

## DISASTER & IDP CRISIS

### Situation of IDPs

#### Registration of IDPs Starts In Kurram

Coordinator FATA Disaster Management Authority Mujahid Turi said that 160 displaced families, who fled their homes in the central tehsil, had been registered. On the directives of the FDMA, two registration points have been set up to facilitate the IDPs. The main camp had been set up in Durrani, lower Kurram where 47 affected families had been accommodated. Majority of the displaced families had opted to live with their relatives. The government recently notified 80 square kilometer area in central Kurram as conflict zone where operation against militants is to be launched soon. Troops` deployment in the valley is in progress as security in Parachinar and other parts of the agency has been tightened. The authorities have placed ban on display of weapons in Parachinar and other parts of upper Kurram. Paramilitary forces have also been deployed at Parachinar Airport. A contingency plan had been prepared to cope with the humanitarian crisis. Durrani Camp had capacity to accommodate 4,000 families. The directorate of works and services would provide drinking water at the camp and a survey in this regard had been completed. Over 30,000 families have already been displaced in Kurram Agency due to the conflict and violence since 2007. Majority of the IDPs had migrated to Peshawar and other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

[Dawn – June 30, 2011]

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#### Flood Victims Still Await Compensation

The policy dialogue titled, `Floods 2010: Governance Issues in Disaster Risk Management` was jointly organized by Action Aid Pakistan and Institute of Social and Policy Science to mark the first anniversary of the devastating 2010 flood. The speakers, while pointing out the institutional, legal and financial lacunas in the national disaster management, asked the government to introduce appropriate systems to deal with the grievances of the flood-affected people who could not get Watan cards. They also demanded immediate release of second installment to those who had been given the Watan cards. The speakers said that at policy level, the government should give special considerations to the women heading households and other such vulnerable groups in issuing the Watan cards while facilitating them at the implementation level. They said that the Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs) lacked required capacities to efficiently respond to the disasters and appropriate steps should be taken to improve the skills and abilities of the PDMAs so that they might play a leading role in coordinating response to the floods and other disasters. They criticized the Parliament for not putting proper efforts in drafting the National Disaster Management Act 2010. They said that NDM Act 2010 should be reviewed comprehensively to avoid duplication of roles and responsibilities. Jemal Ahmed, Country Director Action Aid Pakistan, in his opening remarks said that the basic objective of holding the policy dialogue was to discuss and debate legal, institutional, financial and implementation challenges for effective Disaster Risk Management (DRM), particularly in the context of floods 2010. Dr. Salman Hamayoun, Executive Director ISAPS said that lack of coordination in response to floods 2010 was not only among the public and civil society organizations but it was also evident in different organs of the United Nations dealing with the flood disaster. Member NDMA-DRR, Ahmed Kamal said that the existing

budgetary allocation for disaster risk management had many flaws as more than 99 per cent of the funds were being spent on flood response whereas literally a meager amount was being spent on disaster preparedness. He said that NDMA was in a process of finalizing the national contingency plan that would soon be made public. PDMA representatives from Punjab, Balochistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir were also present on the occasion. They noted down the observations made by the participants of the policy dialogue and pledged to incorporate the feedback in their future course of actions. Azhar Lashari of Action Aid laid emphasis on the need of effective institutional framework to cope with the disasters such as 2010 flood.

[Dawn – June 22, 2011]

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## Assessments & Reports

### SC Orders Implementation of Flood Commission's Recommendations

The Supreme Court directed the federal and provincial governments to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the Flood Inquiry Commission and take strict action against responsible departments whose negligence had caused colossal losses of billion of rupees to the national economy. A three-member bench of the apex court comprising Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, Justice Tariq Parvez and Justice Amir Hani Muslim, announced the quick implementation of the recommendations of the Commission and directed that the text of the recommendations be published in national and regional languages and made public. The court further said that the concerned provincial chief secretaries should ensure strict action against those found responsible for negligence and a report in this regard be submitted to the registrar of the Supreme Court in 15 days. The Flood Inquiry Commission submitted its 200-page final report in the Supreme Court, revealing that the negligence of the Irrigation departments of Sindh and Balochistan had caused a colossal loss of Rs. 855 billion to the national economy during the devastating floods of 2010. After taking the report, the court ordered that the report be translated into Urdu and made public and held that orders for implementation of the commission's recommendations would be announced. According to the report, 1600 people lost their lives and thousands were injured. Almost 4.5 million people lost their jobs, mostly in the farming sector. The Rabi crops for 2010-11 were badly affected and 20 million people became internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 7.0 million students were deprived of their academic session. The report said the encroachments contributed to obstructions in the flow of water resulting in flooding of many areas.

Local influential persons had encroached thousands of acres of land in kaccha areas. Among those directly responsible for the deluge of Guddu are the chief engineer, in charge XEN and their staff, the report said. The report said major damage was caused due to lack of maintenance and repair of river embankments, canals and obstruction by major highways/motorways constructed by the Irrigation Department and the National Highway Authority (NHA) and others across the country. The report said that flood affectees did not receive help in time and that currently early warning facilities in the country were of a limited nature. "There are only seven Radars in the whole country. There is no coverage in the northwest of the country and Balochistan, including the coastal belt of 960 km," the report pointed out. The report said the chief and irrigation secretaries of Sindh had tried to conceal the facts while irregularities were found in the Sindh Irrigation Department. The commission recommended a 10-year audit of the department. The major reason for inundation of agricultural lands and abadis on the northern side of Peshawar-Islamabad Motorway (M-1) was the inadequate capacity of crossing bridges meant for the drainages of flood flows in rivers located between Peshawar and Mardan. The motorway virtually acted like a 'bund' obstructing the natural

course of water flows in the area. The bed of river Kabul, upstream and downstream of the main Kabul river bridge, had silted up to an alarming level, which has decreased the waterway, the report said. On December 15, 2010, the apex court had constituted the Flood Inquiry Commission headed by Muhammad Azam Khan and comprising Fateh Khan Khajjak, A.W Kazi and Kh Zaheer Ahmed to investigate the damages caused by the 2010 flood that engulfed the Pakistan and caused unprecedented damage to life and property. The Supreme Court had taken suo moto notice of the matter on the letters of renowned lawyer Fakhruddin G Ebrahim, Deputy Chairman Senate Jan Muhammad Khan Jamali, Dr Asad Leghari, Muhammad Rahim Baloch and advocate Zahida Thebo, requesting the chief justice to probe the matter of breaches in dykes and unauthorized diversion of floodwaters by influential people to save their lands.

[The News – June 8, 2011]

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### **Attabad Tragedy: Audit Report of Relief Aid to Be Made Public**

Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly Speaker Wazir Baig said that an audit report will be carried out into the money received by the Gilgit Baltistan administration in the wake of the Attabad tragedy. The audit report will be then presented in the legislative assembly. Although he didn't explain the reason behind his decision, it is believed that the complaints raised by the people of Gojal forced him to take action. In January 2010, a massive landslide blocked Hunza River at Attabad, creating a lake that not only submerged a large stretch of the Karakoram Highway, but also five villages upstream. Including China and the Punjab government, dozens of philanthropists, charity organizations, members of the civil society and non-governmental organizations had not only provided financial support but also relief goods for the victims of the tragedy. As the media highlighted the issues, the flow of aid to the region intensified from the international community with donors and funding agencies directly and indirectly approaching the displaced people. Last year China donated food, coal and diesel for the people of Gojal, the road to which is still blocked. The people of Gojal have been faced with hardships ever since the tragedy occurred and have often raised questions over the distribution of aid among the people. Details of the money spent are yet to be sought from concerned officials. The speaker conveyed his sympathies with the people of Attabad and Gojal, and added that the audit will be carried out by an auditor general. If the task of draining the lake is handed over to China, the issue can be settled soon. He said that the spillway will be dug 100 meters deep so as to let the water stored inside flow out.

[The Express Tribune - June 01, 2011]

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### **Pakistan Hosts Highest Number of Refugees: UNHCR**

Pakistan hosts the highest number of refugees that is 1.9 million. Iran and Syria follow Pakistan with 1.1 million and 1 million refugees, respectively. The number of people forced to flee their homes to escape war or abuse has risen to its highest for 15 years, with four out of five refugees in developing countries. In all, there were 43.7 million displaced people worldwide at the end of 2010, up from 43.3 million a year before, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). They include 15.4 million refugees who fled across borders – 80 percent of them to nearby developing countries – and 27.5 million uprooted within their own homelands, it said in an annual report. Another 850,000 are asylum seekers who lodged claims. Fear about supposed floods of refugees in industrialized countries is being vastly overblown or mistakenly conflated with issues of migration. Meanwhile it's poorer countries that are left having to pick up the burden. The world's poorest countries host huge refugee populations, both in absolute terms and in relation to their

economic size, according to its report, “Global Trends 2010”. Slightly more than half of all refugees are children under 18. Afghans form the largest group, 3 million refugees, including many who left their homeland years ago, followed by Iraqis, Somalis and Congolese, whose countries are also mired in protracted conflicts. But there is an “uneven distribution” of the world’s displaced people. Sometimes it seems the loudest objections come from countries that don’t shoulder the biggest burden. Thousands of people fleeing upheavals in North Africa have been heading to Italy on rickety boats in recent months, creating an immigration crisis in Lampedusa, an Italian island situated half way between Tunisia and Sicily. In Europe, there were 1.6 million refugees at the end of 2010, down some 40,700 from a year before, mainly due to registration and verification conducted in the Balkans, according to UNHCR. The agency was founded 60 years ago to help 2.1 million refugees in Europe after World War Two. Asia is home to some 4 million refugees, followed by 2.1 million in Africa, while there are nearly 7 million in the Middle East and North Africa and 800,000 in the Americas. Some 100,000 refugees who could not return home or stay in their first countries of asylum were resettled last year in 22 countries, more than 70,000 of them in the United States. Overall there is a huge need for solutions to provide safety and assistance and to draw attention to what many of us take for granted, a place to call home.

[Daily Times - June 20, 2011]

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## Relief & Rehabilitation Responses

### Cash Transfers: UK to Contribute To Watan Card Programme

The United Kingdom announced to give 60 million pounds (Rs. 8.4 billion) for cash transfers to the flood-affected population besides reiterating commitment to provide 1.4 billion pounds (Rs. 196 billion) in aid to Pakistan for social sector and governance over four years. The aid for flood-affected population reflects a policy change on part of the UK that had earlier refused to provide funds for the Citizens’ Damages Compensation Programme (CDCP). The UK has pegged the release of money with a World Bank loan for the programme. While the WB has already approved the loan, the disbursements would be made after completion of the ongoing cost-benefit analysis exercise being conducted at the provincial level, the official added. The government had announced to give Rs.100, 000 in cash to each flood-stricken family under the CDCP. The total cost of the programme is Rs. 160 billion. According to an official handout under the new operational plan 2011-15 for Pakistan, the UK had committed almost 1.4 billion pounds in development assistance for poverty reduction, health, education and governance. According to the reprioritized operational plan, out of 1.4 billion pounds, the UK would give 645 million pounds for the education sector, something they were reluctant to commit to earlier. The remaining amount would be spent on eradication of poverty and improving governance. The UK-Pakistan development cooperation would enhance in the future and that Pakistan could become the highest recipient of UK’s assistance by 2015. For the outgoing financial year, the UK had announced to give 41 million pounds (Rs. 5.8 billion) in aid to Pakistan. Of that, Rs700 million were under additional funding for the earthquake-affected areas and Rs 1.3 billion for national maternal and newborn child healthcare programme. The UK also committed to give a one-billion-rupee grant for Punjab economic opportunities programme. Both sides expressed their resolve to further deepen and strengthen the economic and development cooperation between the two countries. Regional trade and various aspects of government’s debt position and the IMF programme also came under discussion.

[The Express Tribune - June 01, 2011]

## World Bank Approves \$125 Million for Watan Cards

The agreement, signed by Economic Affairs Secretary Wajid Rana and World Bank Country Director Rachid Benmessaoud, would also pave the way for release of a £60 million grant that the United Kingdom had announced for the Flood Emergency Cash programme, but had pegged to the release of the World Bank loan. However, still there are hiccups in release of the World Bank loan as the disbursements would be made after completion of an ongoing cost-benefit analysis exercise, currently being completed at the provincial level. Certain actions are required to be implemented before the release of the money and the government hopes the process would be completed soon. To offset the economic impact of the 2010 floods, the government announced that it would give Rs. 100,000 in cash to each of the 1.6 million affected households under the Citizen Damages Compensation Programme. The total cost of the programme is Rs. 160 billion. The federal government would bear Rs. 48 billion out of the total cost. Launched in September 2010, the government has given an initial tranche of Rs. 20,000 under the programme to flood victims in order to cover their immediate needs. The next phase, supported by the World Bank and the UK donation, will provide an additional payment of Rs. 40,000 to around 1.1 million of the most affected households. Finance ministry sources told that the United States would soon announce to release an amount of \$190 million for the programme. The release agreement is expected to be signed during a visit of high ranking official of the Obama Administration. The government has been trying to allay many of the IMF's concerns in recent months with several politically unpopular but economically necessary decisions, such as deregulating much of the pricing in the energy sector and removing sales tax exemptions for several sectors. International lenders and donor agencies appear to view these developments as a positive sign, though much depends on the government's ability to pass the budget for fiscal year 2012 in the form proposed by the finance ministry.

[The Express Tribune - June 10, 2011]

## Requirements to Deal with Disasters

### Flood Assessment: Gilani Calls for Flood Management Plan

A meeting at the Prime Minister Secretariat, for the first-ever time was held to assess flood preparedness ahead of the monsoon season. Stressing the need to remove institutional bottlenecks, Prime Minister Gilani said that there was a need to devise a strategy to face future challenges. Early warning and proper arrangements would reduce the effects of natural calamities for flood forecasting. Focusing on the need for organizational capacity-building plans should also be chalked out for flood relief, management of overflow channels for barrages and head works, safety of protective embankments, realignment of important channels for releasing excess water and the development of alternative road links. Emergency services should be efficient and well-coordinated at national, provincial, and district levels. Expressing the hope that this time; the country would be better prepared to handle any adverse situation during and after the monsoons. Gilani instructed the cabinet division and the National Disaster Management Authority to come up with a comprehensive plan to reduce and eventually end the country's dependence on foreign assistance. Officials of the Pakistan Meteorological Department are asked to approach their counterparts in developed countries, especially China, to help them in developing a better forecasting model. Directing the ministry of water and power to coordinate with provincial governments and experts to prepare a strategy on ways to deal with specific breaches nobody should be allowed to breach any canal or protective wall on their own. The prime minister said that adequate quantity of relief goods should be available at district level to meet any eventuality. It is essential for health, water

and power and communications ministries to improve coordination ahead of the monsoon season. Authorities were also told to regularly inspect primary embankments.

[The Express Tribune - June 26, 2011]

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### **Disaster Response: Improved Psychosocial Services Stressed**

There is an urgent need to improve psycho-social support services for disaster-affected communities and for collaborative efforts to integrate such services into all disaster preparedness programmes. This was the consensus emerged at a seminar on psychosocial interventions and disaster response. The seminar was organized by Rozan, an Islamabad-based non-governmental organization (NGO) working on mental health and violence. Speakers discussed challenges and lessons learnt from psychosocial work while sharing recommendations to explore ways to address gaps. A study titled, “Improving psychosocial support services for disaster-affected communities in Pakistan: A needs analysis and review after the 2010 floods in Pakistan,” conducted by the NGO was also shared at the seminar. The study highlights existing psycho-social issues of men, women, adolescents and children including stress, anxiety, grief, need for privacy, frustration due to slow pace of rehabilitation, uncertainty about the future and how these factors impact the ability of communities to rebuild their lives after the devastating floods. The study reveals that not only are psychosocial initiatives insufficient in number, many are vertical programmes addressing either mental health needs or are social community activities that do not adequately meet the community’s psychological needs. It stresses that this work needs to be integrated and intervention needs to address both dynamics.

Since many people affected by the disaster do not necessarily need specialized psychiatric or psychological services, mental health-focused models must also expand their work to include some social and development activities whether through building the capacity of one’s own staff or by collaborating with other NGOs who are able to provide social support. Other key recommendations included the need for development and empowerment based work with communities on gender and rights, the need to address issues of gender based violence, introducing work with boys and men as part of psychosocial interventions as well as building staff capacities in psychosocial issues and programming etc. The concept of psychosocial support is as diverse and broad as the communities in which it is applied. Collaborations between different organizations with varying levels of expertise – such as psychological support, social support, community development, gender and human rights – access and experience are essential to effectively meet the psychosocial needs of a disaster-affected community. The government and NGOs must work together to develop strategies to better understand, manage and access funds for psychosocial support. Steps to develop minimum psychosocial support standards guidelines in the NDMA framework to assist aid organizations in incorporating basic psychosocial support as part of all post-disaster planning work are needed.

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