



PAKISTAN

Drought Relief Assistance Project

Disaster Context

Pakistan has been suffering from a serious drought because of below-normal rains since 1998, particularly in rain-fed areas. The prevailing drought has seriously affected the southern, southeastern and western regions of the country, as well as some areas in the north. The provinces of Balochistan and Sindh, along with the Cholistan region in Punjab and the southern districts of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) have been severely affected.

The government has described the drought as one of the worst in the country's history and has judged it to be the major cause of a low economic growth rate of 2.6 percent in 2001. According to Ministry of Finance figures, the drought caused a loss of 25 billion rupees (about \$420 million) to the national exchequer in 2000-2001. The position of GDP is expected to be the same in the current year because the prevailing drought and the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 terror attacks in the United States have suppressed economic growth.

NWFP and Balochistan were particularly affected by the events resulting from the aftermath of 9/11. The two provinces are situated at a strategic location where, due to the porous border with Afghanistan and the unstable political situation of the region, Afghans have historically taken refuge. The most recent influx started some 20 years ago. Following an initial movement of an estimated 5 million refugees into different parts of Pakistan, greater than 3 million have remained in the country. In 2000 and 2001, the combination of famine and war compelled Afghans to flee their homes and head towards the Pakistan border. Although the border remained closed after the 9/11 attacks, the events that followed nevertheless resulted in the arrival of tens of thousands more refugees, creating further pressure on the already fragile situation in the border regions and making life worse for the locals on account of drought and shortage of water, food, and feed for animals.

Project Title

Drought Relief Assistance Project (PAK/00/003)

Sectors

- Drought relief
- Disaster response
- Policy support
- Institutional coordination

Funding

UNDP contributed \$100,000 from TRAC 1.1.3 funds. Another allocation of \$60,000 was made last year from TRAC 1.1.3 funds to establish a provincial coordination mechanism for one year, effective June 2002.

UNDP and the Japanese International Cooperation System (JICS) also worked together, on a cost-sharing basis, to provide relief to drought-affected areas of Balochistan and Sindh provinces. Under the agreement, UNDP provided monitoring services for the project, and JICS placed an amount equivalent to \$78,560 at the disposal of UNDP for monitoring distribution of drought relief assistance provided by the Government of Japan to Balochistan and Sindh.

Partners

- Emergency Relief Cell, Cabinet Division, Government of Pakistan
- JICS
- UN Disaster Management Team
- UK Department for International Development

Programme Activities

- Formation of a Provincial Drought Management Committee in Balochistan in August 2000
- Establishment of a Disaster Management Support Office in Quetta to assist in the coordination of drought-related emergency programmes in Balochistan

- In cooperation with the WFP, FAO, UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO, UNDP undertook crop, food and non-food assessments of drought-affected regions in 2000, 2001, and 2002. DFID cooperated in non-food assessment during 2000
- Completion of a rapid household survey in 24 districts of Balochistan to determine the impact of drought on agriculture, livestock, water and sanitation, health and nutrition, and water sectors in April 2001
- Signing of a cost sharing agreement with the JICS in August 2001 to cooperate in the implementation of a project for monitoring services on the relief products under the Japanese Grant Aid for Emergency Programme (Drought Disaster) 2000 for Pakistan; originally, the project was to operate from August 2001 to May 2002, but later was extended to August 2002
- Continued monitoring of the drought situation and preparation/distribution of situation updates to all interested parties with the intent to generate in-country and overseas support for relief activities and short- and medium-term investment in the affected areas
- Establishment of coordination support mechanisms at the provincial level in NWFP and Balochistan to bring synergies to UN programmes and refugee-related activities in these provinces. This was achieved by appointing UN Provincial Facilitators in the two provinces