



A UNITED VOICE FOR GLOBAL CHANGE

The largest alliance of U.S.-based international nongovernmental organizations focused on the world's poor and most vulnerable people.

April 21, 2010

Dr. Rajiv Shah
Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20523

The Honorable Jacob J. Lew
Deputy Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Raj and Jack:

Thank you for undertaking your recent visit to Pakistan. You will have seen and heard about the broad range of programs that the U.S. government supports there. A number of InterAction's nearly 190 member organizations have had operations in Pakistan for decades. I write on their behalf to call your attention to and emphasize the importance of humanitarian programs that were first launched a year ago when military operations in northwest Pakistan led to the displacement of 3 million people.

While there has been progress in responding to the crisis, more than 1.3 million people¹ are still displaced and depend on emergency relief to survive. The humanitarian situation is becoming increasingly desperate in the following districts of the North West Frontier Province (NWFP): Hangu, Kohat, Dera Ismail Khan (DI Khan) and Tank as well as in the Peshawar Valley. About 90 percent of those displaced are either renting or staying with friends or relatives. Many houses are shared by up to 10 families, despite inadequate access to water, sanitation and healthcare. Others are staying in overcrowded camps where health and sanitation facilities are poor.

The humanitarian community is committed to supporting these displaced Pakistanis, but we cannot do this alone. We rely on financial support from the international community.

The UN, the Government of Pakistan and NGOs earlier this year called for \$537 million to meet the needs of the displaced and to support those who have managed to return to their homes. Unfortunately, donors have so far contributed only \$170 million. Of that, the United States has donated almost \$100 million, while other donors have provided just over \$60 million.

Dwindling contributions to this crisis are now forcing humanitarian organizations to close essential life-saving programs in Pakistan's Swat valley and surrounding areas, as well as in

¹ Some of the displaced have been unable to return to their homes since military operations against armed opposition groups surged last April. Others have been displaced by more recent operations such as the military offensives in the FATA, which have forced more than 200,000 people to flee from their homes.

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World Vision



the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). This means that aid agencies are being forced to make difficult trade-offs and make decisions about shutting down programs. Programs under threat include:

- A health and nutrition project for internally displaced people and host families in DI Khan district, NWFP being implemented by Merlin. The project is providing healthcare to more than one million people, but is due to close at the end of May.
- An emergency hygiene and sanitation project (constructing household latrines and distributing hygiene kits) targeting 4,000 IDPs in Kohat district, NWFP. The project is being implemented by Oxfam. Oxfam has been drawing on its own emergency funds to cover costs but will likely have to close by the middle of May.
- A livelihoods support program being implemented by Save the Children in Swat Valley and Bunir, NWFP assisting 24,000 returnee families to start earning a living again is now at risk.

Closing these programs means that local people will go without essential basic services such as health, clean drinking water and education. People in dire need will feel the crisis more. Communities affected by the fighting will struggle to move beyond the conflict into a peaceful and stable environment.

The humanitarian community commends the U.S. government's continued long-term commitment to civilian assistance in Pakistan but remains concerned about plans for implementing the U.S. aid package there, as described in the administration's December 2009 *Pakistan Assistance Strategy Report*. We urge the administration to consider the recommendations outlined below to ensure that U.S. assistance will address **humanitarian and development** needs:

- *Assure flexible funding to meet humanitarian needs:* The humanitarian community urges that the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance remain engaged in Pakistan throughout 2010 and consider an even longer commitment to ensure humanitarian needs are recognized and adequately addressed.
- *Nationwide Needs-Based Humanitarian and Development Funding:* Humanitarian and development funding will be more effective in Pakistan over the long-term if aid is targeted to areas with a demonstrated need, rather than favoring areas that have short-term strategic military and political importance. Investments in less volatile regions have been successful and can become the basis for building stable regions. This requires distributing aid in a way that is geographically balanced. U.S. investments should be made in all underserved areas, and humanitarian assistance should be made available not only to internally displaced persons (IDPs) from areas declared conflict-affected, but also in all areas to which IDPs are returning and residing and to host families.
- *Diversity of Funding Mechanisms and Funders:* Encourage the rest of the international community to fulfill their commitment to the people of Pakistan by providing funding for essential services. Donors must also ensure that adequate funding for critical but necessarily life-saving activities such as early recovery projects for those who return to their homes, the provision of seeds and tools, help with livestock, grants to re-establish small businesses and programs specifically focused on the protection needs of women and children.

Enclosed is a briefing paper prepared by the Islamabad-based Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF)² that provides further details about the humanitarian crisis.

² The Pakistan Humanitarian Forum comprises 35 of the largest international NGOs operational in Pakistan.



The community of U.S.-based international NGOs once again thanks the U.S. government for its generosity and long-term commitment to humanitarian and development assistance in Pakistan. We welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam".

Samuel A. Worthington
President & CEO

Enclosure

CC:

Hon. Hillary R. Clinton, Secretary, Department of State

Hon. Richard Holbrooke, Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Department of State