systems particularly Kabul and Swat and waterways in urban centres of Swat, Charsadda, Nowshera, Peshawar and Mardan are increasing the intensity of floods. In most of the cases, land grabbers have manipulated the revenue record and now getting the land vacated from them is almost impossible. This issue is highly politicized and every political government avoids stepping into this mess. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is unable to come up with long term risk mitigation plans that include installation of early warning system, adequate flood protection and removal of encroachment. However, a mechanism at local level was being evolved to handle post-disaster relief and early recovery in the entire province, which will improve the state response in case of any calamity. The District Disaster Management Units (DDMUs) have been notified in 24 districts although these units are run by one District Disaster Management Officer (DDMO) without having any office or infrastructure that can facilitate his working. The PDMA chief said the provincial government had engaged United Nation's Development Fund (UNDP) for setting up the DDMUs offices in 10 most vulnerable districts of the province in initial phase. As per the programme, each DDMU will be given Rs. 2.4 million for procurement of vehicles and office equipment. This project will be replicated to remaining districts in the subsequent years. As a result of this intervention, these local level disaster bodies will generate resources, coordinate relief activities and create awareness, claiming "next time the response in any unforeseen calamity will be much better than before."

[Dawn - August 6, 2011]

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### **Floods 2010: Success Stories in the Worst of Times**

One year ago, Haseena Mai was a maid. Today, she has a poultry farm and earns Rs. 30,000 a month. Last year's floods were a blessing in disguise for some people, and Haseena is one of them. A widow and mother of three, Haseena lost her house in the worst floods in Pakistan's history that affected around 20 million people. As assistance, she was given 50 hens with three months of feed from a non-governmental organization (NGO). By the time the water receded, the hens were big enough to

lay eggs. Haseena then sold the eggs, bought more feed and eventually more hens. She now owns a small poultry farm and earns around Rs. 30,000. A resident of Muzaffargarh, Haseena has become an inspiration for the men and women in her area, but she is not alone in her success. There are others who did not give up when faced with the disaster and fought for a better life when everything was lost. Several acres of Rana Mumtaz Ali's agricultural land were lying barren because of salinity in Daira Dir Panah, when the floods brought fertile soil to his land. The once barren land produced 1,760 kilograms of wheat per acre this year. The crop is so thick now that even a snake cannot slither into it. Around 100 acres of land in Daira Dir Pana has become fertile. An area of around 15 kilometers of infertile land from Shanawan to Mahmood Kot can now be cultivated. Wheat production per acre before the floods was around 2,200 kilograms (kgs), which has now increased to 2,600 kgs per acre. Floodwater lakes have also provided livelihood to people. A lake near Abbas Wala Band, close to Kot Addu is abundant with fish. With no effort, Jamshed can catch up to 15 kilograms of fish. This lake was made after last year's flood has proved to be a blessing. The Fisheries Department of Punjab controls some 300 water bodies across Punjab that fish farmers can lease for three years by an auction. According to the Fisheries Department, the number of water bodies leased has risen by 30 per cent after the floods.

[The Express Tribune - August 10, 2011]

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### **Slum Dwellers Blame CDA, Islamabad Administration**

The All-Pakistan Alliance for Katchi Abadis has strongly criticized the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration for failing to make adequate arrangements to prevent flooding during the monsoon rains. In a press release issued, the alliance blamed CDA and ICT administration for failing to offset the impacts of flash floods torrential downpour which caused significant damage to homes of katchi abadi (slum) dwellers across the federal capital. Monthly rations and many household appliances of at least 300 homes in France Colony (F-7/4), 100 Quarters (F-6/2), Shopper Colony (Khadda Market) and Miskeen Colony (G-8) were swept away during the downpour. CDA's typical response that katchi abadi dwellers were 'warned to leave their homes' in advance of the floods speaks volumes for its perception that katchi abadi residents are second-class citizens. The alliance's chairperson, Aasim Sajjad Akhtar, said that majority of Islamabad's katchi abadis are built on and around natural nullahs and every monsoon the dwellers are faced with a threat to property and life that has never been properly addressed. Each incoming government raises populist slogans with regards to rights and regularization for katchi abadis, but well into the second decade of the 21st century, we are still living in subhuman conditions." The alliance has demanded CDA and the federal government to formulate a long-term policy that acknowledges the right of the capital's katchi abadi dwellers of affordable shelter.

[The Express Tribune - August 12, 2011]

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### **Over A Million People in Six Districts Affected By Flood, Says CM**

Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah has said that more than one million people have been affected by the recent flood in six districts of the province. Speaking to reporters at the Sukkur airport, Shah said that 1.1 million people had fallen victim to the rain havoc in interior Sindh. Sindh, which was one of the worst-affected provinces in last year's flooding, is still trying to rehabilitate flood survivors. According to the provincial disaster management authority, 7.2 million people were affected in the 2010 floods and, as of June 2011, 1.8 million people were living in relief camps. Shah

said that flood survivors had been accommodated in schools and they will be given Watan Cards soon. Meanwhile, National Assembly Speaker Fehmida Mirza has said that 600 millimeters of rainfall in Badin has affected around 90% of the 1.8 million people of Badin. Speaking at a news conference in Badin, Mirza said Badin had received a historic cloudburst. "The rain turned out to be more than double the amount we had anticipated. More than 80% of the homes in villages and 40% in urban areas of Badin have caved in, while the district has lost 80% of its crops." Appealing for urgent help of national and international NGOs, more than 200 relief camps in Badin are accommodating around 50,000 rain-affected people.

It has been a week since the rains but effective rescue or relief work by the national and provincial disaster management authorities are yet to see. An outbreak of various diseases as people are forced to drink unsafe water and are living in squalid conditions in camps is cited. Soon, will be dealing with a health crisis if we fail to mobilize medical teams immediately. The provincial government might divert uplift funds for the relief and rehabilitation of those affected by the recent heavy downpour. Unprecedented rains have devastated six districts of Badin, Tando Mohammed Khan, Tando Allahyar, Mirpurkhas, Umerkot and Thar. The Sindh government has declared Badin, Tando Muhammad Khan and Mirpurkhas calamity-hit areas following fresh floods in the province. With the allocation of Rs. 161 billion, the provincial government has already declared 2011 as the year of development. This year significant arrangements have been made to prevent floods. Regarding development work on dykes, embankments and vulnerable points have also been strengthened. Rescue operations are being conducted but workers are facing problems in inundated villages due to absence of a road network. Prime Minister has ordered the use of helicopters to help with the effort. Recent rains have caused flooding and destruction of infrastructure and crops in 24 out of 30 union councils in Mirpurkhas. Around 120 relief camps have been set up in the region for 18,000 people. Six union councils of Mithi District have also been inundated and all schools across the district have been converted into relief camps to shelter the victims. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) had earlier said over 200,000 people have been affected in flood-hit areas in interior Sindh.

[The Express Tribune - August 17, 2011]

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### **Still No Chopper As Flood Threat Looms Ahead**

The Punjab government has no helicopter for rescue operations in case torrential rains in Punjab cause flooding. The provincial government sent its own helicopter for overhaul and the federal government refused to provide an alternative helicopter on rent. The provincial government purchased a MI-17 helicopter in May 2004. Its flying life of 1,500 hours expired in July 2010 because it was excessively used by Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif to visit far-flung districts to monitor development work and hold public meetings. Last month, the helicopter was sent to Russia for servicing after being kept in a hangar for almost a year. The Punjab government will now have to pay Rs. 161 million for the overhauling and training of two pilots from Russia. The helicopter is scheduled to return in September. Now the government is confused on how to handle rescue operations in case of floods. The home department purchased a MI-17 helicopter because the government had to hire a helicopter from the Ministry of Defense to manage the visits. Later it was decided that the MI-17 helicopter should be used for all rescue and relief operations in case of floods, famine and earthquakes. It can board up to 10 people. The federal government was not in a position to rent one to the Punjab government.

[The Express Tribune - August 17, 2011]

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## **Flood Crisis Again**

There is no evidence as yet that the government has got its act together to deal with the new floods that have inundated parts of Badin district in Sindh and also Kasur district in Punjab. Reports from Badin speak of severe food shortages and the outbreak of disease, notably among children. A large quantity of rice crop is said to have been destroyed. According to the Sindh chief minister, over a million people in the province have been affected by the floods in around six districts. The army has been called in to help and about 45,000 people have moved to camps. The prime minister, on his visit to the area, promised a host of relief measures. However, given the governments past record, these have hardly served to reassure the people who claim they have so far received little help from official quarters. In Kasur, while the Rangers have been called out and the district administration says plans have been made to evacuate people to eight relief camps set up in the area, people are reportedly reluctant to move and leave their houses, lands and livestock behind. It is understood that the UN agencies, after an initial survey conducted by the organization's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Activity, is on standby, ready to move in when necessary. The UN organizations believe 75,000 people could be displaced by the latest flood. It is uncertain if the government – specifically the National Disaster Management Authority – has called upon other international agencies to help alleviate the suffering of the people. There has been no word of this. In a disturbing repetition of last year's events, we hear again, of drains breaking their banks in Badin and other areas. Following last year's devastating floods, there was talk of persuading the Irrigation Department to improve its working. This does not appear to have produced results. Worse still, as a number of international humanitarian agencies have warned over the past few weeks, it seems very little has been learnt from the experience of the previous year. The degree of disaster preparedness required to avoid unnecessary suffering was simply not in place. Steps to issue early warnings also appear to have been skipped. This is nothing short of a disaster in itself. One would expect that the various organizations set up to help cope with disaster would be better able to deal with the problems that have arisen once again. This, it seems, is not the case. Evidence to this effect continues to pour in with the rain.

[The News - August 18, 2011]

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## **Civil Society Criticizes Government for Slow Response to Flood-Hit Areas**

Civil society organizations engaged in humanitarian relief work after rains in Sindh expressed concern over the poor response by state organizations, especially the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Provincial Disaster management Authority (PDMA) and its district bodies to the rain and flood-hit areas of Sindh. At the meeting, civil society actors decided to form the Sindh People's Commission on Disaster Prevention and Management (SPCDP) to take initiative in mobilizing organizations working in the affected areas to lessen the losses to agriculture, infrastructure and to cater to the immediate needs of the displaced families. During the information sharing, it was discovered that the affected districts were Mirpurkhas, Badin, Tharparkar, Thatta, Tando Mohammed Khan and parts of Tando Allahyar. The losses were beyond expectations and hundreds of people were living at roadsides, railway tracks, banks of safe canals and mounds in the area without any assistance. More than 30,000 people from Badin district have reportedly migrated to Thar in the fear that the disaster may damage their economic and livelihood resources.

They observed that the people would go back to their native areas after the rainwater receded, and also noted that the situation in the villages was direr. In this regard the government should approach UN aid agencies to begin relief work without further delay and allow NGOs to initiate help to the affected people. Badin and Mirpurkhas districts were the worst affected areas in terms of

losses to crops and damage to infrastructure. Left Bank Outfall Drain (LBOD) and other saline water drains built to drain out waste-water have breaches, which have inundated a wide area, compelling people to shift their families to safer places. The figure of one million people displacement was incorrect, as more people had been affected. They observed that early warning systems were lacking in disaster-prone areas and that the people had faced this kind of loss in the past and had faced bitter experiences in relief camps, making them wary of making use of those facilities again. There was no immediate government response in any area after the heavy rains. Mostly the marginalized classes in these areas are in trouble. More than 20 deaths have occurred due to different diseases, the result of the poor health and hygiene situation in relief camps.

**[Daily Times - August 21, 2011]**

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