



Preliminary Report

by **Yasmeen Lari**, *Chair & CE, Heritage Foundation, Chair, KaravanPakistan*

A KaravanPakistan-KPT relief camp became operative on 15th May at KPT premises, Customs House, Kharadar Road, through the support of Chairman KPT, Ms. Nasreen Haq. The camp has been organized by Ms. Shanaz Ramzi, Heritage Foundation's **Swat SOS** Coordinator. Accordingly, it became essential for us to assess the immediate and long term requirements of the displaced persons.

I visited Mardan on 17th May 2009 accompanied by Mr. Naheem Shah, Project Coordinator, Heritage Foundation's Earthquake Affected Area projects, and Mr. Rehan Khan, KaravanPakistan volunteer from Switzerland, to gather first hand information regarding the situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who have fled from the troubled areas of Swat, Dir and Buner.

We had meetings with the army command for the IDPs (Brig. Bader), at the Engineering Centre, Risalpur, the civil administration command (Mr. Muddassir Malik) of Shaikh Shahzad Camp, Mardan, and, through the courtesy of Mr. Kamal Hyder, Mr. Habibullah and Mr. Ajmal, with displaced families from Swat who have taken refuge with friends and relatives in nearby villages. We also took an extensive round of the Shaikh Shahzad Camp.

ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION

During discussions it became clear that we are in it for a long haul – estimates vary from 8 months to over a year, and the calamity is undoubtedly greater than we might have imagined:

- There are more people out of the loop than those in the IDP camps. They need to be registered to access available resources;
- Those staying with friends and relatives are now facing extremely hard times as no help is available from the formal sector;
- Coordinated efforts are required to plan for more than just immediate relief;
- The number of women is larger than men, since women and children were able to move to safer places, while many men either stayed back or were killed; women and children are highly vulnerable;
- The weather is extremely hot, with danger of heat stroke and related diseases; danger of widespread outbreaks due to heat and sub-hygienic conditions in camps;

- Water supply appears to be largely polluted, with related health risks;
- Health camps do exist, but require help in procuring medicines for specific ailments;
- The rainy season is just around the corner; camp sites have no arrangement for storm water drainage. Once flooded, health hazards will multiply manifold;
- In addition to trauma due to Taliban and military actions, loss of livelihoods, displacement, and now being forced to live in tents during extremely hot weather, are exacerbating psychological stress conditions;
- In spite of efforts by the administration to apply international standards, there are many instances of overcrowding e.g. 10 of a family living in a tent comprising all ages and genders;
- Schools are being set up in the camp, but there is a need to create recreational activities for children with sports and/or art e.g. drawing, painting, skits and plays etc.
- There are no facilities for washing clothes and utensils, and/or family cooking arrangement;
- Both men and women need to be provided with opportunities to occupy themselves on an urgent basis.

IMMEDIATE NEEDS FOR CAMPS

There are altogether 10 camps, a list of which is available at the end of the Preliminary Report:

- 10 nos. desert coolers required for Field Hospital of Pakistan Army near/at Shaikh Shahzad Camp;
- Particular medicines required in the Field Hospital – a list is being prepared for immediate procurement;
- 10 nos. Electric water coolers per camp for community halls in camps;
- 10 nos. wheel chairs for disabled people (small size) for each camp;
- Infants' feed e.g. milk formula, Cerelac etc. for several thousands infants;
- Water purifying tablets which can be used in water coolers, several thousands required;
- Liquid ORS bottles for infants, several thousands required;
- Disinfectant soap and washing powder;
- Large Trash Cans 40 nos. per camp;



- On-going needs of electric fans, water coolers, beddings, steel plates and cooking utensils, shalwar-qameez/kurta for men and women, children's clothes, unstitched fabric and sewing machines etc.

PREPARATION OF ACTION PLAN

Based on our experience in working in the Earthquake 2005 Area, we are preparing an action plan for improving conditions in the IDP camps based on involvement of the residents. Some preliminary thoughts are detailed below:

1. Long Term Camp Residency Issues

a. Flooding from Monsoon Rains

Construction of tent platforms, using bricks, lime and mud; peripheral drains for draining rain water and related arrangements. The work to be carried out by involving tent residents.

b. Protection from Sun

Construction of wooden and mud *chappar* (cover) to provide protection to the tents from the strong sun. The work will be carried out by involving tent residents.

c. Household Kitchens and Washing Places

Construction of small structures for household use with brick, wood and mud. These would be constructed and used on shared basis among close family members. These facilities will obviate the necessity of *langar* (soup kitchens) and allow women to get involved in cooking for their families, and perhaps even sell some of the products to other tent residents.

d. Water, Hygiene and Sanitation

Suggestions received from Mr. Saad Khan, Swiss Pakistan Society:

- Distribution of Sodium Hypo chlorite NaClO liquid to families;
- Treating drinking water through SODIS sun treatment methodology;
- Provision of Lifeboy/Safeguard soap and Dettol;
- Provision of ORS bottles (liquid form);

e. Women's Needs

Suggestions received from Mr. Saad Khan, Swiss Pakistan Society:

- Provision of sanitary towels, soap, tooth paste and tooth brushes
- Plastic tubs and washing powder for washing clothes etc.
- Sewing machines for stitching clothes for themselves and their children.

2. Civil Society Volunteers

We need to provide volunteer assistance through mobilizing the private/corporate sector and students (particularly women) in order to guide and assist local residents' groups. A comprehensive proposal is being prepared for a Civil Society Volunteers' camp, where volunteers could be provided board, lodging and transport facilities. Some areas of volunteer involvement, to lead residents' groups, have been identified as follows:

- Garbage collection, sanitation;
- Hygiene regimen: personal hygiene, clean water etc.;
- First Aid training and mutual assistance programme;
- Sports, art and theatre groups for the youth and children;
- Women's groups: stitching, craft skills;
- Vocational training for men;
- Marketing craft products etc.
- Other possibilities of residents' involvement e.g. setting up workshops for particular skills, vegetable gardening etc.
- Adult literacy classes for men and women etc.

3. Return of the IDPs, Rehabilitation

Although the return of the IDPs is still in the distant future; however, preparatory work must begin fairly soon. Psychologically, the present displaced persons have to be prepared for the shock that might be in store for them when they return. There is a need for trauma counselling for men, women, youth and children.

Further input from all friends is greatly welcome.

NAMES AND LOCATION OF CAMPS

The following is a list of camps that have been established in the area by the civil administration.

Camp 1: Chota Lahore, Swabi

Camp 2: Shah Mansoor, Swabi

Camp 3: Sheikh Yasin, Mardan

Camp 4: Sheikh Shahzad, Mardan

Camp 5: Jalala, Mardan

Camp 6: Benazir Complex, Nowshera

Camp 7: Jaloza Camp, Nowshera

Camp 8: Kacha Garhi 1, Peshawar

Camp 9: Kacha Garhi 2, Peshawar

Camp 10: Palosa, Charsadda