

# Six months into the floods

## Resetting Pakistan's priorities through reconstruction

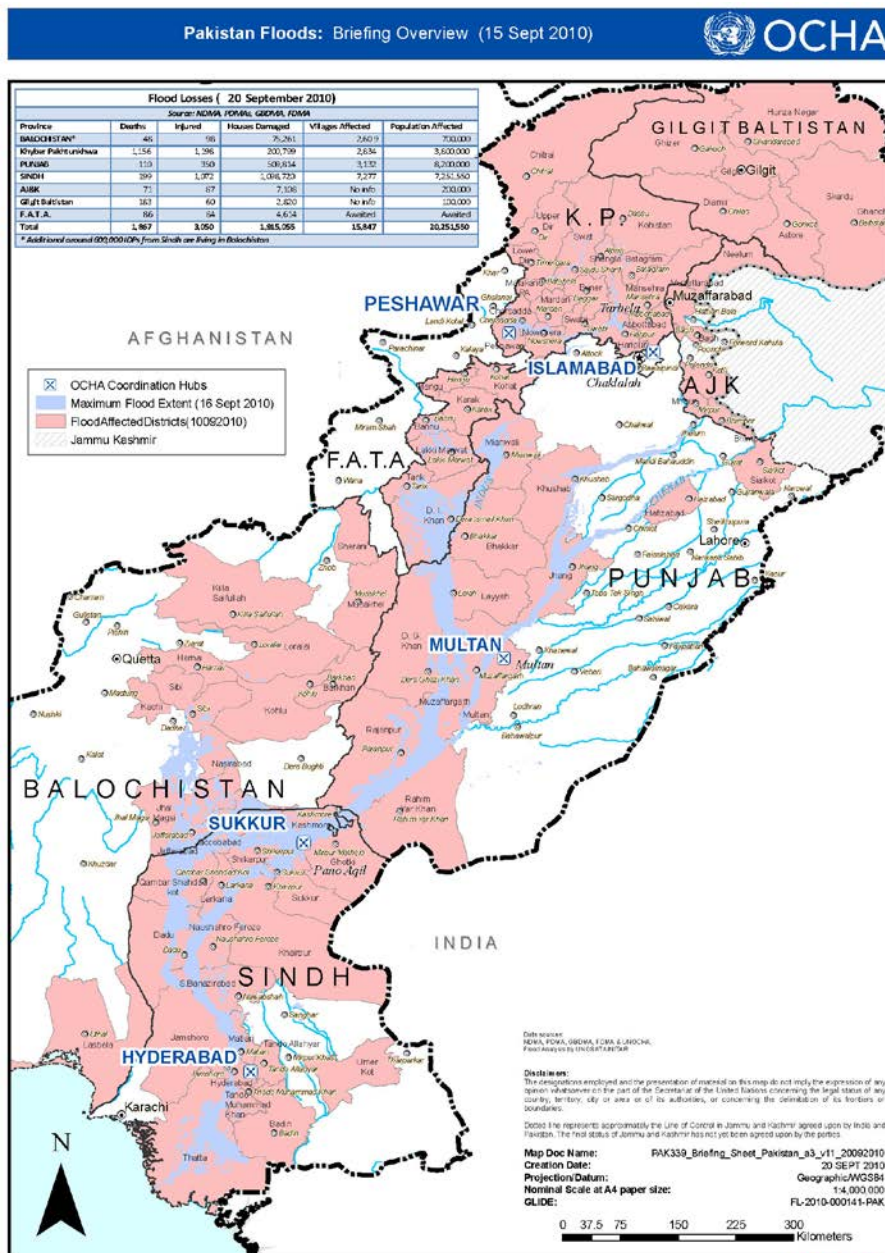
[www.oxfam.org](http://www.oxfam.org)



A farmer from Thatta standing in her flooded field. Copyright: Caroline Gluck/Oxfam.

**The monsoon floods that began in Pakistan in July 2010 caused a colossal disaster. Thanks to the collective efforts of the Pakistani Government, UN agencies, international NGOs, and local relief organisations, the response has achieved major successes and seen millions of Pakistanis receive vital emergency relief. However, the disaster is not over and many people still need humanitarian assistance. Ongoing emergency relief is just the first step in rebuilding devastated communities. A nationally-led, pro-poor reconstruction programme is needed now to create a path of sustainable development leading to a fairer and more disaster-resilient Pakistan.**

# Map of floods



# Executive summary

Six months after the flood disaster began, this briefing paper evaluates the humanitarian response so far, the continuing crisis, and the challenges that lie ahead. It looks at the immediate reconstruction task, as well as the underlying socio-economic and political issues that need to be tackled by the Government of Pakistan, backed by the international aid community, in order to help vulnerable Pakistanis rebuild stronger, safer communities and a more equitable and self-reliant country.

The huge floods that began in July 2010 were without precedent. **The people of Pakistan have shown resilience, strength, and generosity of spirit against remarkable challenges.** Now more than ever, the needs of the people must be put at the heart of the recovery. Building on the current humanitarian response, **a nationally-led, pro-poor reconstruction and development plan must lead the way.** By resetting priorities to tackle the underlying inequities that keep so many people poor and vulnerable, the disaster can be turned into a **transformative moment** for Pakistan. It is time to get down to business: steering the trajectory of Pakistan towards sustainable, comprehensive, pro-poor development and growth.

The size and scale of the disaster is difficult to conceive. Approximately 20 million people were affected, 14 million of whom have needed urgent humanitarian assistance. Floodwaters inundated up to one-fifth of the country (an area larger than all of England and affecting the same number of people as the population of Australia), partially or wholly destroying more than 1.6 million homes and causing approximately \$10bn of direct and indirect losses – half of which were borne by the agricultural sector alone.<sup>1</sup>

In the face of severe logistical obstacles, a major relief effort was launched by the Pakistani Government, supported by UN agencies, international NGOs, and local relief organisations, who battled to assist a population engulfed by a sea of contaminated water. Several donor governments and millions of individuals in Pakistan and around the world acted quickly and generously to provide money and relief items.

**Thanks to their collective efforts, the response to the floods has achieved significant successes.** Many lives have been saved, the spread of disease has been controlled, and millions have received vital assistance. **However, there are still vast humanitarian needs on the ground and serious lessons to be learnt from how the response has been delivered so far.** Now, six months after the floods struck, it is time both to look forward at the challenges of how to build and lead an effective reconstruction programme, and to evaluate the humanitarian response thus far.

**Today, the crisis is far from over**, particularly in the south of the country. Many areas – notably homesteads and agricultural land – remain under water or cut off. There is a widespread lack of adequate shelter, malnutrition rates are high, and many of those who are still displaced do not have the means to return home, or anywhere to return to. For those affected by conflict in the north of the country, the floods have had a double impact. Already vulnerable as hosts or displaced people, their resilience has been tested once again. Yet the Federal Government is ceasing emergency relief operations in most areas from 31 January 2011, putting at risk large numbers of Pakistanis who still require assistance. Moreover, with the next planting season looming, time is running out for landlords, government authorities, and the aid community to help damaged farming communities to recover and thus prevent a secondary food crisis that would result in yet more families sliding into destitution, debt, and hunger.

**Emergency relief is just the first step in a comprehensive programme of reconstruction and reform that is now required.** Rather than lurch from one disaster to the next, now is the time to rebuild Pakistan in a strategic way that tackles long-term problems not only on paper, but in practice. The floods and the flaws in the response to them have highlighted long-term problems that leave millions of Pakistanis poor and vulnerable to shocks, as well as weaknesses in the country's capacity to respond to them. The central government's current approach of cutting development budgets in half and focusing on the cash disbursement scheme in the reconstruction phase is likely to leave many underlying issues unresolved. Instead, **the momentum of the current floods response must be increased** through the urgent repair of infrastructure and key irrigation systems, significant land and agriculture reforms, building good-quality basic services that are accessible to all, and protecting communities from further disasters through locally-led disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures. The meaningful participation of flood-affected communities will be key to any plan's success. A watchful and engaged civil society can encourage the good governance that is necessary to build a strong, just, and prosperous country.

# The humanitarian response: successes, weaknesses, and the continuing crisis

Given the immense scale of the disaster, the response to the Pakistan floods has seen some notable achievements. By November 2010, military and civilian personnel had rescued over 1.5 million people. As the rains continued and the floods spread over a period of months,<sup>2</sup> aid workers, troops, government staff, and volunteers battled hard to distribute money, food, tents, water, hygiene items, and other essential assistance to well over 1.4 million households.<sup>3</sup> Their combined efforts helped avoid mass deaths from the initial flooding – which once seemed inevitable – and have so far averted a public health disaster.

The Pakistani Government took responsibility for leading the response, particularly directing the aid effort in the south of the country, where the needs have been greatest. Several donor governments and institutions – especially the USA, Saudi Arabia, Japan, the European Union and the UK – have contributed substantial funds. Members of the public both in Pakistan and around the world have also given generously. The British public, for example, has donated over \$100m via the main UK appeal for the floods.<sup>4</sup>

Although the aid effort has achieved a lot, it has also experienced many problems and has struggled to match the immense scale of human need. A patchy overall international donor response (despite the efforts of a generous handful), weak civilian disaster management capacity and a sluggish UN response contributed to an aid effort that was often weakly co-ordinated and slow to deliver sufficient assistance to everyone who needed it.

Consequently, millions of flood-affected people waited weeks or even months for emergency relief. As recently as mid-November 2010, Oxfam's partner staff identified approximately 10,000 flood-affected people in Dadu, Sindh Province who had not received any aid at all. Oxfam believes there may be more such people today. Concerns over the impartiality of local aid distribution have been rife. Women have experienced particular problems in obtaining assistance. In a society already characterised by severe gender inequality, women's mobility can be highly restricted and harassment is commonplace.

Today, the disaster is far from over and deeper effects are yet to come. Malnutrition levels in the south of the country, chronic before the floods, have skyrocketed. Today, an estimated one million internally-displaced persons (IDPs) are wintering without adequate shelter (although precise numbers do not exist because the tracking of IDPs,

whose movements have been highly fluid, remains very weak). Many returning families in southern Punjab and Sindh are sleeping in flimsy tents, or have no shelter at all. Freezing overnight temperatures threaten thousands of displaced families in Gilgit-Baltistan and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkwa. This not only raises the risk of illness but hinders people's attempts to rebuild homes and revive businesses. A sustained relief effort is needed to assist such people.

## **Pakistani state overstretched**

The Pakistani Government has scored some significant successes in the face of an unprecedented catastrophe that would have severely tested most countries. The government deployed at least 20,000 troops to lead successful rescue operations, while its civilian staff has attempted to coordinate and manage the provision of assistance, ranging from relief items to official cash-based support, that has benefitted millions of flood-affected people.

However, in a country prone to disasters, the state should have been better prepared to deliver an adequate and timely response. Its struggle to do so is largely – at various levels – because of weak state institutions, conflict, and lack of effective control over parts of its territory, and years of under-investment in its civilian disaster management capacity. Although the official Watan<sup>5</sup> cash transfer scheme has assisted many people, there have been incidents of local nepotism and corruption, and at times the scheme has lacked the basic infrastructure needed to deliver it. In Shikapur district in Sindh, only three ATMs were available to serve flood affected people in a 2500km<sup>2</sup> area. On top of this, women and religious minorities have faced cultural obstacles in receiving this and other forms of aid. In the face of such gaps in the official response, groups of various political affiliations and standards of accountability have stepped in to provide assistance.

The government has announced an end to emergency relief operations in most areas on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2011. With many people returning to their home areas and aiming to rebuild their lives, an increasing focus on their long term recovery and reconstruction needs is welcome. However, the sudden disruption of emergency programming may have a negative impact on the recovery and should be carefully assessed by all stakeholders. Local officials and the international community lack adequate population tracking data to provide a clear picture of IDP movements and continuing humanitarian needs. As a result, many of them may fall through the cracks. The government should ensure that those men, women, and children who face a prolonged emergency well into 2011 continue to receive urgent humanitarian relief according to the needs on the ground.

Flood-affected IDPs sheltering in public buildings are increasingly prone to forced evictions. 104 schools in the Sindhi district of Qamber Shahad Khot alone are still hosting displaced families.<sup>6</sup> All returns should be voluntary, informed, and undertaken in safety and with dignity to ensure any continuing needs are met and assure the long term sustainability of the returns. All camp closures should meet minimal standards by including clearly communicated advance

notification by relevant authorities to the inhabitants, sufficient time to prepare and transport provided to those who do not have the means to move. People with tents must be allowed to take those with them. Displaced Pakistanis who feel afraid or unable to return home should have their constitutional right to determine their area of residence respected.

Many IDPs in the north of Pakistan who had already been displaced previously as a result of conflict are especially vulnerable.<sup>7</sup> In Khyber Pakhtunkwa, in the district of Dera Ismail Khan (already hosting close to 55,000 conflict IDPs) where more than half the district was severely affected by the floods, only a quarter of the water and sanitation needs are currently being met. Additionally, in a country where violence against women is extensive and reporting cases of it carries significant risks and stigma, appalling incidents of gender-based violence, exacerbated by flood-related displacement, have often lacked any response from officials, police, or the aid community.<sup>8</sup>

The Pakistani Federal Government took some positive steps to facilitate humanitarian access by easing – though not lifting – restrictions on aid agencies and staff movements. The government’s decision in August 2010 to grant visas to foreign aid workers on arrival was also welcome and enabled aid agencies to deploy required staff quickly. This provision should be extended well into 2011 until the crisis is over.

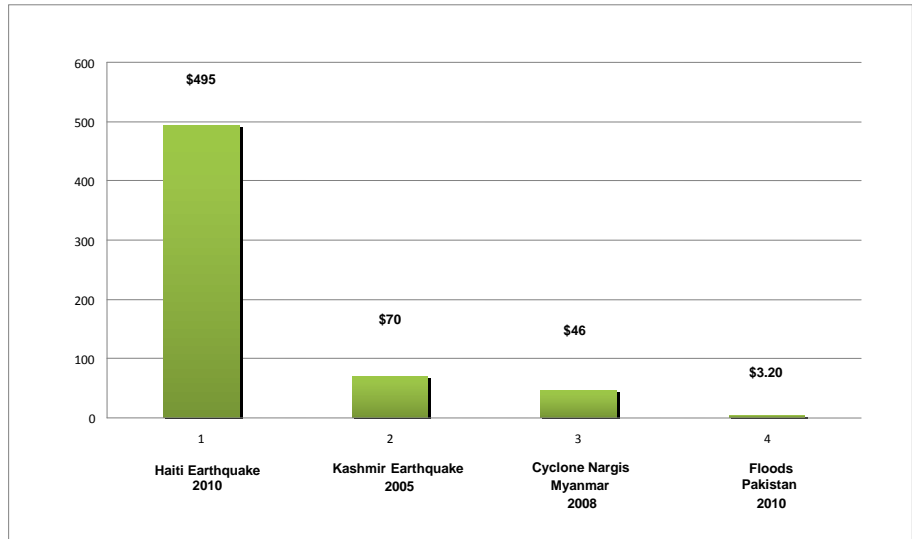
However, relief agencies still need to obtain No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for foreign staff travel in Khyber Pakhtunkwa, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and Baluchistan. Recent provincial-level amendments have increased restrictions and even introduced completely new ones.<sup>9</sup> These changes may be well-intentioned to improve coordination and to protect the security of aid workers but they hinder the delivery of aid. The NOC policy for Khyber Pakhtunkwa has changed three times since the floods began, resulting in delays in processing applications for example.

### **Patchy donor response**

Several donor governments and institutions have acted relatively quickly and generously to support the floods response with essential resources. Overall, however, international donor funding – seemingly substantial in financial terms – has been slow to arrive and remains inadequate in relation to people’s needs.

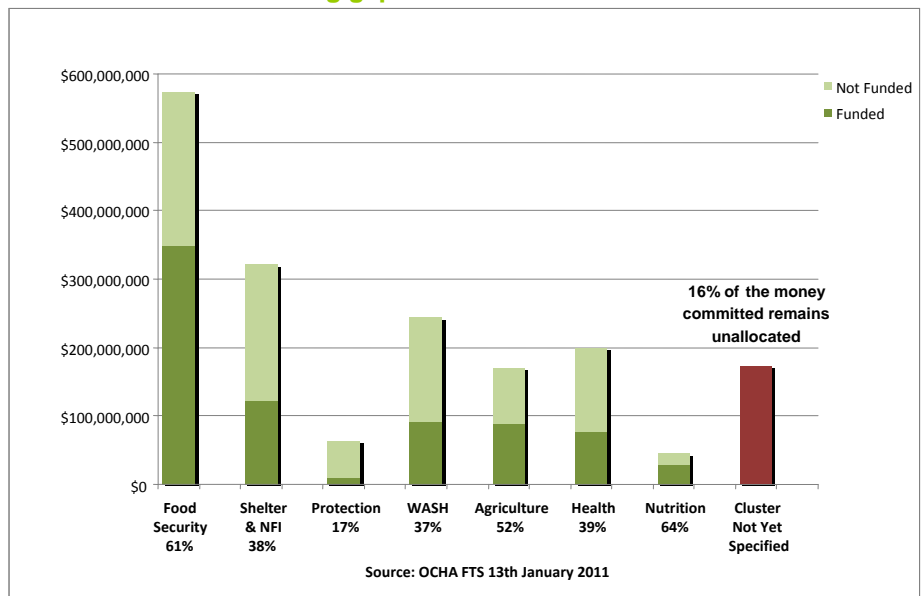
For example, by 9 August 2010, \$3.20 had been provided per flood-affected person. As Table 1 below shows, this pales in comparison with the amounts donated soon after other disasters.<sup>10</sup> The initial scarcity of resources slowed the relief and recovery effort at a critical time. Facing growing humanitarian needs, WHO, UNICEF, and UN Habitat warned in November that they would need to scale down operations unless new funds arrived.

**Table 1. UN Appeal funding per person 10 days into the disaster**



The funding problem persists today. By mid-January 2011, the revised Floods Emergency Response Plan – which is seeking \$2 billion for one year of relief and recovery projects – was still barely half-funded, with vital sectors seriously cash-strapped, as illustrated by Table 2 below. By comparison, six months after the Haiti earthquake in 2010, the emergency appeal was 64 per cent funded and the international community had moreover pledged more than \$10bn in immediate and long-term assistance. Six months after the earthquake in Kashmir in 2005, the UN emergency appeal was two-thirds funded.

**Table 2. UN cluster funding gaps**



A handful of donor governments and institutions have been relatively generous. The USA and the UK provided substantial funds quickly, and were later joined by Saudi Arabia and Japan as the leading donors. The EU, Australia, Norway, and Turkey have also provided sizeable contributions (especially if the last three countries' economic size is taken into account).<sup>11</sup>



However, the responses from several other donors have been disappointing and excuses such as overstretched aid budgets and contributions to other recent emergencies cannot absolve them from their responsibilities to Pakistan's flood survivors. The Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship require donors to manage their aid budgets and to respond impartially to crisis-affected people wherever they are and whenever crises occur.<sup>12</sup>

## The UN

UN agencies have contributed significantly to the relief effort, supporting the government in planning and co-ordinating the humanitarian response, raising awareness of critical issues, and delivering assistance directly or through numerous partners. The efforts of UN agencies have helped to save lives and prevent a secondary public health disaster.

However, the UN-led 'cluster system' for the co-ordination of humanitarian sectors has been dogged by problems. A lack of experienced UN cluster coordinators with relevant skills in the initial phase, coupled with too many key UN staff based initially in Islamabad when they should have been out in the field, led to gaps, duplication, and delays. Activity mapping and information management remain weak, as does inter-cluster co-ordination. Administrative procedures used by UN cluster lead agencies (and some donors) to disburse funds to frontline relief organisations have been slow, burdensome, and unsuited to the demands of a rapidly growing emergency, hindering NGOs trying to scale-up and deliver urgently needed aid.

## Relief agencies challenged

Frontline humanitarian agencies have achieved considerable success; international and national organisations joined hands to rescue trapped flood survivors and provide life-saving assistance to millions of flood-affected people. This was achieved despite huge logistical obstacles, a patchy donor response, and cumbersome fund disbursement mechanisms.

Such hindrances partly explain the uneven geographic coverage of assistance by many aid agencies in the first few months. Some NGOs (such as Oxfam) have been working in multiple locations in Khyber Pakhtunkwa, Punjab, and Sindh since the summer of 2010. However, others initially focused their efforts in Khyber Pakhtunkwa, where many NGOs had been assisting conflict-affected communities, and were unwilling or unable to extend their operations to address enormous gaps in aid coverage in the south of the country until 2-3 months later. Local-level political interference with the distribution and targeting of aid has also contributed to the uneven coverage.

Pakistan's vibrant civil society showed its flexibility, with many groups acting as innovators and activists to provide aid directly to flood-affected communities. However, the proliferation of international aid agencies seeking local partners, particularly in areas less familiar to

international actors, led to many local NGOs taking on multiple and sometimes unfamiliar responsibilities with insufficient support. Partnerships must be grounded in mutually beneficial terms and should ensure sufficient support that enables national NGOs to absorb resources effectively and accountably. In addition, international NGOs must be careful not to poach the staff of local NGOs – who have a vital role to play in an emergency response – as was agreed during the response to the Kashmir earthquake in 2005.

# The reconstruction challenge

*If we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous, we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people, and especially of the masses and the poor.*

Mohammed Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan, 11 August 1947.

If Pakistan is to stand a chance of building its vision of a better future, the country must move towards a comprehensive development programme and, as part of that, must shift from inevitably chaotic emergency responses to long-term resilience. The right steps must be taken towards a more sustainable, more equitable society. Pakistan's ability to improve its disaster preparedness and to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 and beyond, now depends on a massive scaling-up of political commitment and investment in areas such as governance, social reform, physical infrastructure, agriculture, public health, and education.

Socio-economic injustices, such as extreme poverty, inequitable land rights and access, food insecurity, and gender discrimination, are widespread in Pakistan. Ongoing conflict and counter-insurgency operations, particularly in the north of the country, have also taken a toll on Pakistan's development aspirations and its ability to respond effectively to disasters. Insufficient governance and accountability and unharnessed domestic resources have undermined attempts to tackle these development challenges thus far. Despite promises made after previous disasters, there is still no effective disaster management infrastructure at national or district levels. Additionally, damage to and neglect of the changing physical environment has robbed vulnerable communities of natural forms of protection, increasing disaster risks.

This is not the first disaster that Pakistan has experienced and it will not be the last. Building back better must be broader than physical disaster risk reduction (DRR) and should aim to tackle the underlying social inequities, which have increased people's vulnerability to disasters, in addition to the rising threat of climate change.<sup>13</sup>

A robust, nationally-led post-flood reconstruction programme holds the potential to meet these challenges head-on and change the development trajectory of the country. Now is the time to put words into action. Backed by the international community, the Government of Pakistan must lead the country on an upward path towards greater equality and sustainable development.

## Sustainable development means addressing inequality, even in the face of disasters

Pakistan cannot overcome poverty until it addresses identity-based inequality – historic, generational exclusion based on gender, religion, ethnicity, and other socio-economic indicators. Those in the remotest areas, particularly where affected by the ongoing conflict between the Pakistani army and armed groups, risk being excluded from reconstruction efforts. These groups represent the poorest and most vulnerable people in Pakistani society. In the wake of disasters, their suffering is disproportionately great.

### Women

Pakistan has made significant strides towards improving the overall position of women in the face of complex challenges. However, many of these challenges remain. Pakistani women have less access to health, social, and information services than men, and are therefore less able to deal with additional stresses.<sup>14</sup> In Pakistan, the official identification system targets the nuclear family with women registered under their father's or husband's name. Although women are entitled to their own ID cards, this rarely happens for cultural and bureaucratic reasons. Because much of the emergency assistance, as well as the government compensation scheme, hinges on possession of a Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC), current practices and policy indirectly reinforce women's dependency on men. The CNIC system has great potential but requires reform to fully implement a one person, one ID card policy and ensure equal access to aid and essential services.

Additionally, many flood-affected families have resorted to harmful survival tactics, which reinforce traditional practices that view women as commodities. A worrying increase in the number of girls sold for marriage,<sup>15</sup> in instances of forced prostitution, and in gender-based denial of resources or services has been reported, as desperate families seek money to survive.<sup>16</sup> Women's rights must be made a priority within recovery and reconstruction work, to tackle not only the customary practices that often override laws pertaining to women, but also the lack of supportive state structures and mechanisms for the protection of women when they claim their rights.

### Landless people and small farmers

Landless tenant farmers and sharecroppers<sup>17</sup> represent some of the most vulnerable groups affected by the flooding and include many people from religious and ethnic minorities. Many of them fear that they will become dispossessed. Access to land enables them to have a home and allows them access to basic entitlements (such as Watan cash assistance<sup>18</sup>) yet this was not legally protected before the floods, and may now be even more difficult. Those who have gained access to land and sufficient resources to rebuild often have to do so under a repressive feudal system. Many small landowners who have taken loans from money-lenders face the same difficulties as landless tenants.

#### Box 1

Sakina Chandani is a mother of six. She and her husband are peasant farmers who earn between Rs 100 and Rs 200 (\$1.16–\$2.32) for a day's manual labour. She is the recipient of a progressive state redistribution of land programme in Sindh.

'When I first found out I had been awarded land, I felt as if I was flying. I couldn't believe I was a landowner,' she said.

Sakina Chandani,  
Thatta, Sindh Province,  
December 2010

People need livelihoods and control over their own lives, not just handouts. Rather than receiving handouts of food, the landless should be given the security of access that would allow them to grow their own. Pakistan's elite, both landlords and politicians, have to show their mettle. This is their opportunity to contribute to the national effort to alleviate Pakistan's poverty. They must begin by supporting those on whom their wealth and power depends and allow registered access to homesteads and reform of land rights accordingly.

With significant funds potentially available for reconstruction,<sup>19</sup> the international community has an opportunity to support Pakistan in promoting more equitable access to and distribution of land throughout the country. The current Damage Needs Assessment includes a housing recovery and reconstruction strategy which addresses land ownership issues under 'finance' by suggesting an increase in the private housing market as a means to contribute to economic growth.<sup>20</sup> Such an approach ignores the simple reality that those most in need of land security will be unable to pay for land, particularly in the wake of the floods. This could be replaced with simpler progressive models, such as the Sindh Province Government's land redistribution programme and the Punjab Province's Jinnah Abadi Scheme (which provides formal settlements for those without shelter). These must be completed and replicated in other provinces, with a particular focus on providing economically-viable locations (through State acquisition of land if necessary) and increasing women's land ownership.<sup>21</sup>

## Food insecurity

Land reform models should go hand in hand with progressive agricultural assistance that supports the most vulnerable farmers, rather than large-scale landowners. Agriculture, which accounts for 21 per cent of Pakistan's economy and provides 45 per cent of all employment, was hit particularly hard by the floods. As a result, Pakistan's bread basket of Punjab and Sindh is under threat.<sup>22</sup>

The floods have exacerbated a massive existing problem that requires a structural intervention in the national reconstruction response. Even before the floods, almost half the population were food-insecure.<sup>23</sup> Now, many of the same vulnerable people have lost all their assets in the floods, or sold them to survive, and have few means left of earning a living until the next planting season in April.<sup>24</sup> Prices for basic commodities such as food and fuel have rocketed since the floods, adding to existing inflation.<sup>25</sup> Fruit and vegetables have moved further out of people's reach – a kilogram of okra (otherwise known as 'lady's fingers') has gone up from 50 to 80 rupees and pomegranates have doubled in price.<sup>26</sup>

Farmers, casual labourers, and small businesses will struggle to recover until the credit market is rehabilitated and farming is again possible. With indebtedness already a prevalent problem, millions of Pakistanis risk sliding further into a debt trap or falling into bonded labour,<sup>27</sup> unless they become economically-productive or receive adequate assistance. The inability of households to repay debt limits their ability

to optimise their use of what cultivatable land has survived, thus deepening the trap. Large-scale landlords, some of whom have reportedly already taken the money their displaced tenants received through the Watan Card system as debt repayment, must write off these debts and encourage agricultural input without the exorbitant interest rates normally imposed (often as high as 20 or 30 per cent, per quarter). As an alternative, access to official channels of credit through credit unions or modern banking systems should be increased.

Substantial investment will be required to ensure that there is not a secondary food crisis. The most recent official published figures on nutrition, from 2002, showed critical levels of malnutrition in the south, even before the onslaught of the floods. Yet key opportunities to provide food, such as during the winter planting season, were largely missed. The problem is even worse now, as the levels of malnutrition are compounded by an inability to grow food for the future.

Time is running out. Where irrigation systems have survived the floods and agriculture can begin, subsidies should be put in place to avoid the all-too-common exploitation of small farmers. Those landlords rehabilitating privately-owned irrigation systems should extend these to the land of adjacent small holders as an investment in local productivity. The Government's distribution of free seeds is a good initiative. However, the seeds must be of high-quality, must be provided with appropriate fertilisers, and must go directly to the poorest farmers who need them urgently. The future of hundreds of thousands of farmers now depend on the vast irrigation channels of the Indus river basin being repaired before the planting season in April, especially in Sindh. Landlords, donors, and the national and provincial governments must work together to meet this critical deadline. Finally, crops produced from these interventions should be used to feed Pakistan's people as a priority, not sold for export.

### **Development gains must not be lost**

At the same time, a focus should be maintained on moving the country forwards and upwards towards sustainable, pro-poor development. Substantial development gains and investments made by the Government of Pakistan, the international community, and civil society over recent decades are at the heart of reducing vulnerability to shocks. However, these gains currently stand to be lost.

Nationwide, 10,916 schools were damaged in the floods.<sup>28</sup> These schools must be rebuilt, not just to replicate what was there before but to tackle the risks that the future holds, with due consideration both to DRR and climate change adaptation principles, as well as to the needs of girls (such as adequate and appropriate water and sanitation facilities).<sup>29</sup> Even before the floods, only 2 per cent of GDP was allocated to education, the lowest level in South Asia. Now the government is considering even further cuts to the Public Sector Development Programme, which was reduced by 50 per cent after the floods, from Rs 280bn to Rs 140bn (\$3.27bn to \$1.64bn).<sup>30</sup> Rather than continuing to slash its spending in the development sector, the Pakistani Government should use this potentially transformative

moment to prioritise sufficient funding for essential services, such as education. Rebuilding infrastructure (whether transport, health, or education facilities, or other essential services, such as water or electricity) is critical both for the restoration of local economies and the creation of employment and incomes.

## Improving Pakistan's civilian DRR and climate adaptation capabilities

Recognising that vulnerability is chronic means rethinking the humanitarian-development divide. While keeping a watchful eye on continuing emergency needs, and ensuring that development gains are built upon, the national reconstruction programme should spearhead a wider effort to radically strengthen Pakistan's own ability to prepare for and respond to disasters and adapt to climate change effects.

These recommendations are not new. After previous crises, the State set up civilian disaster management bodies at national and sub-national levels – such as the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMA) – to mobilise resources for more effective preparedness, relief, recovery, and co-ordination. A national strategy was developed that outlined the roles and responsibilities of these new bodies and of existing institutions (such as those of district authorities). However, a lack of political will and investment, especially at the critical but under-resourced district and provincial levels, has meant that local authorities have struggled to co-ordinate and manage responses. There is often a complete disconnect between national and provincial level decision making. Deeper reform is therefore needed to build on the good work that has already been started. Disaster management expertise and district-level emergency cells need long-term technical and financial support to address the dearth of knowledge about hazard identification, risk assessment and management, and linkages between livelihoods and disaster preparedness.

Since 1947, Pakistan has been affected by five major floods (1950, 1988, 1992, 1998 and 2010). This time, the mega floods caused total or partial damage to more than 1.6 million houses<sup>31</sup>. Although the primary concern of most flood affected people is to return to their homes and rebuild their houses,<sup>32</sup> communities are now anxious about the ability of their houses to withstand the next monsoon season. There is a critical window of time to provide assistance to communities to help them build their homes back better and more resilient to flooding. Housing needs will be specific to the local context (pukka or katcha areas<sup>33</sup>) and communities themselves are best placed to rebuild according to the context. The preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment of the World Bank and Asian Development Bank promotes a model of 'flood-resistant hybrid house'. However, the cost of a 'hybrid house' is estimated at Rs 180,000 (\$ 2,120) far beyond what most people are due to get in compensation through the Watan scheme, or have at their disposal. Taking into account rates of inflation in Pakistan, cash assistance for housing reconstruction must be sufficient to meet the heightened costs of building materials.

### Box 2

Lashkar Pur Village in South Punjab has a population of nearly 300 people and was hit by the floods. Through Ox-fam's DRR programme, communities were better prepared for the disaster.

"During the 1992 floods, 100 per cent of our houses were damaged, but this year, when the water was 6 inches higher, only a few houses were damaged owing to this work of raising houses and building embankments"

Qasim, Manager of a Lashkar Pur Village community-based organisation, south Punjab, August 2010

Reconstruction work must recognise that the key to disaster resilience lies with involving affected communities as well as State structures in these processes. The provincial authorities in Punjab and Sindh have discussed the construction of model villages for flood-affected people.<sup>34</sup> Such initiatives can only hope to be successful by prioritising the housing and construction recommendations above, the meaningful participation of communities, and critically assessing the indirect impact on livelihoods, social networks, and women's mobility. Successful models for community involvement in improving disaster resilience do exist: development actors, including Oxfam, have conducted numerous projects working with local partners and grassroots groups. If such activities were appropriately scaled-up and applied nationally, Pakistan would be better equipped to cope with disasters.

As the global climate changes, the intensity of annual monsoon flooding can be expected to increase.<sup>35</sup> Efforts to rehabilitate the naturally-protective environment and adapt to the impacts of the changing climate need to be accelerated, with reforestation and appropriate water management being key areas. Various harmful or negligent practices, including deforestation in upland areas, the expansion of agricultural lands in river flood plains, poor maintenance of retention embankments, limited investment in irrigation systems, and ineffective early-warning systems, exacerbated the flood disaster in 2010 and must be addressed. Those who destroyed parts of the flood-protection bunds (flood embankments) for their own personal gain should be held to account.

With international support, the Pakistani Government could lead in systematically integrating DRR and climate change adaptation into all development activity. Pakistan is a signatory of the Hyogo Framework for Action, and its political establishment must work harder to meet its commitments and protect its citizens.<sup>36</sup> Such an investment would not only save lives and livelihoods but money too, since humanitarian responses generally cost several times more than preventive measures.

### **A transparent, accountable, and nationally-led reconstruction plan is urgently needed**

The current situation presents an opportunity for the Pakistani Government to show responsible leadership by urgently implementing a nationally-led, pro-poor reconstruction plan that demonstrates transparent decision-making with regard to the allocation of resources and the flow of aid.

This is a key moment for the government to address directly the 'trust deficit' that exists within and outside the country. This could be done by making budget and aid allocations publicly available and should reflect the need to invest in the immediate and long-term future of Pakistan. Aid dollars and rupees must be directed to post-flood reconstruction and reach the poorest and most vulnerable people and those most affected by the floods. This could be supported by supporting the ability and mandate of civil servants and appointees to resist and overcome corruption that may occur along the way.<sup>37</sup>



Just as the country requires strong direction to overcome its biggest challenge in decades, the current process of political devolution (under the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution) has seen flood-hit provincial-level governments handed key responsibilities for flood rehabilitation and reconstruction.<sup>38</sup> In principle, bringing democracy and decision-making closer to communities is a positive step and the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment is welcomed in this regard. However, transferring such responsibilities without first putting in place the necessary capacity and resources (human and financial) undermines the likely transparency and effectiveness of the recovery and increases competition for donor resources between already divided provinces.<sup>39</sup>

The Federal Government's flagship reconstruction response thus far has been its cash transfer mechanism – the nationwide Watan Card scheme.<sup>40</sup> Cash-based assistance has a valuable role to play in many disaster responses, potentially transferring much-needed aid safely and efficiently, while enabling people to make their own decisions about what they need. To ensure this is truly successful and fulfils its ambition, the Government has to be much more rigorous in ensuring that the system does not succumb to corruption and that the most vulnerable really do have access. The Government should continue to provide mobile outreach centres for registration and appeals, and should extend updated information campaigns in local languages to stem misunderstandings around eligibility criteria and the timings of future fund disbursements.<sup>41</sup> With such potential, the importance of strengthening this scheme, and prioritising the role of non-governmental oversight within it, cannot be overstated. The recently-introduced grievance system is a critical step in the right direction but already faces a sizeable number of appeals largely linked to civil registration document updates. With increased staff levels, resources, and vigorous transparency in the process, the Watan scheme can become a mechanism to deliver assistance to those most in need, both in emergency times and beyond.

However, cash alone is not the answer to such a devastating event. There have been promising commitments by the Government of Pakistan to implement a broader reconstruction effort, and newly emerging actors at the federal level appear to have been tasked with directing these plans.<sup>42</sup> These initiatives are welcome and rightly recognise that there are some issues that can only be effectively addressed by a stable national government supporting provincial authorities in tackling critical issues of reconstruction – such as providing strategy on improving land rights, national water management, helping resolve inter-provincial disputes, and ensuring a fair and equitable distribution of resources nationwide.

However, such initiatives need to be effectively resourced and co-ordinated with provincial actors. A nationally-led reconstruction process that proactively supports provincial governments in tackling such issues would avoid a fragmentary approach. This would allow local authorities to focus on the activities that they are best placed to address, such as identifying reconstruction priorities at the local level, ensuring community participation in recovery planning, and

addressing grievances relating to aid distribution. A proliferation of administrative structures and operational authorities should be resisted, with focus shifted instead to making existing structures and processes effective and accountable.<sup>43</sup> In some areas, the officials who have joined the provincial disaster management authority (PDMA) have pre-existing roles within revenue boards that are responsible for land demarcation and tax collection. Corruption is perceived as widespread in Pakistan<sup>44</sup>, and the recent removal of the PDMA director general in Sindh along with a senior revenue official on corruption charges has only increased this view.<sup>45</sup> For PDMA to be above such concerns, it is critical there is a clear segregation of responsibilities to deal with any pre-existing bias. It is also imperative that the PDMA is transparent and accountable to the public, and listens to those affected by the flood, so the response really benefits people who need it.

Mobilising domestic resources in the short and long term is critical. As taxpayers around the world support Pakistan to recover from the floods, wealthy Pakistanis ought to contribute their fair share through taxation.<sup>46</sup> Domestic resource mobilisation must not be allowed to fall disproportionately on those who can least afford to pay.<sup>47</sup>

### **Involving civil society**

A key means of ensuring accountability and building trust is the involvement of civil society in the reconstruction effort. Those best able to determine what is needed in order to rebuild damaged communities and address poverty in the long term are usually the communities themselves, and their involvement improves the chances that reconstruction efforts will be locally-supported and sustainable. Lessons must be learned from Pakistan's unfortunate history of flood mitigation projects – funded by international financial institutions (IFIs) – that have had devastating consequences for communities.<sup>48</sup> Civil society involvement in assessing and determining the priorities of the preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank following the 2010 floods was minimal. This must be rectified through ensuring that decision-making for the reconstruction programme systematically and meaningfully engages with flood-affected communities and civil society.

### **Role of the international community**

Although the international community is interested in pursuing political and security-related objectives in Pakistan, humanitarian, early recovery, and reconstruction aid must be primarily targeted on the basis of needs and not designed to further stabilisation goals – although development that meets people's needs can contribute to peace and stability. The problematic security-driven approach in much development work in Afghanistan must not be repeated in Pakistan.

In addition to the humanitarian response, donors (both governments and IFIs) have a key role to play in helping to fund the early recovery and reconstruction phases. The UN appeal, which covers the first year after the floods and therefore a large component of the early recovery,

is only 56 per cent funded.<sup>49</sup> The initial spurt of funding is now a trickle and yet massive needs remain. International donors need to meet their responsibilities and support Pakistan as it rebuilds. Reconstruction funding, estimated by the preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment to be \$8.7 – 10.9bn, must support not only the national government but also the provincial and district levels, where resources are urgently needed. This support should not only be about more aid, but also ensuring that it is good quality: long term and predictable aid that is given to projects that are pro-poor and founded on the basis of need. To back this up, technical support is required, especially at the provincial and district government level, to make sure the government has the capacity to deliver a reconstruction response that is transparent and that properly addresses the needs of flood-affected people. Donors should also ensure they are supporting national NGOs to develop their own skills – a critical investment in a country where disasters are sadly frequent.

Finally, it is not only the poor of Pakistan who face massive debts, but the country collectively. In the first nine months of the 2010 financial year, the cost of servicing Pakistan's foreign debt<sup>50</sup> was three times the amount the government spends annually on health care. The international community should use this moment to cancel Pakistan's international debts, many of which were acquired during previous disasters, under dictatorial regimes, and for international projects that have not benefited the country. Debt cancellation cannot happen in isolation – it must take place in conjunction with more effective, fair taxation and pro-poor, transparent funding of the reconstruction. However, this should not deter the conversations on how debt cancellation can be achieved from beginning. In the meantime, donors should ensure that aid is in the form of grants not loans, so Pakistan is not further burdened by debt.

# 3

## Conclusion and recommendations

The 2010 monsoon floods have been devastating for Pakistan and its people, and the emergency is not over. However, this can also be a moment for fundamentally positive change. The first step on the path to changing the trajectory of poverty in Pakistan is a nationally-led, pro-poor reconstruction plan that puts the needs of the people at its core.

Transformative measures are required to address vulnerabilities arising from social inequity and exclusion. Important investments in development and steps towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals are under threat. Humanitarian aid cannot be a replacement for sustained government action on social protection and building resilience to shocks.

There is no doubt that this disaster has been overwhelming for the Government of Pakistan and the international community alike, but much has been achieved and many lives have been saved. This momentum must be carried forward to reduce vulnerability and poverty through the provision of disaster-resistant housing, significant pro-poor land and agriculture reforms, building good-quality basic services that are accessible to men and women alike, and protecting communities from the next shock through comprehensive disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

The time for talking is over. The Pakistan story this time can, and must, be different.

## Recommendations

### **The Government of Pakistan should:**

- Ensure that flood-affected people receive adequate and appropriate humanitarian assistance for as long as they need it, while facilitating unhindered, impartial humanitarian access to all affected people.
- Lead a swift nationally-led, pro-poor reconstruction and development plan that is transparent and targets the most vulnerable people wherever they are. This must be based on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation principles, including appropriate support to provincial governments. It must address critical needs, such as housing and livelihoods, and tackle underlying concerns, such as land access, governance, and tax reform.
- Strengthen civilian disaster management and response capacity, ensuring that affected communities and civil society, particularly women, are meaningfully involved and consulted in disaster response initiatives and reconstruction planning.

**The international donor community should:**

- Support and push the Government of Pakistan to implement a nationally-led, pro-poor reconstruction and development programme that is appropriately co-ordinated with provincial authorities.
- Fulfil its obligations to support humanitarian, recovery, and reconstruction efforts with greater resources that are commensurate to the scale of people's needs.
- Increase support to Pakistan's civilian disaster management infrastructure at all levels, with particular attention to tackling governance challenges at the local level.
- Ensure that donor projects prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable communities and are geared primarily to poverty alleviation, disaster resilience, climate change adaptation, and related social, economic, and governance reforms – and not wider political or security objectives.

**The UN should:**

- Ensure the timely, well co-ordinated, and adequate provision of relief and recovery assistance. Cluster effectiveness must be strengthened by providing detailed mapping of needs to determine who is doing what and where, by proactively providing strong analysis and direction, and by improving inter-cluster co-ordination.
- UN agencies must streamline slow and cumbersome fund disbursement procedures to enable frontline aid agencies to expand operations more quickly.

**Pakistani civil society and media should:**

- Advocate on behalf of vulnerable people and assist government to assess and prioritise reconstruction needs.
- Track financial flows in the relief and reconstruction efforts by monitoring planned and actual expenditure and demanding transparency in the process.

# Notes

- <sup>1</sup> According to the preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, November 2010. Some aid actors and Pakistani officials believe that the actual figures are higher. Shelter Cluster Meeting Summary, 11 January 2011, gives an example of the kind of discrepancies: 'The DNA figures were introduced in mid-November but have proved to display big discrepancies when compared to the PDMA figures at district level. Field investigations by NDMA in early January 2011 have confirmed the veracity of the PDMA figures. For example, in Dadu the DNA figures detail 24,000 damaged or destroyed homes, while the PDMA figures describe 168,000.'
- <sup>2</sup> Eight breaches in Lake Manchar dam to release water from Dadu led to the displacement of approximately 40,000 individuals, as late as 18 September 2010. <http://www.awaztoday.com/newsdetails.asp?pageId=7068>
- <sup>3</sup> The Government's cash disbursement scheme reports that it has reached a total of 1,425,903 households as of 17 January 2011 <http://watancard.nadra.gov.pk/reporting.jsp>
- <sup>4</sup> The Pakistan floods appeal organised by the UK's Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) had raised £68m by January 2011.
- <sup>5</sup> The Government of Pakistan is distributing cash (20,000 rupees – \$233 – to be followed by a further 80,000 rupees) to those who have been flood affected via a free ATM card system.
- <sup>6</sup> Information provided by UNHCR to NDMA Strategic Meeting, 7 January 2011.
- <sup>7</sup> In July 2010, the government stated that 1.4 million conflict-affected IDPs remained, but humanitarian agencies have documented significant under-registration (World Health Organisation, April 2010; UN Office for Coordination Humanitarian Affairs, March 2010; Multi cluster Rapid Assessment Mechanism, June 2010). Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2010) 'Pakistan: Flooding worsens situation for people displaced by conflict in north-west', 6 September 2010.
- <sup>8</sup> Information gathered in Oxfam's own field assessments and indicated by the UN Gender-Based Violence Sub-Cluster Guidelines and FAQs, 24 November 2010.
- <sup>9</sup> National Disaster Management Authority letter of 29 December 2010. Subject: Policy for Issuance of NOCs to Implementing Agencies for Early Recovery Projects (Para 2b).
- <sup>10</sup> Within ten days of the Kashmir earthquake in 2005, which left up to 3.5 million people homeless, the international community provided \$247m (and pledged \$45m). This amounted to \$70 provided per person. Within ten days of Cyclone Nargis striking Myanmar in 2008, affecting 2.4 million people, almost \$110m was provided (and \$109m pledged), amounting to \$46 provided per person. Within ten days of the Haiti earthquake in January 2010, some \$742m was committed and \$920m pledged to assist 1.5 million affected people. This worked out at \$495 per person.
- <sup>11</sup> Based on data from UN OCHA's financial tracking system, 5 January 2011.
- <sup>12</sup> A set of 23 Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship was agreed in 2003. These were drawn up to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of donor action, as well as their accountability to beneficiaries, implementing organisations, and domestic constituencies, with regard to the funding, co-ordination, follow-up and evaluation. <http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/gns/home.aspx>
- <sup>13</sup> Climate change is set to exacerbate the impact of disasters in Pakistan, with more flooding and droughts. Precipitation has decreased 10-15% in the coastal belt and arid plains over the last 40 years, while summer and winter rains have increased in northern Pakistan. Global warming, in conjunction with environmental degradation, changes in land-use and cropping patterns, and population growth, is increasing pressure on rural and coastal communities. Rising sea levels threaten homes and livelihoods in coastal areas. Such effects aggravate existing vulnerabilities in a country where food and water security issues have become increasingly pressing.
- <sup>14</sup> Almost all indicators relating to the status of women's rights show that Pakistan has extremely high levels of gender discrimination. Pakistan is one of the few countries in the world to have a negative sex ratio with 100 women to 108.5 men. According to the Human Development Reports, Pakistan ranks 138 on a list of 174 developing countries on the Human Development Index (HDI); 131 on a list of 163 countries on the gender development index (GDI); and 100 on a list of 102 countries on the gender empowerment measure (GEM). OGB Ending Violence Against Women Response Update, 11 January 2011.
- <sup>15</sup> Under the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929, the minimum age of marriage in Pakistan is 16 years for females and 18 years for males, although it is common to find marriages of people younger than this, particularly in rural areas.
- <sup>16</sup> UN Gender-Based Violence Sub-Cluster Guidelines and FAQs, 24 November 2010, and Oxfam's own internal food security assessment, November 2010.
- <sup>17</sup> Sharecropping is a system of agriculture in which a landowner allows a tenant to use the land in return for a share of the crop produced on the land (e.g. 50 per cent of the crop).
- <sup>18</sup> Refer to endnote 3
- <sup>19</sup> Following the Pakistan Development Forum in November 2010, \$500m was pledged by USAID for reconstruction (money that was previously committed under the Kerry–Lugar Bill to come to Pakistan anyway over the next five years). It is believed that this has largely funded the government's Watan Cards scheme. Following the same conference, China pledged \$500m for reconstruction, although the details of this fund are unknown. Other donors have also indicated potential to provide significant support for reconstruction programmes.

- <sup>20</sup> World Bank and Asian Development Bank with the Government of Pakistan: Damage Needs Assessment, November 2010, p171.
- <sup>21</sup> Despite accounting for 70 per cent of the agricultural labour market, women own less than 3 per cent of the land, and even when women do own land they may not have actual control over it. International Centre for Research on Women, Household Survey, 2005.
- <sup>22</sup> IMF (2010) 'Pakistan: Use of Fund Resources – Request for Emergency Assistance', 10 September 2010, p.7.
- <sup>23</sup> Abid Qaiyum Suleri and Sahib Haq (2009), 'Food Insecurity in Pakistan', Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and WFP, p.2.
- <sup>24</sup> Although it is not within the scope of this paper, attention should be drawn to the impending Revised General Services Tax, which is due to add up to 17 per cent to the cost of a number of commodities from 1 January 2011 and is likely to disproportionately affect the poorest people at the same time as livelihoods have been lost. <http://www.onepakistan.com/finance/rgst/>
- <sup>25</sup> Commodity hikes and rising inflation have been widely reported in the media: <http://news.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/local/price-spiral-takes-food-items-out-of-common-mans-reach-500>. This commenced as the damage caused by the floods started to be felt. Month-on-month food inflation jumped to 5.1 per cent in August 2010, far above the average of 1.6 per cent for the same period over the previous five years. State Bank of Pakistan (2010) 'Monetary Policy Decision', 29 September 2010.
- <sup>26</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-11875204>
- <sup>27</sup> The Pakistani Government has enacted legislation to end bonded labour – such as the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1992 and other national policies, most notably the National Policy and Plan of Action for the Elimination of Bonded Labour – yet implementation has been woefully ineffective. The Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER) estimated that the total number of agricultural sharecroppers in debt bondage in Pakistan to be over 1.8 million people, and that there could be as many as one million brick kiln workers in bonded labour. [http://www.antislavery.org/english/campaigns/take\\_action/background\\_bonded\\_labour\\_in\\_pakistan.aspx](http://www.antislavery.org/english/campaigns/take_action/background_bonded_labour_in_pakistan.aspx)
- <sup>28</sup> <http://www.pakistanfloods.pk/en/recoveryarehabilitation/early-recovery>
- <sup>29</sup> Despite implementation of various initiatives, girls' access to education is still a challenge in Pakistan due to a number of reasons, which include lack of educational institutions, missing basic facilities in schools, high dropout rates, cultural constraints, insufficient budgetary allocations, and lack of effective demand for quality education by the society. Oxfam GB and the Institute of Social and Policy Sciences Report on the Education Budget of five districts of Southern Punjab, January 2011. Pakistan has committed to the empowerment of women through equal access to all levels of education by 2015, as expressed in the third MDG.
- <sup>30</sup> <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/29-Dec-2010/Govt-may-further-cut-PSPD>
- <sup>31</sup> Preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, November 2010, p88.
- <sup>32</sup> Oxfam recovery assessment – Jonathan Brass, November 2010
- <sup>33</sup> 'Most of the affected houses are of katcha (non/semi-permanent) type construction, which is the predominant type in rural areas. Pukka (permanent) type construction is found in some rural and most urban affected areas. Virtually none of the houses in the affected areas has been designed for flood-resistance. A typical affected house in rural Pakistan consists of one or two rooms, an animal shed, storage area, silos for grain, space for open cooking, and a latrine and washing area which are generally without roof, with 4-5 feet (1.2-1.5 metres) high walls. The average size of a housing unit varies across the country, between an average of 1.7 rooms (381 sq. ft/354 sq metres) in Sindh and 3.2 rooms (697 sq. ft./64.7 sq metres) in Pakistani administered Kashmir, and an average household comprising 6.8 persons. Compounding this is the fact that a portion of the affected area lies in a high seismic zone' (p88) Preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, November 2010
- <sup>34</sup> A timely reminder of the pitfalls sits in Balakot, Manshera in Northern Pakistan, where post-earthquake plans to relocate the town to a new model village location were never completed, despite money committed and construction started. This was heralded by donors in much the same manner as current plans, only to see limited buy-in within communities. According to ERRA's progress report of June 2008, land under acquisition for this purpose was worth Rs1.5bn or \$17.5m (p4).
- <sup>35</sup> Precipitation has decreased by 10–15 per cent in the coastal belt and arid plains over the past 40 years, while summer and winter rains have increased in northern Pakistan.
- <sup>36</sup> The Hyogo Framework is the international global disaster risk reduction protocol - a global blueprint for disaster risk reduction efforts with a ten-year plan - adopted in January 2005 by 168 governments at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction. For more information, see: <http://www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/hfa.htm>
- <sup>37</sup> Examples of small steps forward include the recent Sindh High Court judgement on the petition of Sindh Hari Abadgar Ithad in Khaipur District regarding land tax (Dhall) collection. This establishes the right of farmers to be billed for their agricultural tax and to pay through banks, thus providing some protection against long-established practices of corruption.
- <sup>38</sup> The process derives from the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution and provides for progressive steps in general. On 1 December 2010, the federal government approved the devolution of an initial five ministries to the provinces, in line with the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment. The International Crisis Group (ICG) has called it 'possibly the most significant

legislative achievement since the 1973 constitution'. ICG (2010) 'Reforming Pakistan's Criminal Justice System', December 2010, p.7.

- <sup>39</sup> The initiative of the Planning Commission of the Government of Sindh working in partnership with UNDP to consult on a reconstruction plan may be a good model, but has the potential to substitute responsibilities for a nationally-led reconstruction plan.
- <sup>40</sup> Households with an ID card and verified by district authorities as belonging to a 'flood affected area' are entitled to an initial Rs 20,000. Cash is issued free via an ATM card from participating banks.
- <sup>41</sup> Communities repeatedly raised the lack of access to Watan Cards in Oxfam field interviews in Swat and Upper and Lower Sindh. The Protection Cluster in Sukkar has prioritised problems with the Watan scheme along with food and shelter as the top three protection concerns for communities in Upper Sindh. 'Respondents reported bribes involved in the process of receiving Watan Cards. Interviewees narrated stories of having been asked to pay as much as Rs 5,000 for issuance of the card' (UN Rapid Protection Assessment, Northern Sindh, November 2010, p.13). The scheme has also been widely criticised in the media and protests are commonplace, e.g. <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/12-Oct-2010/NADRA-faces-problems-in-distribution-of-Watan-Cards>; [http://www.pkaffairs.com/News\\_Flood-stricken\\_Over\\_100000\\_families\\_go\\_without\\_Watan\\_cards\\_8100](http://www.pkaffairs.com/News_Flood-stricken_Over_100000_families_go_without_Watan_cards_8100); <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/11-Oct-2010/Protestors-protest-against-non-issuance-of-Watan-Card>
- The lack of adequate grievance mechanisms (other than referral to the overstretched District Coordination Officers (DCOs) is highlighted by the backlog of complaints. This has perversely prolonged some people's displacement as many IDPs lack the means to return home, while others fear missing payments or the hidden costs involved in travelling to DCO offices to follow up appeals or to reach ATMs. Moreover, there are not enough ATMs: for example, in Shaikapur district in Upper Sindh there are only three machines for the whole district of 2,512 sq km. In Swat almost all ATMs are in Minghora, resulting in people from Upper Swat having to travel up to 65km to reach the nearest machine, often to find that it is not working. At the same time, the price of transport from Upper to Lower Swat has gone up five to ten-fold since the floods, as the main road has been washed away.
- <sup>42</sup> There have been new institutions created in response to the floods. The Federal Reconstruction Unit is only just recruiting and its relationship to the existing structures is as yet unclear (Part of the Planning Commission (<http://www.planningcommission.gov.pk/>)). The National Oversight Disaster Management Council has been created to ensure oversight in budget allocation in the reconstruction.
- The meeting of the Council of Common Interests (made up of Provincial Chief Ministers and Ministers from the Federal Government) announced its endorsement of a plan ahead of the Pakistan Development Forum in November, but no follow-up strategies have been shared publicly. <http://public.dawn.com/2010/11/09/rehabilitation-plan-for-flood-hit-people-approved-3.html>
- <sup>43</sup> Pakistan's Earthquake and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) has yet to complete its reconstruction plans following the 2005 earthquake. In addition, Khyber Pakhtunkwa already has a reconstruction plan for rebuilding after the conflict of 2009. The World Bank and the Government have established a fund of roughly \$1bn for post-conflict recovery in Khyber Pakhtunkwa and FATA (Asian Development Bank, 2009). The US and the UK have supported Pakistan's Ministry of Defence on reconstruction and recovery projects carried out by Pakistan-led civil-military teams there (USDoS, 2010). Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 'Pakistan: Flooding worsens situation for people displaced by conflict in north-west', 6 September 2010.
- <sup>44</sup> Transparency International Pakistan tracks perceptions of levels and frequency of corruption faced by ordinary Pakistanis on a daily basis. TI's most recent report indicated an increase of corruption within the land administration sector, now considered to be the most corrupt sector after the police and energy sectors. Reasons cited include lack of accountability, lack of merit (respect or reward in reducing corruption,) and low salaries. According to TI, 89 per cent of Pakistanis consider that land records should be computerised and published. The average expenditure on bribery per household is Rs 10,537 per annum. Transparency International, National Corruption Perception Survey Pakistan (2010) 1 June 2010, p.17.
- <sup>45</sup> This is the second removal of a Director General of the PDMA in as many months. <http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=25302&Cat=4&dt=1/13/2011>
- <sup>46</sup> Pakistan's tax-to-GDP ratio, at 9.8 per cent, is one of the lowest in the world (Ministry of Finance, Government of Pakistan, 'Budget in Brief 2010-2011', [http://www.finance.gov.pk/fb\\_2010\\_11.html](http://www.finance.gov.pk/fb_2010_11.html), p.42). Less than 2 per cent of the population pay income tax and a substantial informal economy goes untaxed. S. Akbar Zaidi (2010) 'Pakistan's Roller-Coaster Economy: Tax Evasion Stifles Growth', Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Policy Brief No 88, September 2010, p.5.
- <sup>47</sup> Over the past two decades, the tax burden borne by the poorest 10 per cent of Pakistani households has increased by 24 per cent. Huzaima Bukhari and Ikramul Haq (2010) 'Paradigm Shift in Tax System', Business Recorder online, 24 September 2010 Ministry of Finance, Government of Pakistan, 'Budget in Brief 2010-2011'. reported that indirect taxes – taxes on consumption, which impact particularly harshly on the poor – account for 63 per cent of total tax revenue.
- <sup>48</sup> The World Bank-led Left Outfall Drain Project and the Chashma Right Bank Irrigation Project, led by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), serve as stark reminders of the implications of failing to adhere to agreed processes for community consultation and social and environmental impact assessment. The WB-led Left Bank Outfall Drain project was investigated by the WB Inspection Panel who found that the project caused loss of life and damage to livelihoods, a heightened risk of flooding, increased salinity impacting on large tracts of agricultural land, saline intrusion in the Indus Delta, and reduced and contaminated water supply in Hyderabad, Karachi, Thatta and Baid. Mustafa Talpur, 'The World Bank in Pakistan: See no Suffering, Hear no Cries, Speak no Truth', in Asia Pacific Network, The Reality of Aid (2008), 80. In 1992, the ADB approved the Chashma Right Bank Irrigation Project, which involved the construction of a 274km canal along the Indus River, together with distribution channels, cross structures and bridges. The ADB Inspection Panel found a failure to adequately assess the social and economic



impacts and to propose mitigation measures, failure to identify categories of adversely affected people and develop safeguards and compensation schemes, and failure to comply with the ADB's own consultation policy. The project was found to have resulted in disruption to the previously well-functioning indigenous hillside torrent system, reduced access to grazing land and fuel wood, loss of standing crops, orchards, and trees, loss of dwellings, and the destruction of potable water supply lines.

<sup>49</sup> OCHA Financial Tracking System, accessed 20 January, <http://fts.unocha.org/pageloader.aspx?page=emergencyDetails&appealID=905>

<sup>50</sup> The amount that Pakistan has received in humanitarian assistance must be understood in the context of the amount it pays out in external debt servicing – an amount which increased in part as a result of loans it received following the 2005 earthquake. As of March 2010, Pakistan's total external debt amounted to \$56bn (€42b), with annual repayments at \$4.4bn (€3.3b). Based on data provided by the Ministry of Finance, Government of Pakistan, in 'Pakistan Economic Survey 2009-10' (2010) at [http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter\\_10/08\\_Public\\_Debt.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_10/08_Public_Debt.pdf)

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