

# Information bulletin



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Pakistan: Landslides

Information bulletin n° 01  
GLIDE [LS-2010-000004-PAK](#)  
14 January 2010

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The Hunza Valley (in Gilgit Baltistan) received heavy land sliding on 4 January 2010, killing 19 people. One village was destroyed by the immediate effects of the landslides; nevertheless, the river and the main highway been blocked, making many more communities potentially vulnerable in the coming days. The Pakistan Red Crescent Society's Gilgit Baltistan branch started relief operations right after the landslides. An assessment team (along with an International Federation representative) from the national headquarters in Islamabad has also been sent to the affected area to assess further needs. To date the national society has provided food and non-food items to 332 affected households.



Pakistan Red Crescent Society Gilgit Baltistan branch staff and volunteers off loading relief goods at Aliabad warehouse. Photo: Mubashir Fida/International Federation.

At the moment, the existing resources of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) are adequate, but with the evolving situation, additional external funds might be sought.

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## The Situation

A series of landslides took place in Hunza valley of Gilgit Baltistan province (previously referred to as the Northern Areas) on 4 January 2010, approximately 700 km north of Islamabad (and 100 km from Gilgit). According to the local authorities, 19 people have lost their lives while 43 houses have been completely destroyed. The worst affected village is Attabad with people relocated. Families from two adjacent villages (Sarat and Salmanabad) have also been relocated due to fear of further land sliding. A total of 191 households from the three villages are residing in the small towns of Altit and Aliabad; either with relatives or schools. Breakdown of these 191 households are as follows:

- From Attabad village: 103 households
- From Sarat village: 33 households
- From Salmanabad village: 55 households

The area has volcanic activity (causing land to drift); recent rains in the winter has also softened the soil, causing land sliding. More landslides continue to take place.

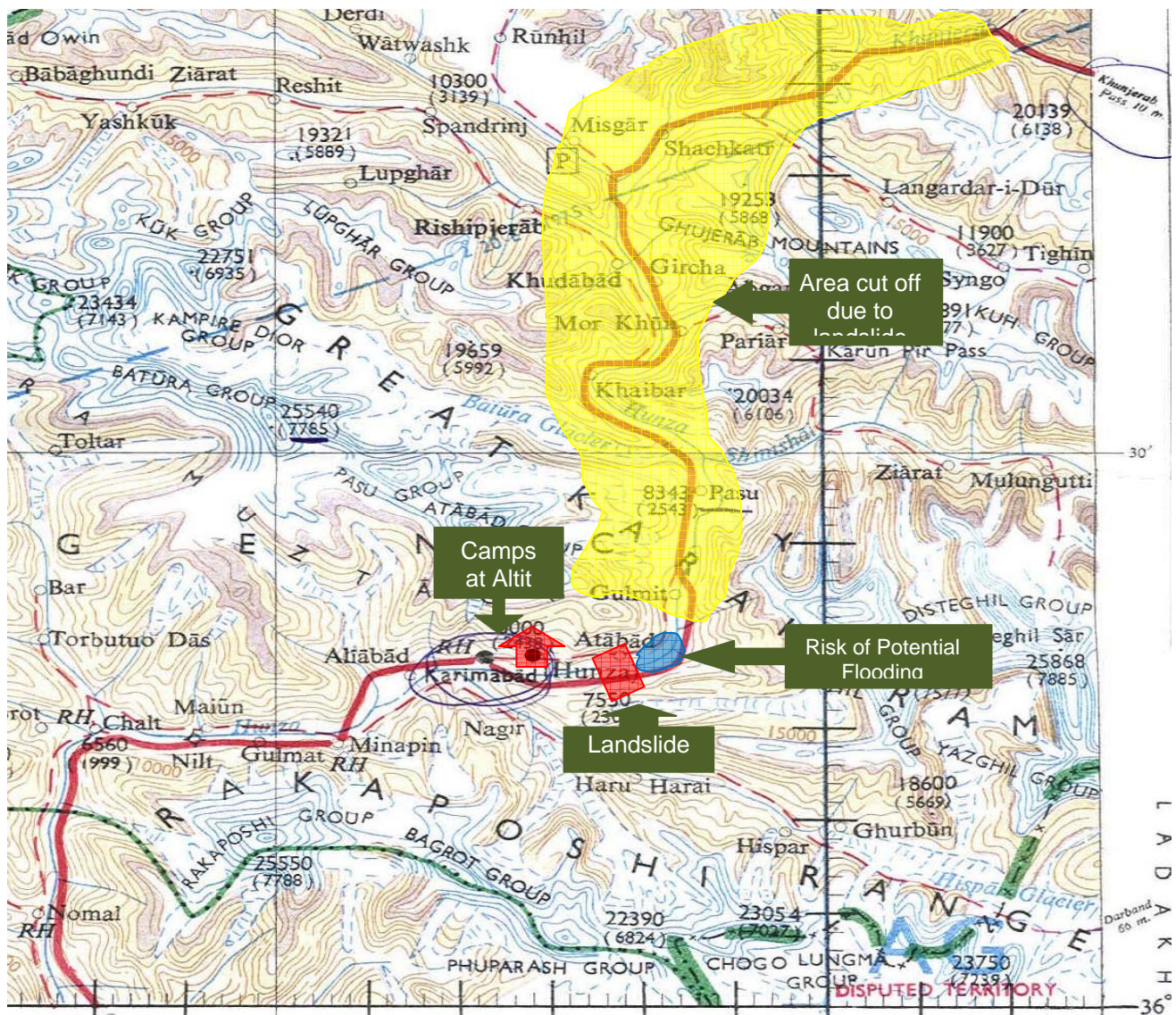
The debris from the landslides has also blocked Hunza River, creating an artificial lake (a dam), with the water levels continuously rising. Due to river blockage, 238 households in four low-laying villages face potential risk of flooding. Details of these 238 households are as follows:

- From Ayeenabad village: 30 households
- From Shiskat Bala village: 51 households
- From Shiskat Payeen village: 33 households
- From Shiskat Centre village: 124 households

At the moment, flood waters have reached some farming land in Ayeenabad.

The landslide has also blocked Karakoram Highway, cutting off upper Hunza Valley from the rest of the district. Due to this, approximately 2,900 families are at risk of facing severe food, medicine and fuel shortages.

The winters are very harsh in this area. As of mid-January, the day time temperature is zero degree centigrade with night temperature falling to -5 to -6 degrees.



Map showing the landslide in Hunza Valley.



Debris in the Hunza river, blocking the water flow. Photo: Mubashir Fida/International Federation.

The relief and rescue operation is being carried out by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Pakistan Army, Focus Pakistan and Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Gilgit Baltistan branch.

On 13 January, the Deputy Commissioner for Hunza chaired a coordination meeting and shared the plans with PRCS.

According to the local government, a dam burst is very highly unlikely to occur. The authorities will try to create passageway for the water. The government is considering using helicopters to facilitate people living in upper Hunza that has been cut off due to the landslide. The government is also considering using the Khunjrab pass to bring in supplies for

these communities from the neighbouring China. A mule track is also being cleared to facilitate these people to take their supplies into the valley.

The affected communities in Attabad, Sarat and Salmanabad may need alternate shelter once the schools open in the area in the beginning of March. Currently the camps are being run by district administration and a religious council. The government is also considering about relocating the communities threatened by rising water levels in Hunza River.

Health and care facilities are being provided by Agha Khan Health services and Public Primary Health Initiative (PPHI) at Altit camps. According to the Agha Khan Health services, there are sufficient medicines available in the area and Agha Khan Health services is managing the situation quite comfortable in upper Hunza. However, there are no proper health facilities available in villages of Ayeenabad and Shiskat.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The national society has been assisting the affected people from the first day of the disaster. The PRCS has distributed non-food items (tents, blankets, plastic sheets, hygiene kits, hurricane lamps, buckets and jerry cans and stoves) among 200 families from 6 to 8 January.

An assessment team from PRCS national headquarters with International Federation personnel reached Hunza on 11 January 2010 and with the support of the Gilgit Baltistan branch conducted a rapid assessment (registered 300 households for distribution of food and jackets). The team has met the community and key humanitarian organizations.

The PRCS distributed food and non-food items among the 132 families (from Attabad and Sarat) on 13 January 2010 in the camps in Altit. These items include:

Village	Families	Food Package	Non Food Items
Attabad	102	(flour, sugar, ghee, daal, tea, salt)	(soap, jackets, male/female shawl, quilts)
Sarat	30	(flour, sugar, ghee, daal, tea, salt)	(soap, jackets, male/female shawl, quilts)

A distribution for 55 families of Salamanabad living in Altit camp has been planned for 14 January 2010.

The Deputy Commissioner of Hunza has provided the PRCS a space in the Boys' Degree College in Aliabad to establish a warehouse for relief stocks. The following items (food and non-food items; for 300 households) have been sent by the national headquarters and stored in the ad-hoc PRCS warehouse in Aliabad. The food items are sufficient for one month. After the distributions on 13 January, the quantities of the items in the warehouse are as follows:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Received</b>	<b>Dispatched</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Flour	12,000 Kg (40 kg Per family) 300 package	6,200 Kg/ 155 package	5,800 Kg/ 145 package
Sugar	3,000 Kg (10 kg Per Family) 300 package	1,550 Kg/ 155 package	1,450 Kg/ 145 package
Ghee	3,000 Kg (10 kg Per Family) 300 package	1,550 Kg/ 155 package	1,450 Kg/ 145 package
Daal	1,000 Kg (3kg Per Family) 333 package	465 Kg/ 155 package	535 Kg/ 145 package
Tea	300 Kg (1 kg Per Family) 300 package	155 kg/ 155 package	145 Kg/ 145 package
Salt	300 Kg ( 1 kg per Family) 300 package	155 Kg/ 155 package	145 Kg/ 145 package
Soap	1500 pcs (5 pcs Per Family) 300 package	775 pcs/ 155 package	725 pcs/ 145 package
Jackets	2520 pcs (7 pcs per Family) 360 package	620 pcs/ 155 package	1,900 pcs/ 205 package
Shawl	1000 pcs (3 pcs Per Family) 333 package	465 pcs/ 155 package	535 pcs/ 178 package
Quilts	1,055 pcs (4 pcs Per Family) 263 package	620 pcs/ 155 package	435 pcs/ 108 package

The PRCS has also deployed two mobile health teams to the area on 5 January; nevertheless, the teams are currently helping the affected people settled in the different camps made in schools and colleges.

The International Federation's senior communications officer is a part of the rapid assessment team sent by the PRCS national headquarters. Under the earthquake emergency appeal (M05EA022), the International Federation has facilitated the PRCS in maintaining disaster preparedness stocks (non-food items) for 35,000 households, placed at strategic locations throughout the country. These stocks are now being used to assist the affected people.

The International Federation country office is closely assessing the situation in the affected areas and is prepared to extend any support to the national society, if need arises.

The ICRC in Pakistan has also extended its support to PRCS on needs basis.

The USAID has offered USD 50,000 (CHF 51,037 or EUR 34,500) support (in kind) to PRCS. The modalities are being finalized and the support is expected to materialize soon.

## 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.

## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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