

120 Days After the South Asia Earthquake and Beyond Winter 2006

One hundred and twenty days after the South Asia earthquake on 8 October 2005, UNHCR remains fully engaged to support the Government of Pakistan's efforts to save lives of the displaced over winter, as well as deliver and monitor assistance to the displaced living in camps of above 50 tents.

The Government and military have been at the forefront of coordinating and delivering the emergency response in the aftermath of the earthquake which affected approximately 1.9 million persons in North West Frontier Province and Pakistan-administered Kashmir.

As part of the United Nations interagency support to the Government of Pakistan, UNHCR is lead agency of the "Camp Management Cluster" (CMC). UNHCR supports the running of camps by providing material and technical assistance and coordinating the delivery of basic services such as healthcare, water, sanitation and education. In this respect, it has been important to work in close coordination with other related clusters to ensure that essential needs are met in the common interagency response. Cooperation with the shelter cluster (led by IOM), food and nutrition (led by WFP), health (led by WHO),



*An aerial view of Bassian relief camp run by the military with UNHCR support in Balakot, North West Frontier Province.
UNHCR/V.Tan*

water and sanitation (led by UNICEF), logistics (led by WFP), protection and education (led by UNICEF) has been key. In cooperation with others, UNHCR is leading the inter-agency effort in camp situations to assist close to 150,000 people living in 147 camps in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Pakistan-administered Kashmir.

The Government of Pakistan adopted the Camp Management Strategy on 29 November 2005 prepared and endorsed by the camp management cluster; this is now being implemented in the field.

Achievements to date

Assistance to Beneficiaries

UNHCR has focused its efforts on the delivery of quality assistance to ensure survival of the population in camps over the winter months. According to the consultative camp management strategy, a 'camp' for which UNHCR is responsible, is composed of fifty tents or more. In addition, there are a large number of scattered families in settlements (composed of under 50 tents) who have set up temporary shelters near or in the vicinity of their damaged homes. These settlements of fewer than fifty tents fall under the direct responsibility of the Government. Nonetheless, along with members of other clusters and other humanitarian organizations, UNHCR has also been providing assistance to the populations in these spontaneous settlements in the emergency effort to save lives over winter. OCHA is currently leading an inter-agency assessment of settlements of fewer than fifty tents and will soon provide a breakdown of the affected population which will help to plan returns, assess the vulnerable and estimate the residual caseload.

UNHCR has been able to achieve many of its goals despite enormous challenges including the vast and mountainous terrain, continuous aftershocks, periodic road blocks due to landslides, and local traditions and cultural sensitivities regarding access to women and the vulnerable.

In view of the enormity of the needs, UNHCR's initial response of an emergency team of 72 persons by November 2005 had to be further increased to strengthen technical support across a range of sectors not originally envisaged in the UNHCR response (i.e. beyond the camp management sector) as well as broaden coverage. Since the strengthening of the team, UNHCR has been working with an emergency team of 138 persons and it has an established presence in six locations. Emergency staff is deployed to the four humanitarian hubs of Manshera, Batagram, Muzaffarabad and Bagh, the two field offices in Abbottabad and Bisham, with a support team in Islamabad.



Young quake survivors outside their tent school in Bassian camp, NWFP. UNHCR/V.Tan

The camp management cluster and the shelter cluster combined their efforts to address the issue of winterization to ensure the survival of the camp population over winter. In a first phase, blankets and plastic sheets and mattresses were distributed. In a further move to provide warmth in winter, cluster members distributed kerosene stoves and fuel, an activity co-funded and supported by UNDP. UNHCR distributed approximately 40,000 kerosene stoves and 500,000 liters of kerosene to the

camp. The distribution of all items was completed in January although kerosene fuel continues to be distributed for stoves.

To raise awareness on the risk of fire in camps, UNHCR worked together with the Government and other cluster members provided fire-prevention equipment (sand buckets, etc.) and launched a fire safety campaign distributing leaflets with information on how to prevent a fire and what to do in case one does break out.

To date, UNHCR has distributed approximately 20,000 tents, 500,000 blankets, 90,000 plastic sheets, 40,000 jerry cans, 20,000 kitchen sets, 6,000 mattresses, 3,500 sleeping bags and 200,000 bars of soap to the quake-affected population. UNHCR continues to provide material and technical support in 26 planned camps run by the military, civil authorities or NGOs, as well as in 121 spontaneous camps.

Camp Management

As lead agency for the camp management cluster, UNHCR deployed site planners and technical experts to help the authorities to select assess and plan sites for a number of camps based on international standards.

This involved choosing suitable sites based on location, road access, size, topography and availability of water. Tents cannot be pitched too closely together and latrines must be situated far from the tents and water sources. A gender sensitive approach has ensured privacy and good lighting for latrines, bathrooms and communal kitchens for women. UNHCR's site planners have conducted training for the military, civil and NGO staff on site planning, decongesting over-crowded locations and water & sanitation in camps.

As lead agency for camp management and by default the "agency of last resort" on camp management issues, UNHCR has, where necessary, acted to fill in any identified gaps which may not have been addressed by other lead agencies in a particular sector. UNHCR

established 55 mobile teams (of which 29 are technical teams) with implementing partners such as the German Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW), Basic Education and Employable Skill Training (BEST), the Institute for Development Studies and Practices (IDSP) to survey needs, identifying any gaps and intervene to fill gaps in camp situations. As such and in coordination with UNICEF and other agencies, UNHCR has contributed to the building of kitchens, washrooms and latrines in the camps to improve living conditions for earthquake survivors. UNHCR mobile teams are also monitoring and evaluating services delivered to the camps by checking the different locations, ensuring proper distribution of items, verifying delivery to beneficiaries.



*Quake survivors enjoy a haircut at Bassian camp in NWFP.
UNHCR/V.Tan*

Community Services

UNHCR's community services staff, together with camp management mobile teams, continue to identify the vulnerable (widows, unaccompanied children, the elderly, single headed households and the disabled) in camps and meet their special needs. Women's committees have been set up to voice and address women's concerns. UNHCR's partners such as InterSOS Humanitarian Aid Organization and International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) have started psychosocial counseling for the traumatized and vocational training activities. Reporting mechanisms have been established in camps to

intervene as appropriate where there are cases of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). Camp management teams are sensitizing camp residents to health, hygiene and fire safety concerns while encouraging them to participate more actively in the running of the camps.

Decongestion / Relocation

In order to avoid squalid conditions in spontaneous camps above 50 tents and address sub-standard conditions that cannot be improved or upgraded, UNHCR and the Government are encouraging residents to move to camps with better facilities. Camps with available space have been identified for this purpose. This is an ongoing process as camp conditions change and camp populations expand and contract.

Contingency Planning

Together with the Government, UNHCR prepared contingency sites ready to receive an additional 80,000 people in camps (60,000 in NWFP and 20,000 in Pakistan-administered Kashmir) should the weather drive people down from the mountains and upper valleys. Fortunately, no major influx of people has occurred to date.

Registration

UNHCR has together with the Government of Pakistan, completed the registration of persons in camps above 50 tents (which fall under the remit of the camp management cluster) in North West Frontier Province and Pakistan-administered Kashmir. Once the data entry and analysis is finalized, UNHCR will share information on the villages of origin/return with all agencies concerned with the return process. This will serve the Government of Pakistan in cooperation with the UN interagency early recovery and reconstruction response and other agencies, to ensure that assistance is targeted to the most vulnerable to enable all those who wish to return to their homes to do so.

Looking Forward

Beyond Winter 2006

UNHCR has been fully engaged during the immediate relief phase after the earthquake. In anticipation of the next phase, UNHCR is in the process of finalizing its disengagement plan to be implemented after the onset of spring. This plan will ensure that return of the population to their place of origin is conducted in an informed, voluntary and dignified manner, that camp closure and site rehabilitation are adequately monitored, and that there is a complete handover of camp management responsibilities to the Government by the end of August 2006.

The Government of Pakistan will develop a return plan in cooperation with the Regional Relief Commissioner in the coming days. Key points will include a priority focus on government-run camps followed by spontaneous camps. According to the tentative plan, the District Commissioner Office would be the implementing authority for the returns. Government efforts on return are run in close coordination with the OCHA led UN Return Task Force which has been established in Islamabad to prepare for return. In the near future, such return task forces will be established in all the hubs.



The Siran Valley in North West Frontier Province is full of villagers buying wood to rebuild their damaged homes. UNHCR/V.Tan

Needs and Challenges

Some vulnerable groups may not have the means to return, as the extent of damage to their homes or land may be irreparable in the short term. These groups will require assistance both to return as well as to have a realistic

prospect of rebuilding their lives in their place of origin. Other groups will have property issues, with contested land titles or tenants without property rights with either destroyed homes or who may lose their tenancy. UNHCR will advocate for special consideration to be given to vulnerable groups in the Government's strategy on return.

UNHCR will continue its mass information campaign in coordination with other agencies to ensure that relevant information on compensation eligibility, available assistance, return packages, land issues, legal concerns, women's rights and other issues is disseminated to persons in camps. UNHCR is also using the existing special radio programme for earthquake survivors to broadcast similar messages to all the displaced.

UNHCR will remain operational in camps until the end of August 2006 to ensure site rehabilitation where necessary, identifying sites for consolidation purposes and advocating adherence to accepted international standards in the camps.

To support the complete handover of camp management issues to the Government of Pakistan, UNHCR is together with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and RedR (UK) guiding and training the local authorities to ensure they have the capacity to assume this role in August 2006. UNHCR's partners have also conducted trainings in camp management activities both in English and Urdu for a range of non governmental partners in NWFP and Pakistan-administered Kashmir. More specific camp management needs will be addressed in future trainings targeted at strengthening skills such as general camp administration, finance, accounting and technical instruction.

The Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA), the government agency in charge of the post-winter phase, while foreseen from the beginning of the emergency is not yet full operational. The international community plans to support and boost the capacity of the organization through resources, training and secondments. UNHCR will provide professional expertise and resources.

Residual Population

It is estimated that the majority of the earthquake-affected population living in the camps will return as soon as the weather permits. Some returns have already been observed, due to the exceptionally warm weather conditions. Many are engaged in 'go & visit' trips to assess living conditions for the return of their families.

It is inevitable that there will be a sizeable population of people who are unable (due to land loss caused by the earthquake or subsequent landslides, legal issues relating to land, inheritance and property rights) to return to their places of origin in the immediate future.

UNHCR will ensure that plans for the closure and consolidation of camps that provision is made for the residual population. This will require that a limited number of camps are maintained by the Government into the next winter until solutions are found for this group.

Funding Overview

As part of the assistance community in Pakistan, UNHCR is in the process of revising its budgetary requirements which will be finalized by the end of March 2006. UNHCR initially established its budget at US\$ 30 million for six months from October to March 2006.

In 2005, UNHCR spent a total of US\$ 12.7 million. In addition, UNHCR projects an expenditure of some US\$ 21.7 million from January till the end of August 2006. The later is subject to review and subsequent internal approval (ORB).

The interagency Return Task force has not yet finalized its return plan and strategy. It is not yet decided in what form UNHCR will contribute to a possible return package, as part of the Return Task Force and what additional funds will be needed. UNHCR is also in the process of discussing with the Government of Pakistan the modalities of the handover of camp management responsibilities to the authorities. In order to allow appropriate capacity building and a smooth and seamless handover to the Pakistani authorities, the

possibility to keep a small team of three to five UNHCR staff members until the end of the year is being considered.

As at 22 February 2006, a total of USD 32,807,193 has been confirmed as cash contribution. UNHCR is very grateful to the following donors:

Governmental/Inter-Governmental	Amount (in USD)
Australia	370,370
Canada	854,701
Czech Republic	299,569
Denmark	3,139,717
European Commission	4,824,274
Finland	1,176,471
France	82,353
Ireland	300,000
Italy	323,415
Japan	1,000,000
Kuwait	500,000
Norway	5,981,413
Republic of Korea	50,000
Sweden	3,811,944
Turkey	500,000
United Kingdom	2,370,741
United States of America	4,000,000
Sub-total	29,584,969
Private Donors	
Austria for UNHCR	12,082
Australia for UNHCR	266,432
Islamic Association Bahrain	9,970
Germany UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe	764,706
Pricewaterhouse Coopers Switz.	7,752
Private Donors Canada	533,653
Private Donors Greece	108,843
Private Donor Hong Kong	1,000
Private Donors Italy	42,267
Netherlands Stichting Vluchteling	352,941
Private Donors Spain	101,176
Private Donors Switzerland	1,527
Private Donors in USA	6,842
Rissho Kosei Kai (JPN)	17,699
Shinnyo-en (JPN)	100,000
Japan for UNHCR	272,557
USA for UNHCR	544,283
HQs Online activities	78,494
Sub-total	3,222,224
Grand Total (Cash)	32,807,193
In-kind contributions:	
NFI Airlift by NATO Member States	
France	2,421,308
Danmark, Greece, Italy	Cash value tbd
Luxemburg, Turkey, UK	"
NFI Land transport: Turkey	50,000
Deployment Site planner: UK	71,174
Grand Total (In-kind)	2,542,482