

# Information bulletin



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## PAKISTAN: Baluchistan Earthquake

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A week after a series of earthquakes shook the country's south-western province of Baluchistan on 29 October, the situation is slowly settling down. However, affected families are still struggling to cope with the aftermath of the powerful quake that, according to government sources, have killed more than 160 people. The number of reported deaths may increase in the coming days.

Preliminary assessments conducted by government agencies and other humanitarian organizations are almost complete and relief aid is being expedited to help support affected families. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) reports that more than 2,000 houses were destroyed in Ziarat and Pashin districts in Baluchistan Province. The government is mobilizing all its resources to reach out to all affected households, especially those in remote areas. National and international humanitarian organizations, including the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement led by the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), are utilizing their resources to meet the urgent needs of the affected families. More than 17,500 families have been displaced.

To date, the PRCS, with the support of the International Federation and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), has distributed relief items to 3,000 families in worst hit areas in Ziarat and Pashin districts. Two mobile health teams have treated approximately 1,000 patients, mostly children, from 15 areas in Ziarat. The PRCS/International Federation relief and health teams will further assess the situation and carry out emergency response to other affected areas. The government is coordinating all efforts of the humanitarian agencies working in the affected areas to ensure fast and effective service delivery to the people. The immediate needs of the affected population identified by the government and working groups include shelter, food, water and emergency health. The PRCS and the International Federation have been requested by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) to co-chair the shelter cluster.

The ICRC launched a preliminary appeal for CHF 9 million (USD 7.8 million or EUR 6 million) on 30 October to enhance the emergency response operation of the PRCS.

On 8 November, the PRCS, International Federation and the ICRC will give a joint press briefing in Quetta.



The PRCS personnel (trained in emergency response) getting ready to carry out relief distributions in the village of Ahmedun in Ziarat. Photo: Mubashir Fida/ International Federation.

## The Situation

A series of earthquakes shook Baluchistan province in south-western Pakistan on 29 October. The strongest quake with a magnitude of 6.4 on the Richter scale hit Baluchistan at approximately 5.10am Pakistan time (GMT +6). Official figures from the government and initial assessments indicate that more than 160 people have been killed, while some 500 others have been injured and more than 17,500 families have been displaced, mostly from worst-hit districts of Ziarat and Pashin. The epicentre of the earthquake was 70 kilometres north-east of the provincial capital of Quetta and 25 kilometres east of Ziarat. The worst-hit districts are Ziarat and Pashin.



Relief items being unloaded from the truck in Ahmedun village (Ziarat) prior to distributions. Photo: Mubashir Fida/ International Federation.

Following the massive emergency relief and health interventions carried out by the national and local government, as well as humanitarian aid agencies, including the International Federation led by the PRCS, the situation is slowly settling down. Assessments conducted by various government and non-government agencies have been completed and coordination work is underway for more effective service delivery to the affected families.

According to the Federal Ministry for Population Welfare, the relief teams had complete access to entire quake-hit areas. Following the distribution, the government has focused on plans to provide weatherproof shelters to quake survivors.

The PRCS/International Federation assessment teams reported that many people continue to live in fear due to the constant aftershocks. Extreme weather conditions that drop below zero at night pose a serious threat to the health of people, especially children and the elderly. Unlike during the first three days after the quake, when people had to stay in the open, they are now living in tents beside their damaged houses with blankets and thick clothing to protect them from the cold.

The PRCS assessment teams recognise the need to provide psychological support to the earthquake-affected families. Despite the harsh aftermath of the quake and extreme weather condition, the PRCS/International Federation assessment teams reported that health situation in the affected areas has been provisioned by government, UN agencies and various non-governmental organizations providing basic health care. There are also basic government health facilities and sufficient medicine to meet the needs. Most common diseases noted are upper respiratory infection, skin infection, diarrhoea, fever, body pain, hypertension and headache. No communicable diseases were noted by the PRCS health teams. According to the PRCS health teams, the government district health units are launching a measles campaign in all affected areas.

Government buildings are partially or totally damaged and so far schools have not been resumed.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The PRCS, with the support of the International Federation, has so far distributed relief packages to 3,000 families in several areas of Ziarat district (Varchum, Wam, Ahmadun and Gogi, Kawas, Kanbangla and Kuch) as well as in some areas in Pashin district. Each relief package consists of a tent, two tarpaulins, seven blankets, one hygiene kit, a stove, one jerry can and a kitchen sets. The relief package is part of the disaster preparedness stock that has been pre-positioned in several PRCS. Furthermore, the PRCS will distribute relief packages and additional 100 winterized tents to 575 families in Zindra and Killi villages around Ziarat. Another 300 winterized tents will also be distributed in Mana, Ziarat district. These winterized tents have been provided by the ICRC. The relief distributions have been carried out by four relief teams composed of 20 PRCS staff and volunteers.

Two PRCS/International Federation mobile health teams are treating patients in 15 areas in Ziarat. These teams have so far treated a total of 957 patients, mostly children. The common diseases treated were upper respiratory infection, skin infection, diarrhea and fever. Each health team is composed of two doctors (male and

female), one lady health visitor, one dispenser, a female motivator and one volunteer. According to the team, the health situation is under control with six health teams from different organizations working in the affected areas. The provincial and rural health centres are also functioning well with basic health facilities and equipment.

The ICRC which has a sub-office in Quetta has been coordinating with the PRCS branch on regular basis. The ICRC has joined the PRCS assessment team to Ziarat on 29 October. The ICRC has been extending surgical health provisions in Ziarat.

The Turkish Red Cross and Danish Red Cross representatives in the country have traveled to Baluchistan to do preliminary assessment. Turkish Red Crescent, along with PRCS has distributed food packages to 1,000 families in 10 villages in Ziarat. Each package contains 20 kg wheat flour, 5 kg rice, 5 kg bean, 5 kg sugar, 2.5 cooking oil, 1 kg salt, 1 kg tea, and 400 gm milk powder. An additional 500 hygiene kits are being prepared by PRCS and Turkish Red Crescent for further distribution. The Turkish Red Crescent is also planning to set up 10 long lasting steel shelter units, which are designed for severe winter conditions and longer accommodation purpose for 120 families. Each steel container unit or package is designed for 12 families and includes 12 steel containers for accommodations, two women comfort rooms and bathroom, two kitchens and two storage rooms for food items.

Iran Red Crescent has also sent 1,000 tents and several boxes of fish tins and detergents for distribution to the affected families.

## How we work

*All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

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