



WORLD SINDHI CONGRESS®

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Flood Relief Support to Pakistan

On behalf of Sindhi people around the world, we applaud international community for their support relief and reconstruction efforts in Pakistan.

The government sources in Pakistan now recognize that although the floods have caused a great damage in all provinces of Pakistan, Sindh is the worst hit. Sindh being at the lower riparian of the Indus River and possessing worst poverty index in the region is especially struck by this great calamity.

A recent report issued by the Federal Flood Commission of Pakistan states that out of total 7.71 million flood affectees 3.68 million are from Sindh. The Sindh government's latest estimates put the toll of affectees to over 7 million in Sindh Province. Similarly, the total number of villages affected in Sindh amounts to 4,359 out of 11,027 total in the country and the crop land of 1.55 million acres inundated by the floodwaters in Sindh out of total 4.70 million acres in the country. About 800,000 people in Sindh are still trapped in floodwaters, approximately 36,000 are suffering from waterborne illnesses, nearly 1000 people have died and more than 5000 villages and towns have totally disappeared from the face of the earth. Approximately 70% of all Sindhis (close to 35 Million people) have been directly or indirectly affected by the floods. Furthermore, the floods have severely damaged the communication networks and infrastructure in Sindh and nearby Baluchistan province.

Please See Appendix 1 and 2 indicating flood in Sindh District wise and Pakistan showing damages Province wise.

The extent of damage and suffering is enormous which will require the involvement of multiple stakeholders and actors in rebuilding the lives and livelihoods of the affected people.

The challenge is particularly daunting for those at the lower riparian of the Indus River and who are suffering the most. We are concerned, owing to the historical unfair treatment of the Pakistani Government toward the smaller provinces, that these people might not receive fair share of relief and rehabilitation assistance.

Recognizing your expertise and the nature of WWC's multi-stakeholder platform we extend our suggestions which you may find useful in this engagement. Specifically, we request you to consider the following suggestions in providing your flood relief, rehabilitation, and rebuilding assistance to Pakistan:

Relief and rehabilitation

- Vulnerability of the flood affectees, especially in Sindh (All 19 districts out of 23 of Sindh), is heightened by the fact that the livelihood of the majority of these people depended on agriculture, mostly subsistence farming. Those lands are inundated and may no longer be productive for some time. Upon their return to the villages these people will require support in not only securing shelters and other basic needs but also in redeveloping their farms and lands and enabling them to form sustainable communities. The WWC may play a pivotal role in assisting local NGOs and CBOs in providing technical expertise and financial assistance to achieve that goal.
- World Water Council's efforts may be mobilized in reaching out to the most vulnerable segments of the society. We request a proactive engagement with local NGO's and civil society groups to access the hard to reach communities including women and religious minorities.

Refurbishing and Rebuilding of Infrastructure

- We believe that it's critical that an independent technical assessment team be employed to identify the causes of floods. There is significant evidence of how mismanagement and diversion of the Indus waters on the upstream have caused economic, environmental, and social impacts on the downstream communities. We suggest inclusion of stakeholders in the assessment representing local public officials as well as technical experts and civil society members.
- We suggest a review of all water treaties and irrigation systems/plans related to water usage at upper and lower streams of Indus. Additionally, all reviews on Indus water treaties may be undertaken within the context of sustainability and survival of the people, especially of lower riparian of the River Indus.
- In terms of refurbishment and rebuilding of infrastructure it's important to consider the approach of 'Basin Development' rather than 'River Management' due to the nature of river Indus and survival of indigenous communities on its waters.
- All decisions on refurbishments and rebuilding of any infrastructure on Indus must be undertaken in consultation with local indigenous communities which are not necessary represented by the Government. We believe this step is important within the context of Environmental Justice.