

ACT Situation Report

Pakistan

Security Hinders Assistance from Reaching Many IDPs

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Background:

Since the start of December, immediately following the Eid holidays in Pakistan, terrorist attacks have occurred at various key locations in Pakistan. Most attacks targeted government or military areas, but markets and a mosque were also attacked. On December 1, a Member of Provincial Assembly and two of his brothers were killed in Peshawar when a suicide attack occurred near his home. Another suicide attack claimed the lives of a Naval personnel and police officer at the gate to Naval Headquarters in Islamabad. More than 100 people have died in recent attacks including those at a major market in Lahore, important government areas in Multan and Peshawar, and a mosque after Friday prayers in Rawalpindi. Hundreds more were injured during the attacks. The continuing terrorist attacks create widespread insecurity.

As humanitarian organizations wait for No Objection Certificates from the government to implement relief activities in DI Khan, Tank, and surrounding areas, the IDPs continue to face challenges of meeting basic food, health care and other needs. According to Colonel Imdad Hussain, in charge of Food Support Program, 59,355 families from South Waziristan have been registered out of which the National Database and Registration Authority completed verification of 36,787 families (The News, December 5). Based on average family size, this means more than 470,000 thousand individuals have been displaced. The majority of IDPs residing in DI Khan and surrounding areas remain with host families. With limited access to basic necessities for the population which normally resides in these areas, the huge influx of people makes basic necessities even scarcer. With limitations and delays in humanitarian organizations accessing these IDPs, the newly displaced and host families face extreme hardship, worsened by the winter season's cold temperatures.

As seen throughout the IDP crisis in Pakistan, female IDPs face additional hardship. For the female IDPs in DI Khan and surrounding areas, extreme difficulty particularly in accessing healthcare services creates concern. Recently, a shortage of female health workers was reported (IRIN, December 2). Female health workers, who want to assist the IDPs, are unable to mainly due to their families preventing them from going to DI Khan and surrounding areas due to security concerns. Winter temperatures and lack of basic food increase the need for healthcare services. Inaccessibility to food

and health services needs to be addressed immediately in order to prevent severe illnesses and deaths. Women and children's situation worsens as many men have been returning to Waziristan in order to protect assets including homes and livestock. Unfamiliar surroundings and the practice of segregation will continue to prevent women from accessing aid and services; the limited provisions they have will not last long. The worsening security situation will exacerbate the problem and possibly inhibit many IDPs from receiving much needed aid in time.

ACT Members' Activities:

As both Church World Service - Pakistan/Afghanistan's and Norwegian Church Aid's relief activities for IDPs from Swat have reached the final stages, the two organizations continue efforts related to transition to recovery and rehabilitation for Swat IDPs as well as relief for IDPs displaced from Waziristan.

CWS-P/A:

Waziristan Response

CWS-P/A awaits its NOC to begin distributing food packages and non-food items to IDPs in D. I. Khan. The NOC is expected and distribution should begin next week. Groundwork for the WASH project in DI Khan continues.

Swat Response

CWS-P/A continues health services for IDPs in Swabi, Mansehra, and Abbottabad. To date, over 22,000 consultations and 6,415 health education sessions were conducted.

In the first week of December, the health team in Mansehra assisted in the delivery of two, healthy babies, a boy and a girl, both born by caesarian section at DHQ Hospital. The baby boy, Younas, was vaccinated and released from the hospital with his mother on December 7. The CWS-P/A health team provided essential pre and post natal care to the mothers in order to help the infants have a healthy and safe start to life.

NCA:

NCA's partner, PVDP, has completed all its activities in Buner and target has been achieved. During this project, PVDP provided health facilities, food and non-food items, folding beds, and training for women.

Women and Health Facilitation Centers:

Pakistan Village Development Program (PVDP) established two Centers in Ghurghushto and Chinglai, union council of Buner District. A total of 1,975 patients received general health services (consultation and checkups, hygiene sessions), and medicines for general sickness such as diarrhea, scabies, chest infection, fever, flu, stomach ulcers, and reproductive health problems. Counseling services were also provided to 132 patients.

Distribution of Food and Non-food items:

PVDP distributed food items to 1,304 children; priority was given to malnourished children under 5 years of age. Children from the minority communities living in the same areas also received food items. PVDP also distributed 50 folding beds with priority given to pregnant women and physically disabled and elderly individuals.

Hygiene Sessions:

PVDP organized 70 hygiene sessions for 1,753 community members in Buner with help of women and male groups. The emphasis of training was on personal, domestic, and environmental hygiene.

WASH Interventions:

PVDP has constructed 331 latrines, 145 hands washing places, 30 bathing places, installed 37 hand pumps, placed 38 dust bins, and distributed 1,400 hygiene kits planned for IDPs living with host communities in five union councils (Chak Noda, Kalabat, Mainay, Thand Koi, and Karnal Sher Khan) in Swabi. PVDP also organized 9 health hygiene sessions and conducted 12 caretakers' trainings to train 262 participants about maintenance of hand pumps.

Pak Community Development Program (Pak-CDP) has completed installation of all 64 hand pumps and construction of 506 latrines planned for IDPs living with host communities in 3 UCs (Gujrat, Bukhshali, and Shahbaz Garhi) in Mardan. Pak-CDP also conducted 87 hygiene sessions on the importance of safe drinking water and improved sanitation with IDPs community groups and children and distributed 1,000 hygiene kits.

Taraqee Foundation (TF) has completed construction of 165 latrines, 8 large solid waste containers, installation of 32 hand pumps, and distributed 250 small dustbins for domestic use for IDPs living with host communities in Abbottabad (UCs Jhangi and Nawansher) and Haripur (UCs Pandik and Bareela). In addition, 7 health hygiene promotion trainings were organized for IDPs and host communities. The focus of the training was causes of water borne diseases and preventive measures and the importance and use of latrines. TF has also provided 5 technical trainings on masonry skills to build capacity of IDPs.

ACT is a global alliance of churches and related agencies working to save lives and support communities in emergencies worldwide.

The ACT Coordinating Office is based with the World Council of Churches (WCC) and The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in Switzerland.

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