
Disengagement and Beyond August 2006



Families relocated in a camp near Muzaffarabad. UNHCR/Pakistan

Update on returns, residual camp population and relocation

Eight months after the South Asia Earthquake of 8 October 2005, the organized return process for the majority of the population living in relief camps of 50 tents or more is over. At least 90% of the affected population in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and 70% in the Pakistan-Administered Kashmir have returned mainly to their places of origin and are trying to re-establish their livelihoods in time for the forthcoming winter. The remaining population in the camps consists of those who are unable to return home at present.

To date, 97 relief camps (46 in NWFP and 51 in PAK) out of 232 have been closed, leaving a residual population of 31,000 (4,000 in NWFP and 27,000) living in a total of 135 camps. This number fluctuates as people move in and out of camps. It is estimated by local authorities, NGOs and the international community that over 50,000 people may be living in camps by the end of the monsoon season. This figure is based on the population who may relocate to camps as monsoon rains cause further damage to the landscape and block access roads, the people who may not find suitable means of subsistence

and infrastructure to support them in their villages over the winter, those who may have to move due to reconstruction in the cities (Muzaffarabad & Balakot) in addition to the population currently living in camps.

In addition, a recent geological survey illustrated that a number of villages in the earthquake-affected areas remain at risk of mudslides. Flooding during the monsoon rains also remains a very high risk to many of the villages and camps. Twenty-two people died in July alone due to flooding and mudslides. The Government of Pakistan supported by UNHCR, other agencies and NGOs, is carrying out a relocation exercise, which began on 27th June to transport those wishing to leave the risky areas. Many more families are expected to relocate before and during the monsoon season and before the winter as the situation in regard to shelter and potential for self-sufficiency will remain a challenge for many in high altitude areas.

In order to accommodate the growing number of the people being displaced again, UNHCR has been working closely with its main implementing partners and other agencies including UNICEF and OXFAM, to upgrade and maintain basic standards in relief camps by replacing tents, renovating latrines, communal kitchens and other structures, and by identifying additional suitable sites for new camps as necessary. In support of the government, UNHCR is also consulting and engaging with organizations that will be able to continue the provision of essential services (water, sanitation, health, education, etc.) to the residual population in camps or in camp-like situations beyond August 2006 and over the next winter.

UNHCR, in collaboration with the Government's Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) is conducting a mass information campaign which includes

regular radio broadcasts to ensure the dissemination of information on government policy, relocation procedures, etc., to the displaced population in camps. A distribution of 10,000 radio sets provided by INTERNEWS will be carried out in August.



Relocation from Badhiara, Muzaffarabad. UNHCR/Pakistan

Capacity building towards disengagement

As part of its plan to disengage from the Pakistan emergency earthquake operation, UNHCR is liaising with the authorities, UN agencies, national and international NGOs, donors and other stakeholders to map out organizations, existing activities and funding available on the ground. Once this exercise is complete by mid August, gaps in the provision of services and/or assistance will be identified and resources mobilized to address any shortcomings. Phasing-in of others as UNHCR phases-out aims to ensure continued quality assistance and monitoring mechanisms that ensure adherence to internationally acceptable standards for relief and assistance in camps over the next winter.

A Joint assessment mission, aiming at evaluating the situation in the camps was conducted by government representatives, UNHCR and International NGOs in a first joint venture since the end of the return operation. The mission was able to obtain updated information on statistics, delivery of services and conditions in camps and also to identify gaps and recommend ways to address needs.

The authorities supported by UNHCR and other partners, will also continue with registration and constraint surveys of the camp population that helps determine some of the essential needs in areas of origin and key factors in preventing people from returning home or finding sustainable solutions elsewhere. This exercise already completed in NWFP, will also serve for the better control of movements to and from the camps. Based on the outcome of this survey, as well as the results of the joint assessment mission, a plan of action will be formulated to address the policy and practical needs of camp populations over the next months with a focus on sustainable solutions.

To pave the way forward and beyond August 2006, UNHCR has, since February 2006, been helping to boost the capacity of the Government of Pakistan and local partners to manage populations in camps.

To assist in the hand over of camp management responsibilities, a field based UNHCR expert team of six (three international and three national staff) will strengthen the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, which will be taking over the lead on residual relief and camp management until the end of year.

Also in this context, a “Capacity Building Project” has been developed in a highly consultative manner, aiming at direct support to the District Coordination Office (DCO) in NWFP and Camp Management Organization (CMO). It comprises national and international staff support, office equipment and facilities, vehicles and related costs, staff training and skill development.

National UN Volunteers (UNV) seconded to the CMO and DCO by UNDP on UNHCR’s initiative will provide further hands-on experience in the daily management of camps, particularly with regard to logistics, community services, database management, administration and finance.

Other agencies are encouraged to join UNHCR’s approach to more actively support the central and local authorities in their day-to-day

management and coordination requirements through the provision of national and international experts, training and equipment through the DCO/CMO capacity building project.

This is part of a comprehensive capacity building plan of government counterparts at the federal, provincial and district levels and relevant partners, with clear linkages to the United Nations Country Team and the Early Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority's Early Recovery Plan. This plan will also dovetail with the overall ERRA objectives.

UNHCR will also facilitate the establishment of protection focal points through the secondment of at least one international protection officer and support staff to the Resident Coordinator's Office in Muzaffarabad. This is part of the new joint protection monitoring System, which has been initiated by UNHCR in a joint effort with UNICEF and UNHCHR.

Contingency planning for the next winter

As a member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, UNHCR has successfully advocated for a number of issues, including the need for operations and contingency planning for the winter, and the establishment of an operational response mechanism during the monsoon rains. In collaboration with the government, a central inter-agency team is now working on this plan in support of the authorities and agencies in NWFP and Pakistan-Administered Kashmir. The needs for winterization of the camps have been largely identified and are being addressed. The situation in villages and specifically in high-altitude areas is more difficult to assess and the situation and coverage as regards provision of assistance and services varies significantly. Household security in many areas is not restored, and may remain difficult due to delays in implementation of assistance programmes, difficult access or lack of information to the population on their rights and entitlements. Problems can be anticipated in the areas of health, water, shelter and food availability. Access and the possible need for restoration of air services are being discussed.

While the concept of contingency planning remains important, mitigation and disaster prevention through the strategic use of existing resources is a most challenging task, requiring high level of coordination. UNHCR is closely coordinating with other agencies in order to minimize anticipated risks and maximize collaborative humanitarian assistance to the displaced and vulnerable population.

UNHCR Pakistan Website

In order to provide easier access to update on UNHCR activities in Pakistan including the Afghan repatriation operation, UNHCR Pakistan has a website where reports, maps, photos and information on donors are available online.

Please visit www.unhcr.org.pk.

Funding

As at 8th August 2006, a total of USD 33,854,519 has been confirmed as cash contribution. UNHCR is grateful to the different donors. An overview of the contribution is provided in the next page.

Donors	Amount (USD)
Governmental/Inter-governmental	
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	408,058
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	29,669,611
Private Donors	
Austria for UNHCR	12,082
Australia for UNHCR	275,653
Islamic Association Bahrain	9,970
Germany UNO- <i>Flüchtlingshilfe</i>	764,706
PriceWaterhouse Coopers Switzerland	7,752
Canada	1,069,686
Greece	109,975
Hong Kong	1,000
Italy	66,346
Netherlands <i>Stichting Vluchteling</i>	352,941
Spain	121,792
Switzerland	1,527
United States of Americas	7,342
Rissho Kosei Kai (Japan)	17,699
Shinnyo-en (Japan)	100,000
Japan for UNHCR	401,839
United Kingdom	3,565
USA for UNHCR	607,526
Association Française de soutien à l'UNHCR	118,483
Monaco Amitié sans Frontières	48,368
HQs Online activities	86,656
Sub-total	4,184,908
Grand Total (Cash)	33,854,519
In-kind contributions:	
NFI Airlift by NATO Member States	
France	2,421,308
Denmark, Greece, Italy, Luxemburg, Turkey, UK	Cash value to be determined
NFI Land transport: Turkey	50,000
Deployment Site planner: UK	71,174
Grand Total (In-kind)	2,542,482