



Learning from the Past Response in Pakistan and Afghanistan Flood Response- 15th September 2022

Pakistan

Pakistan has been enduring severe monsoon weather since mid-June, with rainfall equivalent to 2.8 times its national 30-year average causing widespread flooding and landslides and inducing displacement, especially in Baluchistan and Sindh provinces. Millions of people have been affected and hundreds of people have been killed, with many more injured. Damage to houses and public infrastructure is widespread. The National Disaster Management Authority has declared a national emergency – is leading the response in coordinating assessments and directing humanitarian relief to flood-affected people. The Government of Pakistan and the humanitarian community are delivering urgent lifesaving aid for people who have been affected, but humanitarian needs exceed current response capacities. Additional resources are needed to scale up humanitarian assistance¹.

On Tuesday (30 August) the UN will launch a US\$161 million UN Flash Appeal to provide critical food and cash assistance to nearly 1 million people in districts in Baluchistan, Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces; US\$34.28 million is urgently needed to enable the scale-up².

Afghanistan

Over the past few days, heavy rains and flash flooding have also been reported in several provinces across the eastern, southern, south-eastern and central regions of Afghanistan. The floods have destroyed crops, agricultural land and local infrastructure, with floods reportedly cutting off access along several roads, including the Charikar – Bamyan and Terapass – Gardez highways in the central region³.

According to the report released by OCHA- Afghanistan on August 24, some 3,398 homes are estimated to have been damaged or destroyed as a result of the floods – 15 in Ghor, 3,000 in Logar, 195 in Maidan Wardak and 188 in Parwan provinces – with 8246 families affected across 13 provinces.

Already this year, 256 people have been reportedly killed by flash floods, including 118 since 1 August. This is a 75 percent increase on those killed by floods in 2021 when 147 people lost their lives, including 127 people in a single event in Nuristan in July.

This is compounding already existing crisis from the earthquake in August. Humanitarian partners continue to mobilise and scale up their capacity and presence to respond to communities that were hit by the 5.9 magnitude earthquake in Afghanistan this June. Relief web reported that women and girls comprise the majority of those affected (51 per cent) and that at least 10,331 homes (93 per cent of those assessed) have been damaged (fully or partially) in Paktika and Khost provinces with many more are at risk of collapse. A joint needs assessment conducted by the UNOCHA and the national aid community states a total of around 100,000 people (14,000 families) are in need of humanitarian assistance⁴.

¹ This report is produced by the OCHA Humanitarian Advisory Team (HAT) in Pakistan in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 13 to 26 August 2022. PAKISTAN: 2022 Monsoon Floods Situation Report No. 03, 26 August 2022

² Pakistan floods: Government calls on WFP to support emergency response, 29 August 2022

<https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/pakistan-floods-government-calls-wfp-support-emergency-response>

³ Afghanistan: Flash Update #4 - Flash Flooding in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Regions (17 August 2022)

⁴ Community World Service Asia, SITUATION UPDATE, AUGUST 26, 2022 and UNOCHA Afghanistan Report 25 August

Doing things differently learning from the past

A4EP calls on the international humanitarian community to learn from the past response and improve the present response in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. We call for donors to be as generous as they have been to the Ukraine crisis to the needs of flood affected populations in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Their actions will show their commitment to equitable treatment of people in need. We call on signatories of the Grand Bargain and Charter4Change to ensure they implement their commitments to localisation. We also urge the Donors and UN agencies also to take the opportunity to start implementing their commitments made in the outcome paper "Towards Co-Ownership: The Role of Intermediaries in Supporting Locally-Led Humanitarian Action and involve local partners and ensure co-ownership.

Pakistan

1. Funding and financing: So far the NGO community has been faster to raise funds allocating up to \$10million compared to \$3-4 million by UN Agencies. The current UN appeal of US\$161 million is nowhere near enough to deal with the scale of present crisis where 33 million people have been affected compared to 22 million, which well in access of the floods of 2010 (see the table below), where \$3.18bn was allocated for the response. Reflecting on experience of past underfunded apples it is essential to be more realistic about the funding that will be required in light of the present economic and political cries. The donors should consider multiple channels for funding as the UN bureaucratic processes slow down the response. it is crucial that donors also channel funds to the local, national, INGO partners who are closer to the communities and faster to respond.

Comparison (Pakistan Floods 2022 with Floods 2010)		
Indicator(s)	Floods 2022	Floods 2010
Population affected	33 million	22 million
Districts affected	116 districts	78 districts
Houses damaged	1 million (still counting)	1.6 million
Presence of Humanitarian Organizations	70 organizations	158 organizations
People living below poverty line	39.2%	36.8%
GDP per capita income	\$1,538	\$987
Inflation rate	24.9%	15.7%
Crop area affected	2 million acres	1.97 million acres
Major bridges damaged	157 bridges	40 bridges
Damages to Road Infrastructure	3,457 km (still counting)	5,646 km

2. Local leadership in Coordination: As OCHA is quitting and no longer has responsibility for coordination in Pakistan, it has been transferred to UNDP, which does not have experience in coordination of humanitarian action. OCHA should transfer the capacity to local humanitarian co-ordination mechanisms and support and reinforce them.
3. Local leadership in response: Local organisations are based in the community and well positioned to respond. They must be able to access resources to provide timely response. Local actors want to ensure that funds raised in the name of affected population, actually reach the communities in need. Long chain of intermediaries with high costs should be avoided to ensure that majority to the funds that are allocated to the crisis reach the communities in need.
4. Learning from the past: A study should be commissioned to reflect of the learning 12 years on, comparing 2010 response to today's response looking at efficiency and effectiveness of response to avoid the mistakes and bureaucracy of the past. It will help to identify the gaps from previous practice to adjust the structures.
5. Transparency and accountability: International community must insure full transparency of funding through robust reporting of the funds raised in the name of affected population.
6. Enabling environment: The government and international actors must create an enabling environment for those who are responding to the unprecedented emergency. CSOs must have access and reduced bureaucratic burdens if they are to provide timely and effective response.

7. Baking and financial blockages: Pakistan is far from the only country where humanitarian responses by Islamic NGOs have seen their financial services disrupted by banks. It has heightened a sense of discrimination. We urge financial institutions to facilitate the transfer of funds so organizations can respond quickly and effectively.

Afghanistan

1. Need for more robust support: So far little to no support has been received by the populations affected by the floods. The devastating effect of the earthquake, the drought, economic hardship is having a devastating effect on people of Afghanistan. International humanitarian community need to do more to mobilise support.
2. International support and solidarity: As there is no government to government collaboration the international humanitarian agencies can bridge the gap as the Taliban regime is allowing the humanitarian organisations, there is acceptability of international humanitarian civil society so we need to capitalise on that. INGOs can play a crucial role if they work with local partners in this crisis, they have the community acceptance and they are more cost effective and they do not have to go through specific protocols like the UN agencies.
3. Funding and financing: The freeze of resources and decreasing of level of support by donor agencies is hampering response efforts. The current restriction and blockade is affecting response. Apart from political aspect international community should unfreeze the humanitarian funds and the humanitarian agencies should take leadership and come forward on humanitarian basis to bridge the gap.
4. Response coordination: UN/OCHA is coordinating the efforts to respond to the flash floods, some other INGOs have already started the need assessment in Khushi district of Logar, Nengrahar province. According to the current resources and logistic situation, its recommended for the Donor agencies to make funding opportunities available to mobilize the NGOs, as they will be more effectively can reach out the incident areas, with less resources and limited time.

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