

In the event of a full-scale military operation, it is estimated that about 70 per cent of the NWA population (59,500 families or 357,000 people) could be displaced. Based on previous displacements, only 10 per cent of the displaced population would be expected to seek shelter in camps, with the remainder residing with hosting communities in different districts of KP and FATA.

Humanitarian partners are monitoring the situation in the area and planning for an appropriate response in case further needs emerge. Partners will require at least US\$69.6 million to provide basic humanitarian assistance to the displaced people for six months in case of security operations in NWA.

Partners seek funds to continue life-saving services in the north-west

Meanwhile, humanitarian partners currently estimate \$282 million is needed to maintain critical aid throughout 2014 for the 1 million displaced people and over 108,000 who recently returned across KP and FATA. Partners have so far received \$100 million.

Partners are currently developing a Strategic Response Plan (SRP) to help them plan, implement and monitor their activities together. The SRP will include revised funding requirements for 2014.

Food, water and sanitation, health care, shelter, protection and education are among the primary needs of the IDPs and returnees. Without greater support, key organizations providing relief to the displaced people and returnees are due to run out of funds from April, after which the continuation of critical humanitarian assistance may be seriously at risk.

The immediate effects of inadequate funding on humanitarian services may include a reduction in food rations; primary health-care services will be interrupted; life-saving treatment for malnourished children and pregnant women will be scaled back; and education for many children will cease.

Donors may channel funds through the Emergency Response Fund (ERF) to bridge humanitarian gaps in KP and FATA. Since 2010, the ERF has disbursed \$48.7 million for the implementation of 224 projects across Pakistan, including \$17.4 million for 82 projects in KP and FATA.

Further information on ERF projects is available at:

<https://pak.humanitarianresponse.info/funding/emergency-response-fund-erf>

Partners seek to support Kurram Agency returns

More than 4,000 families fled the area in 2011 due to sectarian violence

Partners are seeking to facilitate returns to 50 newly “de-notified” villages in the Alisherzai area in Kurram Agency, FATA, from which more than 4,000 families fled in 2011 due to sectarian violence. De-notification indicates the villages are no longer considered to be calamity-hit.

About 1,500 families have reportedly returned home, and those still displaced could begin returning in March. An ongoing returns intention survey in Kurram Agency indicates that 95.4 per cent of families surveyed by the Protection Cluster have expressed their willingness to return home.

Partners conducted focus group discussions from 17 to 19 February in four densely populated villages of displacement and one village of expected returns, as part of an inter-agency assessment.

Findings indicate 20 per cent of houses and most schools in the affected areas are destroyed, as are basic health facilities. The priority needs of families seeking to return are shelter, food, livelihoods, water, sanitation and hygiene support.

Resources are required to support the returnees to reconstruct destroyed houses, access basic services, and improve their economic situation.

Funding constraints may lead to cuts in food rations and agriculture support in the coming months. In addition, crucial emergency health care, nutrition, protection, shelter, education water, sanitation and hygiene support face severe reductions.

Families planning to return to Kurram Agency need support to resettle in their areas of origin, rebuild their livelihoods and improve their economic situation.

More polio cases reported in the north-west

All affected children had not received the oral polio vaccine due to insecurity related to the campaign

Health authorities have so far confirmed 11 new polio cases from north-western Pakistan this year – 10 from North Waziristan in FATA and one from Bannu in KP.

All the affected children had not received any dose of the oral polio vaccine because of a ban imposed on immunization by the Taliban in 2012, which has precluded the vaccination of at least 260,000 children.

Humanitarian partners are concerned that displacements from North Waziristan could result in the spread of the poliovirus to neighbouring districts. During recent displacements, health officials took the opportunity to identify areas in Bannu where displaced people from North Waziristan settled and vaccinated children.

The KP government is conducting a health campaign through which nearly 500,000 children have been vaccinated against nine diseases, including polio.

Acts of violence against aid workers continue to threaten polio eradication efforts.

Mainstreaming gender in disaster risk reduction

Flood-affected women make economic strides, but need increased participation

Cash-for-work projects in communities recovering from four consecutive years of monsoon flooding in Sindh Province have increased women's participation in economic activities, but more needs to be done to involve them in disaster risk reduction activities.

In January, OCHA and UN Women facilitated discussions among 100 female beneficiaries at nine locations of projects supported by the Emergency Response Fund (ERF) in Jacobabad, Kashmore and Sukkur districts in Sindh Province.

The women indicated cash-for-work activities have enabled them to build smoke-free stoves, rehabilitate damaged homes, establish vegetable gardens and engage in poultry and livestock production to support their families. These activities have increased the women's share of household income by between 30 and 50 per cent, enhanced the households' resilience towards future disasters with savings to pay for the evacuation of the most vulnerable and their property in case of another flooding emergency.

However, these economic gains are meagre in the context of the huge debts accumulated by flood-affected communities as a result of agricultural losses incurred during the past four years of recurrent floods.



Flood-affected women in Sindh Province discuss the distribution of power between men and women in their village. Photo: OCHA/Hadia Nusrat

Greater involvement of women in risk reduction planning would improve their access to basic humanitarian services such as food, reproductive health care and protection during emergencies, and also empower communities to be better prepared to cope with disasters.

The discussions revealed that although women's overall share of power in decision-making remains limited, younger women's influence in household decisions is growing.

The Hyogo Framework of Action, a 10-year plan to make the world safer from natural hazards, which was

endorsed by the UN General Assembly in 2005, calls for gender perspectives to be integrated into disaster risk reduction and response plans.

Health authorities indicate North Waziristan Agency recorded 48 per cent of the 92 polio cases registered in Pakistan in 2013.

Pakistan ranked 135 out of 136 countries in the 2013 Global Gender Gap Report published by the World Economic Forum. The annual report assesses gender equality and equitable division of resources and opportunities among men and women.