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OCHA Situation Report No. 3
Pakistan – Rains / Snowfall
15 February 2005

Approximately 500,000 people affected

This situation report is based on information received from the office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Pakistan.

Situation

1. Heavy snowfall and rains over the past two weeks have now been followed by another wet spell further adding to the damages that have already taken place in Northern Areas, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), Balochistan and parts of Punjab Province. These fresh spells of rains in the affected areas especially in Balochistan, NWFP and AJK have adversely affected the relief efforts and increased the miseries of the affected populations.
2. In Pasni Tehsil (Balochistan), Shadi Kaur Dam burst after more than two weeks of heavy rains. According to the local authorities, the number of deaths is 82 and the missing persons have been rescued successfully from the villages heavily affected by the dam burst and breaches. Five villages and five wards of Pasni Township and six villages with a population of more than 3,000 in Turbat have been severely affected and many houses destroyed. According to official sources, 25 persons have been killed by rains/floods in Turbat, 11 in Chaman, 9 in Pishin, 7 in Awaran and 10 in Jaffarabad and Naseerabad. 25 more persons were killed in Northern Balochistan due to floods caused by the fresh rainy spell in the province. Some 40,000 acres of standing crops is considered completely destroyed. The floods have also badly damaged nearly 40 kilometers of the Mekran Coastal Highway and partially damaged more than 250 kilometers at different points rendering the highway unfit for vehicular traffic. There are fresh reports of damages to road network and bridges causing disruptions and suspension of traffic to the affected areas.
3. Heavy rains have also badly affected adjoining districts and townships including Ormara, Bela, Awaran, Kaetch, Turbat and areas around Dasht River. There are fresh reports of damages in Jhal Magsi area and increased water flows in the river from central parts to the coastal zone with impact on the bridges and destruction/damages to mud houses and small earthen dams built on self help basis by the communities. There are reports of nearly half a million people being badly affected by heavy rains and flood with estimates of four thousand families being without shelter.
4. As many as 46 persons have been reported to be killed as a result of avalanches in Azad Jammu and Kashmir region. 12 bodies have been recovered and injured rescued by helicopters for treatment to health facilities in Muzaffarabad. Search is still continuing for the rest of the people who remain buried under the avalanches.

5. There have been reports of at least 21 more deaths while 33 are missing as a result of avalanches in Mansehra and Kohistan districts of NWFP.
6. On 12 February, a huge avalanche hit at least four houses in Kohistan district as a result of which at least 42 persons were buried alive. These persons have been killed in Dir, Swat, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Battagram, Malakand and Mardan districts of North West Frontier Province. Hazard winter conditions have paralysed daily life in most parts of Abbottabad, Mansehra districts and Swat region, with the local population cut off as both road network and communication system are still blocked. Electricity remains cuts off to many of the affected regions. Highway Department and Pakistan Army are reported to have deployed heavy equipment to clear road blockages caused by heavy snow but the continuing rains and snow are hampering the work. There are reports of massive losses to mud houses and people becoming without shelter. Assessment of the damages is not possible at the moment as the communication network is inoperative in the badly affected areas and helicopters unable to fly due to the continuing bad weather.
7. Eight members of a family were reported killed as a result of avalanches in Astore Valley in the Northern Areas of Pakistan. The avalanches also destroyed more than 35 houses and cattle sheds in the valley.
8. In the Broghal and Yarkhoon valleys of Chitral District (Northern Areas), some 4,000 vulnerable persons are completely cut off and isolated as a result of continuous snowfall since December 2004. While in Punjab, a number of houses have collapsed and large number of persons reported injured.
9. 42 soldiers of the Pakistan Army were trapped in Khyber Agency on 10 February due to heavy snowfall. 16 of them have been rescued while the remaining 26 are still missing and search of the missing soldiers continuing without further success.

National Response

10. The Prime Minister visited the affected areas of NWFP yesterday and announced a compensation package for the affected population indicating payment of Rs. 100,000 to the family of each deceased person and Rs. 50,000 to each injured. He also assured that the Government would be undertaking steps to alleviate the suffering of the victims.
11. The Chief Minister of the NWFP also announced a relief package of Rs. 58 million for the victims of the province and has approached the Federal Government for an emergency grant of Rs. 100 million.
12. The President of Pakistan visited Balochistan and toured the affected areas in Pasni and Gawadar. He announced a special package for the affected areas and assured that each bereaved family would get a cash compensation of Rs. 100,000. The package also includes compensation to the injured with serious and minor injuries as well as interest free long term loans to the victims by the financial institutions for rehabilitation of their livelihoods.
13. Over 4,000 personnel from the Pakistan Army, Navy, Coast Guards and FC are continuing search and rescue and relief operation in Pasni and other affected regions of Balochistan. The Government Authorities in Balochistan have established an emergency cell in the Chief Minister Secretariat to closely monitor the situation. Due to the disruption of communications in the

affected areas limited information has been received and efforts are being made to obtain full information of the losses.

14. Emergency Relief Cell of the Federal Government has rushed two plane loads of relief supplies to Pasni and Gawadar. The items include 300 tents, 4,000 blankets, 200 anti-snake venom vials and water purification tablets. Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has rushed 500 tents and 700 blankets from Quetta to the affected area. 40 tones of food items are being sent by PRCS from Islamabad via Karachi by road. PRCS has also dispatched two truckloads of relief goods for NWFP comprising of blankets, tents, kitchen utensils, clothing, drinking water and food items. A similar consignment has also been dispatched Azad Kashmir for distribution to the affected populations. 7 helicopters and C-130 planes are being used for rescue and relief activities. Two more C-130s carrying tents, blankets, warm clothes and foodstuff provided by PRCS and other sources arrived at Gawadar airport.
15. A Joint Assessment Mission comprising of members from Islamic Relief-UK, OXFAM, Concern and MSF Holland has submitted its initial flood assessment report for Gawadar. The Mission was not able to get a clear picture as it could not visit all the affected areas but has stressed on the immediate need for food items, clean water, tents and blankets. According to the mission, contradictory information about the damages was available from different sources and it would take at least 3-4 days for the situation to become clear.

International Response

16. The Government of Pakistan has not requested international assistance at this stage. However, the Federal Government has shown inclination to welcome help from bilateral and multilateral partners including the United Nations. The UN Rapid Assessment Mission to Balochistan led by UNICEF and comprising of experts from WFP, WHO and UNDP has assembled in Lasbela. The second meeting of the UN Disaster Management Team (UNDMT) chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator was held on 14 February to review the situation and it has been agreed to also rush UN Rapid Assessment Missions to NWFP and AJK in order to cover all the affected areas in the country. The Mission for NWFP led by WHO left this morning for Peshawar and had meetings with the concerned Provincial Officials. UNICEF, WFP and UNDP are also joining this mission. UNFPA is leading the UN Rapid Needs Assessment Mission for AJK with participation from the other three UN Agencies and Islamic Relief which has a presence in the region.
17. UNICEF Pakistan has delivered today, a truckload of relief items at Lasbela for distribution to the victims in the adjoining areas. This consignment comprises of 110 cartons of emergency food rations (containing high energy biscuits), 15,000 water tabs, 500 bars of toilet soap, 500 packets of soap for clothes, 1,000 jerry cans (20 litres), 300 plastic buckets (8 litres), 1,200 sweaters, 2,000 woollen blankets, 25 cartons of nerox water filters, 2 basic health kits (for 10,000 population for three months) and 200 tarpaulin sheets (2 x 2 m). Another consignment comprising of 110 cartons of emergency food rations (containing high energy biscuits), 15,000 water tabs, 500 pieces of water filter cloth (1 x 1m), 500 bars of toilet soap, 500 packets of soap for clothes, 1,000 jerry cans (20 litres), 300 plastic buckets (8 litres), 1,200 sweaters, 2,000 woollen blankets, 25 cartons of nerox water filters, 2 basic health kits (for 10,000 population for three months) and 200 tarpaulin sheets (2 x 2 m) is being dispatched today by sea from Karachi to Gawadar. For provision of relief to the affected populations of Swat in NWFP, UNICEF is in the process of sending a consignment containing 1,000 woollen blankets, 200 sweaters, 100 bars of hand soap, 100 packets of soap for clothes, 1 basic health kit (for 10,000 population for three months) and 100 tarpaulin sheets (2 x 2m).

18. UNHCR has agreed to contribute US\$ 20,000 in the form of tents and other shelter items which will be delivered to the victims in Pasni and Gawadar
19. WHO will contribute US\$ 25,000 worth of emergency medical supplies for the affected populations.
20. UNESCO is contributing a sum of US\$ 25,000 in support to the education facilities damaged by the floods in Balochistan.
21. UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has increased its contribution through UNDP Islamabad by additional US\$ 20,000, to a total amount of US\$ 50,000. The international community is being kept in picture and would be thoroughly briefed on receipt of the UN Assessment Reports from the field. The Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan is monitoring the situation and is in close contact with the authorities concerned at the Federal, Provincial and District levels and would continue to review the situation on regular basis. The next meeting of the UNDMT would be taking place on Wednesday 16 February 2005.
22. OCHA is in close contact with the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan and will revert with further information as required.
23. This situation report, together with further information on ongoing emergencies, is also available on the OCHA Internet Website at <http://www.reliefweb.int>

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