



FAO Emergency Response to Pakistan floods

Situation overview

It is more than two weeks since the onset of the 2010 monsoon and the heaviest torrential rains ever recorded in Pakistan, which triggered flash and riverine floods that ravaged large parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Punjab and continue to devastate Sindh and Baluchistan as the water moves southward. The floods have affected one-fifth of the country and have caused severe losses in KPK, Punjab, Baluchistan and Sindh. Large parts of Gilgit Baltistan and Pakistan Administered Kashmir are also badly affected.

Assessments of losses and damages are underway and many parts of the country remain accessible only by air. According to United Nations (UN) estimates, the number of affected people stands at 15.4 million. At least 1 600 people have died and around 900 000 homes have been damaged or destroyed. A total of over 12 000 villages have been affected thus far. At least 3.2 million hectares of standing crops are under water or destroyed, affecting among the most fertile and productive lands of the country.



Photo credit: Fareed Ullah/PRDS

The flood waters have ravaged towns and villages, destroyed crops, killed livestock, destroyed vital agricultural irrigation infrastructure, downed power and communication lines, and inflicted major damage to public and private buildings. Hundreds of thousands of people remain without electricity, piped water and communications. Many key roads and bridges are damaged or under water and access to affected areas are extremely problematic. Needs are enormous and still rising. Hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced around the four provinces, of whom over 160 000 have been placed in 730 camps in Sindh and Punjab and 913 schools in KPK.

Impact on food security and agriculture

According to the Agriculture Cluster's initial damage assessment conducted in ten districts of KPK completed last week, standing crops on around 150 000 hectares of land planted with maize, rice, sugar cane, vegetables and orchard crops have been destroyed in KPK alone (excluding data from southern districts of D I Khan and Tank). According to the KPK assessment, over 67 000 head of small and large livestock have perished, over 567 000 head of livestock have been affected and more than 5 400 primary, secondary and tertiary irrigation infrastructures have been destroyed or damaged.

Furthermore, initial estimates from various assessments and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs) suggest the loss or damage of standing crops on over 3.2 million hectares and the loss of over 71 000 head of livestock in Baluchistan, Punjab and Sindh. Without emergency feed and veterinary support, tens of thousands will perish. These figures are expected to rise with detailed agriculture assessments scheduled to take place in these three provinces between 20 and 27 August. Preliminary reports indicate severe damage to standing crops of sugar cane, cotton, maize, rice, sorghum, millet and pulses, as well as to orchards and vegetable plots. Cotton, one of the major export crops of the country was ready for picking when floods inundated large cotton producing belts of Punjab. Stocks of stored grains, seeds, fodder and straw have been washed away. According to a preliminary report, 240 000 tonnes of stored wheat grain procured by the government has been washed away in KPK alone.

People who managed to save their livestock are in dire need of feed, de-wormers, vaccines and antibiotics to ensure survival of their animals, as the standing maize, sorghum and millet crops grown for fodder have either been washed away or are now not suitable for livestock consumption. Well targeted and time-critical strategic interventions must be carried out rapidly in support of surviving livestock in order to avert further losses and ensure the rapid restoration and recovery of agriculture-based livelihoods in KPK and other affected provinces.

The loss of stored grain and planting seeds – including wheat, the major staple food crop – has rendered affected farming households extremely vulnerable. It is critical to ensure that wheat is planted in September/October. If this season is missed, many farmers will be unable to plant wheat for 12 months, signifying the loss of two staple food harvests. The impact on agricultural livelihoods and household food security would be catastrophic, resulting in long term dependence on food assistance.

UPDATE ON AGRICULTURE SECTOR PAKISTAN FLOODS

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Pakistan Cropping Calendar for Major Staple Crops												
Crops	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Wheat												
Maize												
Rice*												
* this involves nursery raising time												
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> - Planting </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> - Harvesting </div> </div>												

FAO response

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the lead agency for the Agriculture Cluster, collaborating closely with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the Provincial Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Settlement Authority (PaRRSA) and the Department of Agriculture. Agriculture Cluster members include international and national non-governmental organizations. FAO is also coordinating closely with the Food and Community Restoration Cluster, other United Nations agencies and the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement.

Immediately following the disaster, FAO enhanced its planning and collaboration with the NDMA, PDMA/PaRRSA, provincial line departments and other local and international partners in the emergency response. Following the initial multi-cluster and provincial government assessments, the Agriculture Cluster deployed teams and completed assessment of the damage to agriculture-based livelihoods in KPK. Agriculture Cluster assessment teams have been formed and will be deployed to the most affected districts of Baluchistan, Sindh and Punjab, and more detailed analysis of damages to the agriculture sector is planned in the next ten days.



Photo credit: Qaisar Khattak/PDMA/PaRRSA

Funding requirements to kick-start the agriculture response amounted to USD 5.7 million through the Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan (PIFERP), specifically in support of surviving livestock through the delivery of feed, veterinary services, de-worming tablets and mineral blocks. The European Union Delegation has supported FAO's reallocation of USD 1.6 million from an existing European Union Food Facility project to address immediate needs in anticipation of the upcoming planting season, reaching 25 000 households through the distribution of seeds and fertilizers. USD 1.4 million has been allocated by the Central Emergency Response Fund to respond to livestock needs and preparation for Rabi planting. FAO continues to seek additional funds to meet the most immediate needs of surviving livestock and the Rabi 2010 planting season.

FAO and its partners are currently working to revise and scale up response plans based on the field assessments and funding requirements to ensure that the urgent needs of Pakistani farmers are met on time. A full plan and budget will be included in the revised PIFERP, due to be launched on or around 10 September 2010.

FAO has strengthened its emergency coordination capacity within the FAO Representation in Pakistan, with an international Emergency and Rehabilitation Coordinator and technical, communications, logistics and operations staff fielded to provide support to emergency operations and Cluster coordination.

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