



Floods in Pakistan

January 2011

Current situation

The incessant monsoon rains that Pakistan experienced for days on end throughout July and August 2010 have led to the worst floods for a century. Around one fifth of the country has been affected, with the flood-hit area stretching for more than 1,500 km along the Indus and its tributaries. The flood wave progressed slowly from the North to the South of the country, and large areas of the southern Province of Sindh still remain under water.

Over 20 million people have so far been affected by the catastrophe, and 1700 have lost their lives. According to UN estimates, 14 million people were dependent on humanitarian aid at the moment that the flooding was at its worst.

The floods caused immense damage to infrastructure and agriculture. Floodwater has inundated roads and swept away bridges, in addition to which a huge number of schools (estimated at 10,000) and hospitals have been severely damaged. In total around 1.9 million houses and 2.4 million hectares of agricultural land has either been destroyed or severely damaged.

SDC emergency relief measures

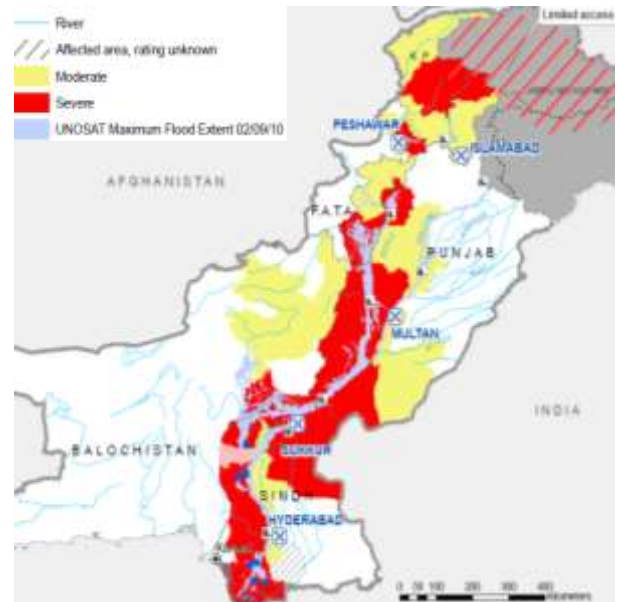
At the end of July 2010, within the first few days of the catastrophic rainfall, the SDC took immediate measures to provide emergency relief. In the northern districts of D.I. Khan and Karak, flood victims received drinking water, food and hygiene kits, in addition to which the SDC also distributed tarpaulins and plastic sheeting for shelters and tents along with household utensils and hygiene articles to needy families in the badly affected areas of the Swat Valley and the southern Province of Sindh. These relief efforts were organized in collaboration with the partner organisations Intercooperation, the Swiss Red Cross, the Pakistan Red Crescent, and other NGOs.

Clean drinking water

As part of an additional relief effort, the SDC launched projects for the disinfection and distribution of drinking water in a number of different regions.

In the Provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkwa (KPK) and Punjab experts from the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA) briefed and trained the authorities and partner organisations with the aim to guarantee the supply of clean drinking water to the local population. This was achieved with the aid of easy-to-use, Swiss-made chlorine production kits, and well-cleaning programmes.

Since the start of the programme, over 2000 water wells and some 16,000 groundwater pumps have been cleaned in the region of Peshawar and the Provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkwa and Punjab. Plans are underway to extend these measures to cover the Province of Sindh as well.



Source OCHA

Support for multilateral partners

The SDC is making a financial contribution of CHF 7 million to the ongoing operations of the ICRC and the UN World Food Programme (WFP). SHA experts have already been seconded to UN-Habitat (United Nations Human Settlements Programme) as well as to UN-OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) and the WFP and UNHCR are receiving the temporary support of experts.

SDC medium-term operations

Relief measures to get through the winter

- To provide the homeless with shelter over the winter months, the SDC and Intercooperation launched a cash project in the Swat Valley. Some 800 families who lost their homes received cash payments to help them get by. Families who were living in tents ever since the floods had set in, used the money to rent apartments or rooms and to buy gas and cooking ovens, as well as warm blankets and clothing. In the more southern-lying D.I. Khan district, the SDC is providing construction materials for roofing in order to support families whose houses have been destroyed. These roofs thus provide the families with protection from the winter rains.
- In the D.I. Khan district and the Swat Valley, SDC is financing seed distribution projects. Approximately 7,000 families received vouchers which they were able to exchange for wheat seeds and chickpea seeds, as well as for fertilizers. Funding is also being provided for the reconstruction of irrigation dams. These projects too are being organised in conjunction with SDC's partner organisation, Intercooperation.

- Further operations such as the reconstruction of schools and dispensaries, the restorations of water supply systems, as well as environmental and prevention projects are currently in the planning phase.
- Together with the Pakistan authorities, a working group set up by the SDC and UNDAC (United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team), is evaluating the need for additional environmental protection measures.

Current commitments

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| ▪ SDC bilateral emergency relief | 3,000,000 CHF |
| ▪ Contribution to the ICRC | 5,000,000 CHF |
| ▪ Contribution to the WFP | 2,000,000 CHF |
| ▪ Contribution to the UNHCR | 500,000 CHF |
| Total | 10,500,000 CHF |

In addition, the Swiss Solidarity foundation and other private relief organisations have to date received donations of around CHF 41,000,000 for the flood victims in Pakistan.

The SDC on-site

Switzerland has been active in Pakistan for 44 years and is represented by an SDC Cooperation Office in Islamabad.

Cooperation focuses on income generation, water, and agricultural development. Swiss Humanitarian Aid (HA) is implementing a programme to rebuild schools in the KPK Province.

In the area of disaster prevention, the SDC supports other projects aimed at the introduction of efficient protective measures, such as floodgates and dams, to prevent flooding. This has proven its worth, as areas which had already benefited from these measures were less severely affected by the floods than those which had not. In 2010, the budget for the Swiss programme in Pakistan was around CHF 17 million (excluding emergency relief). The five SDC members permanently stationed in Pakistan have been coordinating and supporting the implementation of the Swiss emergency relief measures. Furthermore, the SDC Cooperation Office in Islamabad has been constantly reinforced with SHA experts, and the Swiss Embassy in Islamabad and the Consulate in Karachi have both provided valuable support for the operational implementation of the relief operations.

Additional information

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Photos of SDC relief efforts in the Swat Valley and in the Sindh Province



Cash Project in the Swat Valley – Distribution of checks in Shinko and Bela (UC Bashigram)



Water reservoirs and sanitary facilities in a camp in Sukkur, in the Sindh Province

