

Alert

Afghanistan and Pakistan

Earthquake in Afghanistan & Pakistan

Geneva, 27 October 2015

1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

Six months after the devastating earthquake in Nepal, a powerful earthquake once again hits the region. The earthquake occurred on 26 October 2015 at 2:09 pm Pakistan time. The Pakistan Meteorological Department reported the magnitude of the earthquake as 8.1 (US Geological Survey reports it at 7.5). The quake was 196 km (120 miles) deep and centred at 82 km (51 miles) south-east of Feyzabad in a remote area of Afghanistan in the Hindu Kush mountain range.

Pakistan: Severe tremors were felt across the country from north to south, in Karachi, Islamabad, Lahore, Sialkot, Quetta, Peshawar, Swabi, Kohat, Abbottabad, Swat, Malakand and Gilgit etc. According to a US Geological Survey, the powerful quake was also felt in India and UAE.

At least **94** people have been killed and over **300** people reported to be injured so far across the country. However the damage and loss is expected to increase as communication networks, including roads and mobile phone services in some of the northern parts of the country including KP province are still disrupted. Hundreds of buildings are reported to have collapsed in Peshawar, Swat, Lower Dir, Charsadda, Shangla, Nowshehra, Batagram, Bajuar, Abbottabad and Mansehra of KP province. Damage and loss are also reported in Bajur agency, Gilgit, Hunza in the northern areas as well as in Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Multan, Kasur, Jehlum Gujranwala districts of Punjab province.

Afghanistan: The Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) reported that the earthquake has claimed the lives of **15** people while **79** people were injured. In Takhar province, **11** children died in a school when a stampede occurred while children were rushing to leave the building when the earthquake struck. Initial reports from ANDMA and other sources show that the provinces of Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, and Nangarhar are the most affected provinces.

The Ministry of Public Works (MoPW) reported that due to landslides, the roads between Kunduz and Takhar provinces are closed. Furthermore, roads connecting Nangarhar province with Kabu as well as between Baharak district, Badakhshan province and Fayzabad city are closed. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is coordinating with all relevant education departments in provinces to collect information about human loss and earthquake damage to school buildings. Communication networks in Afghanistan are down and data related to damage and loss is still in process of compilation.

2. Why is an ACT response needed

The Afghanistan Government has declared an emergency and has requested international support. The Pakistan Government has not yet released a similar request as of the writing of this alert but initial reports show severe impact especially in the north which will require assistance. An ACT response would be required if the scale of damage and loss continue to increase drastically and the government is unable to address all the requirements on its own.

3. National and international response

In Pakistan, Army troops have been directed to carry out immediate rescue work in any affected areas without waiting for formal orders. Army teams have been directed for quick assessment of earthquake damages across the country and especially in remote areas.

In Afghanistan, ANDMA is leading the coordination. MoPW and the Ministry of Defence have sent their machinery and personal to remove rocks and to reopen the roads. Other ministries are likewise collecting information from counterparts. The humanitarian community is also co-ordinating and collecting information.

4. ACT members' response

ACT Pakistan Forum, comprising Christian Aid, Church of Sweden, Community World Service Asia, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, ICCO Cooperation and Norwegian Church Aid, is currently gathering information through different sources including local staff and partner organizations and a response will be planned based on the needs identified in the affected communities.

In Afghanistan, members are currently conducting assessments either directly or through partners on the ground. Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA) is geared to provide an immediate small-scale emergency response (food, water, blankets). Community World Service Asia is currently reviewing plans and potential gaps and is considering food, non-food items, winterization kits, WASH and health.

ACT members in both countries are actively participating in coordination meetings both at national and provincial levels.

5. Planned activities

The situation is currently very fluid and can change drastically at any moment. Members are closely monitoring the situation and will plan a response based on the needs and gaps identified.

6. Constraints:

Due to the collapse of communications and road networks in both countries, the details of damage and loss are currently proving difficult to ascertain.

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to the Head of Finance and Administration, Line Hempel (Line.Hempel@actalliance.org).

For further information please contact:

ACT Programme Officer, James Phichet Munpa (jmu@actalliance.org) or

ACT Web Site address: <http://www.actalliance.org>