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Pakistan floods: CAFOD pledges further assistance

CAFOD and its partners are continuing to deliver much-needed aid to Pakistan, as the scale of the disaster continues to grow.

CAFOD has now pledged £250,000 in emergency funds to ensure help reaches those who need it most.

The worst flooding in a generation has cut a swathe of destruction from the northern mountain regions to wheat fields in the south. More than 14 million people have now been affected by the upheaval brought by the heavy rains.

Hundreds of thousands have lost their homes, at least 1,600 people have been killed, crops and livestock have been destroyed, and arterial roads and bridges have disappeared.

In the last two days CRS has distributed vital supplies including plastic sheeting, water purification tablets and other relief items to people in the Swat Valley.

The destruction of key roads and bridges hampered early efforts to reach those in remote villages. Aid workers are now starting to reach those in desperate need that have been cut off from outside help for days.

Lucy Morris, CAFOD's Programme Officer for Pakistan said: 'Conditions are still extremely difficult for those who've managed to escape the floods. CAFOD's partner CRS has now reached more than 2,300 people in hard-hit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in the north, with further distributions planned over the next few days.'

CRS has also previously distributed supplies to 4,000 people in the Kohlu and Barkhan areas of Balochistan in the southern part of the country.

In one area of Shangla district in northern Pakistan almost all the existing water systems and walking paths were washed away, but CRS engineers are now working to repair five separate water systems in the region.

Our partners briefly had to evacuate their office in Besham, a town in Shangla district, because of rising floodwaters, but staff were able to return the next day to continue the delivery of vital aid . They have now opened an additional office in the Sharpor Valley of Shangla in order to better serve this remote area.

Once immediate needs are met, work will focus on helping farmers and others resume work and rebuild their lives. In several areas, including Swat, CRS is planning cash-for-work projects that pay survivors for their labor on projects, such as irrigation channels, pathways and retaining walls that benefit whole communities.

Notes to editors

For more information and interviews please contact ppalmer@cafod.org.uk