The New Pakistan ERF

In February 2015, OCHA released the 2015 Operational Handbook for Country-based Pooled Funds (CBPF), a set of new global guidelines for managing CBPFs. In Pakistan, the CBPF is known as the Emergency Response Fund (ERF).

The Handbook includes the following main changes in the operation of CBPFs:

- Strategic alignment of CBPFs will support implementation of Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) but retain the flexibility to respond to unforeseen events. This change establishes a clear link between CBPFs and the Humanitarian Programme Cycle while strengthening the leadership and coordination role of Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) in driving the allocation of CBPF funding to locally identified needs and priorities.

- An accountability framework and operational modalities will provide a set of risk management tools to address risks that i) may hinder the ability of CBPFs to achieve their objectives and ii) are present when disbursing funds to implementing partners. This allows OCHA country offices determine the disbursement schedule, monitoring strategy, programmatic and financial reporting requirements, and auditing plan most suitable to the capacity level of the partner.

- Standardized allocation modalities (standard and reserve) are explained in the Handbook.

- Clearer financial management guidance will ensure a common understanding of budgeting, administrative aspects and procedures. Specifically, the project budget structure and template was revised and aligned with the standard UN Development Group budget categories.

- The Grants Management System (GMS) is a new mandatory tool for CBPFs and is critical in supporting the management of CBPFs and rationalizing the workload of Humanitarian Finance Units. It is a fundamental management instrument for OCHA at the country and headquarter level. It facilitates partners’ interaction with CBPFs at all stages of the grant cycle and promotes efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and supports risk management.

In the second quarter of 2015, OCHA will hold activities in Pakistan to prepare key stakeholders with the roll-out of the Handbook. This will include i) developing a country operational manual based on consultations with key stakeholders, ii) inviting almost 60 non-governmental organization (NGO) partners to undergo a capacity assessment to render them eligible as a CBPF implementing partner, and iii) conducting a series of trainings for NGO partners and clusters on GMS.
ERF nutrition services given at nutrition sites

Disaster, displacements and numerous socioeconomic and cultural factors influence the patterns of feeding children and the nutritional status of children. Under-nutrition levels in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) are marginally higher than national averages. Provincially, 47.8 per cent of children under age five are stunted, 17.3 per cent are wasted and 24.1 per cent of children are underweight. By all anthropometric indicators, KP malnutrition prevalence is higher than the national level figures of 43.7 per cent stunting, 31.5 per cent underweight and 15.1 per cent wasting as stated in the National Nutrition Survey 2011. Children under age 5 and pregnant and lactating women are vulnerable groups among the affected populations in the complex emergency as a result of massive population displacements from FATA and KP.

The entire Nutrition Cluster caseload is calculated based on assessments and ongoing interventions for the complex emergency as well as displacements occurred after military operations in North Waziristan (NWA) and Khyber Agencies early in 2014. It is critical to continue emergency nutrition services for affected populations through outpatient therapeutic and supplementary feeding programmes.

In 2014, ERF supported the community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) programme: 86 nutrition centres were made operational in Jalozai Camp and Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Hangu, Nowshera, Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan and Kohat Districts. These emergency allocations to the Nutrition Cluster played a vital role in saving lives of affected malnourished children and mothers.

The Cluster has closely worked with the ERF Unit to make nutrition response more effective and utilize the funds in best manner. ERF also played a crucial role in the response to the influx of displaced people from NWA. Twenty-eight nutrition centres were activated in Bannu and Lakki Marwat Districts.

Delays in issuing project No-Objection Certificates remains a challenge and has affected project performance. For these projects, UNICEF and WFP provided nutrition supplies: multi-micronutrients, deworming tablets, vitamins, etc. By the end of 2014, 70 per cent of acutely malnourished children and mothers were treated in ERF-funded projects. Some programmes are still ongoing and will continue until mid-2015. The remaining targets should be met by then.

To strengthen Infant Young Child Feeding (IYCF), nutrition staff provided individual counselling services regarding IYCF to pregnant and lactating women and mothers and care takers of under-five children at the health facility level. Similarly community outreach workers, social mobilizers and health educators expanded awareness sessions on IYCF, CMAM and hygiene promotion to 208,659 mothers and other caregivers of children under age 5 and pregnant and lactating women in the targeted areas.

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Nutrition staff taking a child’s Mid Upper Arm Circumference to identify malnutrition.
Credit: CERD
ERF-funded livestock support provides hope

“My name is Abdullah Noor Khan son of Haji Gul Mateen. I am a registered displaced person and permanent resident of Mir Ali Nawar North Waziristan. Currently I am residing in a rented house at Tapi Eid Gah Karak. I have a large family of 19 members to support. I have a total of 18 animals [3 cows, 2 buffalos, 2 bulls, 7 goats and 4 sheep].”

Abdullah Noor was a common labourer before his migration from NWA to Karak. He was living a normal life back in his home town in NWA, but with start of the security operation in NWA, he and his family had to leave behind all of their belongings except for the livestock. They travelled day and night to find a safe place for them and their livestock. In Karak, he has little to do. There is no source of income to buy food for his family and the livestock. Life was becoming hard and miserable for them.

“Lack of feed and shelter affected the milk production. At home, we used to produce enough milk not only for our family, but also to share with our neighbors,” said Abdullah Noor. “Now, we don’t even have enough milk for ourselves. My livestock was of main concern for me as I had nothing to feed them, neither cash to purchase nor green fodder to feed. Some of the livestock died due to unavailability of feed for them. Similarly others are on the verge. Just when I was losing hope, a team from the Muslim Aid Pakistan, visited my house and interviewed me”.

After the Muslim Aid Pakistan assessment team registered him for livestock support he received livestock feed at the distribution point. After receiving the livestock support he broke out in a smile. He had prayed for assistance and for Muslim Aid to be a partner in hard times.

ERF provided $133,154 through Muslim Aid to provide livestock feed and milking tool kits for 600 families displaced from NWA and living in Karak. The project also provided veterinary services, vaccination and de-worming, for small and large animals owned by some 5,000 farmers—people displaced from NWA and host communities—in 20 villages in Karak.

“This assistance has saved the lives of our livestock. Every family of NWA who got this assistance is grateful to Muslim Aid who assisted us in these hard times. Many families have benefited from NGOs through different ways but we have never seen such a great support in terms of livestock support. I and my family will never ever forget this assistance of Muslim Aid Pakistan regarding our livestock assistance.”

Although Abdullah Noor and his family received livestock assistance he still needs additional support. Currently he and his family share their shelter with their livestock. He has requested an additional tent or shelter for their livestock as the family’s shelter can hardly accommodate the family let alone include their livestock.

Just like Abdullah Noor, other displaced people from the same area have similar stories. Muslim Aid Pakistan has tried to reach and assist every vulnerable displaced person from North Waziristan which has been tremendously appreciated by the people displaced from North Waziristan.
ERF brings NWA displaced children into schools

“My family was planning for evacuation when we heard of the military operation in our village. After a short span of time the military operation started and we fled our village to save our lives,” says Muhib Ullah.

Muhib Ullah’s family is one of the displaced families from North Waziristan Agency (NWA) who fled for their lives, settling in hosting areas of Bannu District. He and his family are staying with one of his father’s friend.

“The time of displacement was the hardest time of my life. With five children and my wife we travelled for three hours by foot. At displacement it is difficult for me to fulfill the multiple needs of my family and especially the education of my children…I have nothing to invest in my children’s education,” says Akhtar Nawaz, father of Muhib Ullah.

ERF is supporting the children displaced from NWA in continuing their education in hosting areas of Bannu District by establishing temporary learning centres and providing other supplies to continue their education. During an enrollment campaign, a PADO team identified Muhib Ullah as an out-of-school student and met with his father to enroll Muhib Ullah in Government Primary School Murib Khel Union Council Takhti Khel where PADO has deployed an additional teacher and established a temporary learning centre.

Muhib Ullah was enrolled in Grade 1 in the temporary learning centre and received a student learning kit which included stationary to help him continue with his education. He also received a health and hygiene kit after attending a health and hygiene educational session.

“I thought I would not be able to attend school for many years and pursue my dream of becoming a part of the Pakistan Army will remain a dream. One of my dreams was to learn English and I thought I would not be able to learn English in displacement. The teacher is striving hard to teach us and cover the time that is being wasted after the displacement. I am also learning English from my teacher,” says Muhib Ullah.

“For me it was very hard to provide the educational facilities to my children in displacement considering provision of the other live-saving facilities for my children. It is a dream come true for me as I spent nothing on my child’s education in displacement and he is getting a quality education. I am more than happy as my child is back in school,” said Akhtar Nawaz.
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**Pakistan Emergency Response Fund:**

**Project Performance Report** (January to March 2015)

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**Total beneficiaries reached**

453,787  
(67% reached)

**Beneficiaries reached by cluster**

**Education**

- **Teachers/school committees oriented**
  - Total: 16,747
  - % Achieved: 100%

**Food Security**

- **Cash-for-Work/Conditional Cash Grants package provided**
  - Total: 28,785
  - % Achieved: 100%

**Health**

- **Health kits distributed**
  - Total: 294,655
  - % Achieved: 9%

**Nutrition**

- **Acute malnutrition cases treated**
  - Total: 67,842
  - % Achieved: 24%

**Protection**

- **Number of people provided with protection trainings**
  - Total: 26,839
  - % Achieved: 60%

**WASH**

- **Water facilities rehabilitated/installed**
  - Total: 18,919
  - % Achieved: 100%

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

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