



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
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THE EU AND FLOOD RECOVERY: LESSONS LEARNT FOR THE NEXT DISASTER IN PAKISTAN

26th June 2013, EEAS

Report

This report summarises the principal points of discussion raised by the participants during the meeting held in EEAS headquarters on 26th June 2013 on Pakistan and Flood Recovery. The event allowed participants to take stock of EU funded actions that have been carried out by NGOs, private companies and international organisations, such as Save the Children, UNDP, Internews Europe and Microsoft, in support of recovery and helping the the country to build its resilience.

Tung Lai Margue, Director of the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), inaugurated the event highlighting some key data on the last flood recovery actions undertaken by the EU after 2010 floods in Pakistan. All in all the EU's total assistance for Pakistan amounts to € 2,458 billion for the period 2009 -2013. A large number of NGOs and international organisations and were actively involved in providing emergency relief. Private donations and interventions by private companies also complemented the official humanitarian assistance. Mr Margue stressed the importance of joint lessons learnt exercise both to assess the effectiveness of the EU to the international response and to look forward to delivering improved and coordinated response. He gave a timely reminder of keeping a close eye on the situation in Pakistan and the international attention to the future emergencies challenges.

Pictures¹ of the Instrument for Stability (IfS) efforts in the Pakistan Flood Recovery are on display in the EEAS buildings since 26th June.

Opening the session '**EU strategy on the response to major emergencies**', the EEAS Deputy Head of Division Heino Marius put the floods within the perspective of EU-Pakistan relations.

These had been put on a new footing following parliamentary elections in 2008 which resulted in Pakistan's return to democracy. The EU and Pakistan held two ad hoc summits – in 2009 and 2010 – this engagement was also driven by the wish to express solidarity with Pakistan during a period of crisis, characterized by conflict with militant groups and economic difficulties. The devastating floods of 2010 only added to these problems and the EU (Member States and ECHO) responded with humanitarian support of €423 million.

Under the impression of the floods the European Council adopting a Declaration on 16 September 2010 which called for a comprehensive package of short, medium and longer-term

¹ <http://www.flickr.com/photos/internewseurope/sets/72157634242704037/> and <http://www.flickr.com/photos/unitednationsdevelopmentprogramme/8068597403/in/photostream/>

measures to help underpin Pakistan's recovery and future development. This included increased market access to the EU through a time limited reduction of duties on key imports from Pakistan in conformity with WTO rules which, after lengthy discussion with WTO members, became effective on 25 October 2012.

On the cooperation side, an EU proposal to reorient existing assistance programmes towards early recovery in flood-affected areas was not accepted by the Government of Pakistan. Additional support was, however, provided under the Instrument for Stability and the consequences of the floods were taken into account to the extent possible as part of existing priorities in the fields of rural development and education.

Anne Clear, Head of Sector Humanitarian Aid for Afghanistan and Pakistan (ECHO), underlined the special complexity of the Pakistani situation: the 2010 floods were on an unprecedented scale affecting an area of 100 000sq km and 20 million people. Hundreds of thousands of people still continue to be affected by three consecutive years of flooding and live in makeshift shelters, struggling to keep their families alive and healthy. The threat of hunger, malnutrition, sickness and destitution continues to be part of daily life for millions of Pakistanis.

When the floods occurred in 2010, ECHO had in fact downscaled its presence in Pakistan. However, humanitarian funds were available from 30th July and 2 humanitarian teams were immediately deployed to the region. In addition to the funding requirements, there was an immediate need for massive scale-up by both the national and international communities to deliver assistance. International assistance was requested as the federal and provincial authorities did not have the means to cope with such a large scale disaster. NGOs were not present in many of the affected areas as when they were present in Pakistan, it was mostly in the mostly conflict affected areas in the North-West.

From August to December 2010, 43 grants agreements for a total of €150 million were signed by the European Commission with humanitarian partners to provide emergency relief. The EU civil protection assistance represented a valuable and highly needed contribution to the overall relief effort ensuring that international donations arrived well and supporting UNDAC on geographical information systems. The collaboration and complementarity of civil protection mechanisms and the humanitarian branch of DG ECHO proved to be effective.

Genoveva Ruiz Calavera, Head of Unit Stability Instrument Operations (FPI), reminded that beyond the immediate relief response through humanitarian aid by ECHO, high political priority was given to recovery and reconstruction efforts by the Instrument for Stability and DEVCO.

In its effort to ensure smooth transition from humanitarian to early recovery phase, the EC joined the WB, the UN, the Asian Development Bank and the Pakistani Government for Post Disaster Needs Assessment involving different EU services (including the EU Delegation and the European Commission Joint Research Centre) with the support of the Instrument for Stability.

In November 2010 the IfS mobilized €18 million for early recovery from floods in Pakistan focusing on restoration of local government functions, community participation and rule of law (implemented by UNDP) as well as on the improvement of communication on recovery and reconstruction through strengthening local media capacities (implemented by Internews). Genoveva Ruiz Calavera concluded the session highlighting that the human and economic cost of natural disasters indicates more attention to resilience and disaster preparedness needs to be drawn in international cooperation.

The session '**Response and preparedness to major emergencies through media and technology**' was introduced by the projection of the documentary "[Connecting the dots](#)"².

Thomas Baerthlein, Director of Conflict and Stabilization programme of Internews Europe, demonstrated how the IfS-funded project 'Media for Early Recovery', based on a unique mixture of media capacity building and community mobilization, successfully improved accountability of local governments and relief service delivery in the post 2010 flood recovery period. Evaluated and recognised as best practice in building trust in a short time allowing consensual service delivery and in assisting not just flood affected populations but also other users of government services, this project model is now being replicated in other countries.

Ludo De Bock, Senior Director EU & NATO of Microsoft Corporation, gave an insight view of Microsoft in quality of leading corporate donor responding to the Pakistan disaster. Microsoft action plans focused on facing the alert, providing immediate assistance with a long term view component and rebuilding processes, contributing to not only raise money for the country but also in providing the necessary technology and training. The 'Eagle Disaster Management Package', for example, helped the Punjab government to maintain a record of affected communities but also to plan further actions. In parallel, training was given to volunteers involved in flood recovery in a way to ensure their capacity to better respond to future similar situations. Microsoft actions in the Pakistan floods response are a valuable example of Corporate Social Responsibility towards local non-profit organisations, Inter Governmental Organisations, Governments, citizens as well as customers and partners. A documentary on [Microsoft disaster response programme](#)³ made clear that technology provision is not only essential for sharing real time information but also for providing immediate data, situational awareness and communications which, as Anne Clear highlighted, is essential for good coordination and logistics.

In the last session, '**Case studies on the implementation of EU funds to respond to the 2010 floods and to prepare for the next emergency in Pakistan**', Tom Skirrow, Head of region Asia at Save the Children, that benefitted of DEVCO and ECHO's support, explained that their strategy was based on a five sector response that included health and nutrition, food aid, shelter and non-food relief items, child protection, education and food security & livelihoods. The positive results were principally due to a real time evaluation and a quality needs assessments held at the beginning of the emergency that led Save the Children work in hard areas that were not reached by other agencies. Also, key to success were the prioritization of child centered and integrated programming with holistic strategies and the beneficiary feedback, including a beneficiary hotline to M&E and scheduled responses to beneficiary concerns. A strong M&E team had ready-made tools to allow a quick roll out of assessment processes.

Marc André Franche, Country Director Pakistan at UNDP, presented the [IfS-supported Early recovery programme](#). UNDP followed a multi-sector and integrated approach in the affected districts with a strong focus on restoring the capacities of local authorities, civil society and the private sector to lead the recovery process. The programme followed a community-based participatory approach, with a focus on addressing the needs of vulnerable populations and on

² <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lq1WPgh3w>

³ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ya_yct7oj0

bridging the gap between relief and development. To provide immediate support, UNDP realigned its existing initiatives to provide early recovery assistance to the affected communities.

UNDP usually partners with government at the national and sub-national level to ensure ownership for effective planning and implementation of early recovery efforts. This also ensures sustainability of early recovery efforts as these institutions are permanent. However, when constrained by its limited capacity during the geographically wide-spread crisis, it becomes necessary to involve local civil society organisations for effective and timely implementation and coordination at different administrative levels. The engagement of the local CSOs was based on extensive capacity assessments and ensured adherence to the community-centred approach.

LESSONS LEARNT AND CHALLENGES

- The 2010 flooding and severe floods both in 2011 and 2012 revealed a need for local **media** coverage of the effects of such disasters. By communicating the specific needs of the local communities, we have seen how properly trained and equipped journalists can provide an important link between the flood-affected communities and the authorities responsible for their recovery and rehabilitation.
- Equally important is the role of **technology** in monitoring and responding to disasters by providing technical support to lead response organizations and assess where other resources can be most helpful for the impacted region and communities.
- For ECHO, the **strategy in project selection** had to be reviewed in order to work to scale and try to ensure maximum effectiveness : emphasis was placed on large scale and/or coordinated interventions. The agreements have to be designed with greater flexibility to allow for scale-up by means of contracts amendments.
- The limited human resources and capacity and the fact that much of the country was unknown for most humanitarian, made **humanitarian coordination** difficult. Clusters faced many difficulties.
- The **logistics** challenges faced by NGOs and EU in-kind delivery assistance after the Pakistan floods resulted in the enlargement of ECHO's pool of logistic experts that are trained for international civil protection missions.
- Pakistan has been an important test case in the use of emergency **cash intervention**. An important component of the Pakistani government response was through the Watan Visa prepaid debit card however ID cards were necessary to access it and many families did not have their ID cards or had lost their documents during the floods. Cash interventions by humanitarian agencies in many cases targeted those without identity documents.
- Chronic **under-development** of the target areas, unprecedented scale of needs and vulnerabilities of beneficiaries.
- Ensuring that the operational support functions were able to cope with the volume of work that was necessitated by such a **large scale-up**.
- Keeping **programme strategies flexible** and up to date with the overall context. Quick scale-up had to respond to immediate needs in order to result sustainable without creating parallel structures with existing government structures.

- **Coordination** with national and provincial governments to be prepared for future monsoons and prevent the same level of devastation. Enhanced **institutional linkages** between relevant authorities, schools, civil society and communities.
- **Resilience and building local capacity** to deal with future shock (local government authorities and schools have increased capacity to develop and implement school based DRR approaches); increased capacities to prevent, prepare and mitigate disaster risk through locally appropriate DRR strategies.
- It is important to work on Early Recovery and in this context the government has been very keen to shift from relief to early recovery as quickly as possible. Being linked to development, there is a need to **combine early recovery with humanitarian assistance** and assist both the most vulnerable populations and long term sustainability of the actions.
- **Link relief, rehabilitation and development** to reduce vulnerability of people in flood-prone areas. Pakistan has already developed many of the disaster risk reduction strategies that are needed. Resources and sustained efforts are needed to make them effective. The strengthening of Pakistan's disaster management systems and structural changes is necessary to reduce the exposure of large numbers of people to the effects of floods. Such changes would help to make Pakistan safer, stronger and more self-reliant.
- **Stronger coordination** among EU actors and between the EU and stakeholders in order to monitor projects and be accountable to beneficiaries.
- Clear need to advocate for greater investment in **preparedness and disaster risk reduction** to reduce the cost of relief and recovery next time.
- Special attention has to be given to building better **community resilience**.
- Strengthening **early warning systems** (EWS) at national and local levels requires more extensive instrumentation, setting up of weather stations, and regular interaction between the local authorities and the Pakistan Meteorological Department. Strengthening EWS was one of the most important priority areas identified by the most of the stakeholders.
- The area of **climate change** requires considerable attention. In this regard, various mitigation and adaptation measures need to be identified for implementation in the context of floods.

See more at:

<http://www.undp.org/content/brussels/en/home/presscenter/articles/2013/06/27/eu-event-to-extract-lessons-learned-from-pakistan-floods/>