



ICRC Pakistan Newsletter

November - December 2009

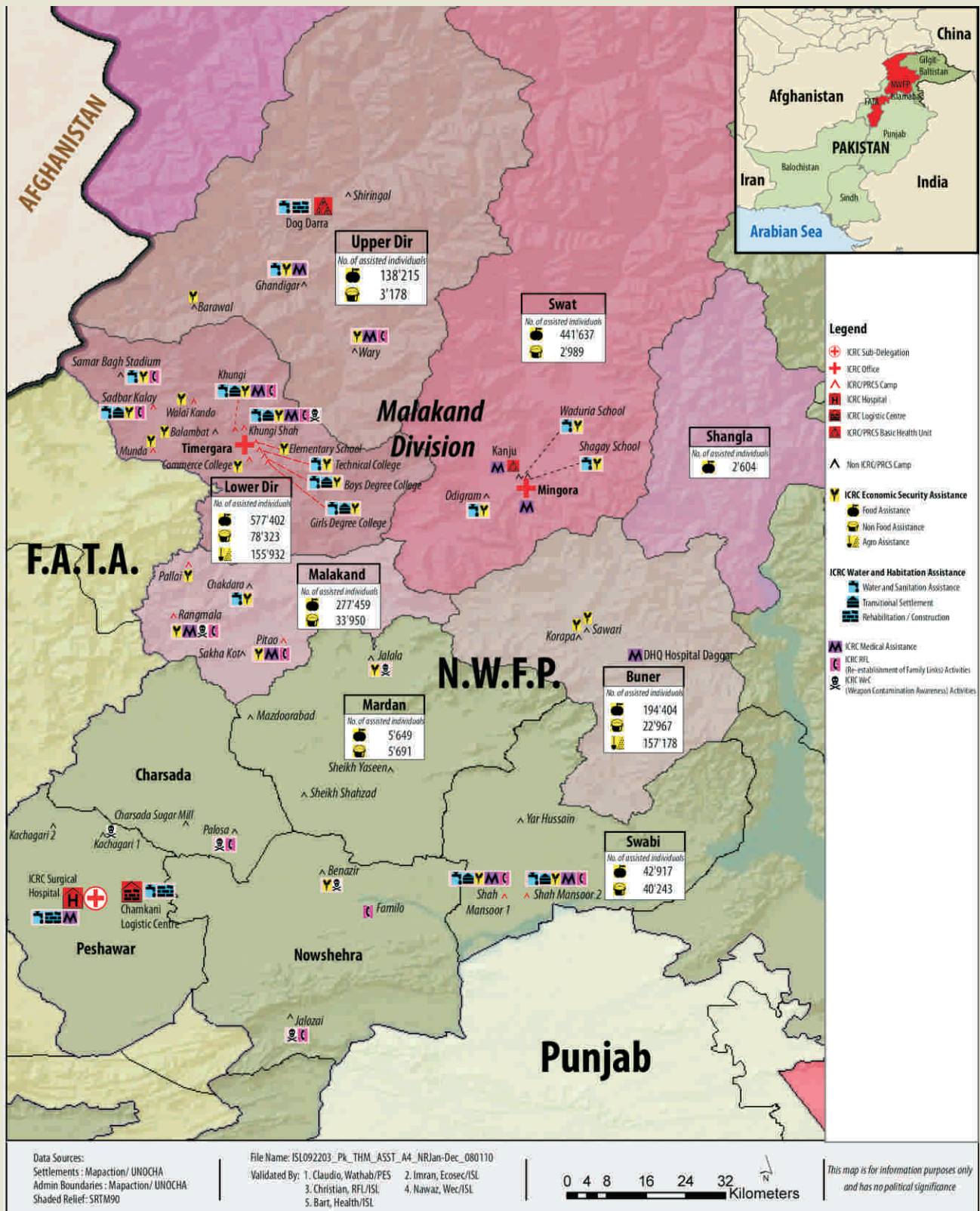
KEY FACTS

- ICRC in collaboration with PRCS distributed seeds and fertilisers to more than 300,000 people in Buner and Dir to kick-start farming.
- Supporting IDP camps of Pakistan Red Crescent, its national partner.
- Assisting 23 medical facilities in the FATA, including eight in Waziristan.
- Has a unique surgical hospital for weapon-wounded patients in Peshawar, which is treating patients from the areas affected by fighting.
- Re-establishing family links for people separated from their relatives by the situation in NWFP and FATA.
- Visiting Pakistanis detained in Guantanamo, Iraq and Afghanistan to ensure humane detention conditions and maintain their family links.
- Visiting detainees in Sindh and Punjab to ensure humane detention conditions.
- Working with the wider Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement to make a difference.



ICRC

ICRC/PRCS Assistance Activities in NWFP (Jan-Dec 2009)



INTRODUCTION

By Pascal Cuttat, head of delegation

2009 was a watershed for the ICRC in Pakistan. Our humanitarian operations reached an unprecedented scale in response to the effects of fighting in the Malakand Division and the Federally-Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

We had to double our budget twice in the course of the year, reaching a total of over \$90 million. We set up new field offices in Timergara (Dir) and Mingora (Swat), in the heart of the affected areas, to better understand and address the humanitarian issues facing the population.

In close co-operation with the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), we were eventually able to help over one and a half million people affected by the fighting in Malakand. This massive assistance operation is still ongoing, although its focus has shifted, in parts, from emergency assistance (food and other essential goods) and camp support to early recovery. Our agricultural support programme, for example, has allowed up to 300,000 people in Dir and Buner to benefit from farming. The organisation can, and wants to, roll out more recovery projects, but this will depend on safe and unimpeded access to the concerned areas.

In the FATA, we have been helping twenty-three medical facilities of the Ministry of Health with regular supplies. We are in the process of negotiating further assistance to the ministry's facilities in Dera Ismail Khan, the area where most of the people who fled Waziristan have temporarily settled, putting huge strains on limited local infrastructure.

As we enter 2010, the situation in Malakand Division is stabilising and our access to FATA remains limited. With a view to remaining adaptable to the needs of the population, the ICRC will consolidate its presence and activities in the field. Most importantly, we hope that 2010 will be less traumatic for the civilian population, which has borne the brunt of the violence which racked Pakistan in 2009.



Two young girls at an IDP camp

BUNER

Thanks to the stable situation, the ICRC and the PRCS launched a large-scale economic recovery programme in Malakand Division, distributing seeds and fertilisers to 22,475 households (157, 178 individuals) in Buner alone. Every household was given 25 kilogrammes of seeds and 50 kilogrammes of fertilisers.

"We have provided emergency assistance since late May, but our priority today is to help Malakand families to rapidly become self-reliant," said Pascal Cuttat, the head of the ICRC delegation in Pakistan. "We expect this programme to help kick-start local agriculture and boost small business, which is indispensable if the people affected are to lead dignified lives."

ICRC specialists will work closely with local experts to monitor the progress of the crop until its harvest next May, when most families are expected to be self-reliant again. Until then, the ICRC and the Pakistan Red Crescent will continue to provide those most in need with food. In November, food and soap were distributed to 160,930 people of the district.



ICRC and PRCS staff members distributing seeds and fertilisers to affected residents

UPPER AND LOWER DIR

The ICRC and the PRCS distributed seeds and fertilisers to 22,255 households (155,932 individuals) in Maidan Tehsil of Lower Dir. "After successfully completing seeds and fertilisers distribution in Buner and Maidan, we are planning to launch a similar programme in Swat," said Muhammad Sheikh Ali, the head of the ICRC's economic security programme in Pakistan.

Over the last two months, the ICRC and the PRCS jointly distributed food and soap to 187,117 people of Lower and Upper Dir. They reopened Sadbar Kalay and Khungi Shah camps in Lower Dir to accommodate over 5,000 IDPs from Bajaur. The ICRC also donated essential medicines and medical equipment to PRCS dispensary in Sadbar Kalay Camp, Lower Dir and Dhog Dara PRCS Basic Health Unit in Upper Dir.



Philippe Fichard/ICRC

Sadbar Kalay Camp in Lower Dir

SWAT AND MALAKAND

Over the last two months, the ICRC in conjunction with the PRCS distributed food, soap and hygiene kit to 221,480 residents of Swat. The ICRC also provided essential medicines to Kanju Basic Health Unit being run by the PRCS. In Malakand, the ICRC distributed food and soap to 3,710 IDPs living in camps and it provided medicines to PRCS-run health facility in the district.



Affected people receiving ICRC assistance

FEDERALLY- ADMINISTERED TRIBAL AREAS

In November, the ICRC, through the PRCS, distributed food to IDPs from Khyber Agency. The beneficiaries, displaced from their homes due to fighting, are living with host families. The ICRC also donated essential medicines to Torkham Basic Health Unit, Khyber Agency, which is being run by the PRCS.

It helped the PRCS to set up mobile health unit in Dera Ismail Khan to provide health-care services to victims of fighting in Waziristan. The health unit is addressing numerous health problems faced by the hundreds of thousands of people displaced by fighting in Waziristan. The unit consists of doctors and nurses and a well-equipped ambulance and can treat most basic problems in the field.

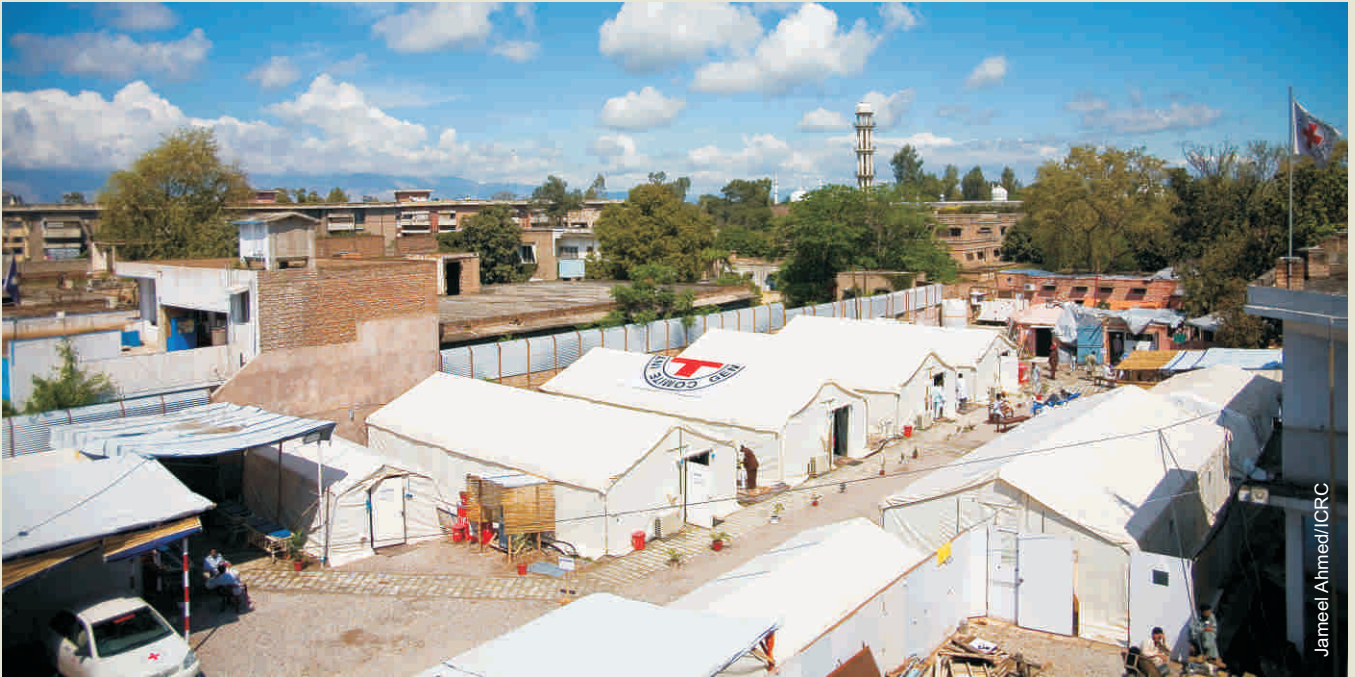


An old man sitting in front of an ICRC vehicle

OTHER ICRC ACTIVITIES IN PAKISTAN

ICRC Surgical Hospital for Weapon-Wounded in Peshawar

The ICRC Surgical Hospital, which offers specialised surgery for weapon-related wounds, admitted 129 patients over the last two months. The surgeons performed 788 operations during the period under review. Weapon-related wounds usually require more than one operation.



ICRC Surgical Hospital for Weapon-Wounded in Peshawar

The Orthopaedic Programme in Peshawar

The ICRC supports the Pakistan Institute of Prosthetic and Orthotic Sciences (PIPOS) in Peshawar. The ICRC provided material assistance to the PIPOS for renovation of its premises. The ICRC also arranged training for PIPOS staff at ICRC Physical Rehabilitation Centre in Muzaffarabad.

At the PIPOS, the disabled people from the NWFP and FATA are fitted with artificial limbs and mechanical devices that restore their body functions. The ICRC provides them with wheel chairs, crutches and physiotherapy. Since January 2009, 2,351 patients were treated at PIPOS.

A home care project complements the work of PIPOS. Its aim is to reintegrate the patients suffering from spinal cord injuries into their families and communities. The services offered under the home care project include home adaptations such as ramp construction, physiotherapy, equipment for daily activities and crutches assessment.

Since January, the ICRC has provided consultation to 1,603 patients, who had spinal cord injuries, under its home care project. It is also providing assistance to 300 patients through follow-ups at their homes.

RESTORING FAMILY LINKS

Helping Families Connect With Loved Ones in Guantanamo

"We were so happy to see each other again", says Farhat Paracha, 56, the wife of Saifullah Paracha, a Pakistani detained at Guantanamo Bay for the last five years, after interacting with her husband by video telephone call (VTC).

"Saifullah wanted to know everything about me, our children and relatives," says Farhat, her eyes gleaming. "I told him as much as I could in one hour. Saifullah is missing his country and the outside world. The VTC reconnects him."

"I came to know about Saifullah's detention when, a few months after his capture, I received a call from an ICRC delegate informing me that my husband was alive and that he was in the custody of US forces at Bagram prison," Farhat said. "The ICRC has kept me and my children in contact with my husband for six years, first in Bagram, and then at Guantanamo. The ICRC delegates who visit my home regularly to deliver and collect letters from and for Saifullah are a part of our family now."

After talking to their father, Muneeza Paracha, 27, and Mustafa Paracha, 20, were beaming. Mustafa said, "I hadn't seen my father since I was 14. I saw him for the first time in six years through VTC. While it cannot bridge the unbridgeable distance of thousands of miles between my father and our family, the video calls make the separation more bearable."

Since April 2008, Guantanamo and Bagram detainees have been able to speak to their families by telephone several times a year under a programme facilitated by the ICRC. Since January 2009, the ICRC has organized 55 telephone calls for 23 families, including 18 Pakistani families, and their detained relatives in Bagram. It also arranged 18 calls for 14 families and their detained relatives in Guantanamo.

In agreement with the US authorities, the ICRC has been visiting the people held at Guantanamo since January 2002. It offers these and other detainees all over the world the opportunity to correspond with their families through Red Cross messages.



Farhat Paracha, the wife of Guantanamo detainee Saifullah Paracha, talks to reporters after speaking with her husband by VTC

KASHMIR

ICRC Physical Rehabilitation Centre and Micro-Economic Initiatives

"Before I was perceived by my community as a burden and was ostracised. Now since I own a grocery shop and earn some money, my relatives and neighbours respect me. I am invited to social gatherings." says Abdullah, a resident of Muzaffarabad. He is one of 360 disabled people who have benefited from an ICRC Micro-Economic Initiative (MEI) programme launched in Pakistan-Administered Kashmir in February 2008.

As the earthquake killed a large number of people, it also disabled thousands, who could not recover from the effects of the earthquake on their own. Responding to the need, the ICRC set up Muzaffarabad Physical Rehabilitation Centre (MPRC) on July 2007. Since then, a multi-disciplinary team of prosthetics specialists and physiotherapists has been treating the disabled patients at MPRC. In 2009, 3,768 patients have been treated at the facility.

"The ICRC launched a complementary MEI to facilitate the socio-economic reintegration of disabled people treated at the MPRC. Under the MEI, the ICRC gives them cash grants to start their own small businesses as well as business management skills training. This briefly introduces them to business, management, accounting and marketing. The beneficiaries have set up a wide range of businesses with the money such as grocery stores and tailoring shops," says Arif Ayub Qureshi.

Qureshi said that after the success of MEI programme in Muzaffarabad district, the ICRC was planning to launch similar programmes in the NWFP and three other earthquake - affected districts of Pakistani-Administered Kashmir, namely Poonch, Neelum and Bagh. He said that he had already received 60 applications from the three districts.



Abdullah, a beneficiary of MEI programme, at his grocery shop

Weapon Contamination Awareness

Over the last two months, the ICRC held 979 weapon contamination risk education sessions, sensitising 25,471 affected people to the dangers of mines and other unexploded remnants of war. The sessions were held in IDP camps across the NWFP.



An ICRC field officer holding a risk education session at Benazir IDP Camp, Raisalpur

BALUCHISTAN

The ICRC distributed food to 2,884 Waziristan IDPs in Quetta, Sibi and Pishin. The ICRC also supports the treatment of weapon-wounded patients coming from the entire region, but mostly from Afghanistan, through three hospitals based in Quetta. Plans are afoot to open a specialised ICRC surgical facility, after the Peshawar model, in response to the increasing caseload of patients out of Waziristan.

SINDH

In Sindh, the ICRC visits detainees in twelve jails to assess their detention conditions and treatment and help improve them. After each visit, the ICRC team shares its findings with the concerned authorities and discusses measures that could be taken to improve them.

In November, the ICRC rehabilitated the main underground water tank in the Karachi Central Jail, where it had also constructed shower cabins and pads for washing and drying laundry in a bid to help the authorities improve hygiene. It has also constructed sleeping platforms, installed taps, and provided the jails with pumps or water tanks. In addition, detainees have been sensitised to basic hygiene to stave off the outbreak of disease. The ICRC also supports the PRCS's first aid programme with training and material.

Summary of ICRC-PRCS Assistance in November and December

| Location | Assistance | Description |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Buner | Seeds, Fertilisers | Distributed seeds and fertilisers to 157,178 residents of Buner |
| | Food, Soap | Distributed to 160,930 residents of Buner |
| Swat | Food, Soap | Distributed to 221,480 residents of Swat |
| | Medical Assistance | Provided medicines to PRCS health facility in Kanju |
| Malakand | Food, Soap | Distributed to 3,710 IDPs in camps |
| | Medical Assistance | Provided medicines to PRCS health facility in Pitao camp |
| Upper, Lower Dir | Seeds, Fertilisers | Distributed to 155,932 residents of Lower Dir |
| | Food, Soap | Distributed to 187,117 individuals in Dir |
| | Water and Sanitation | Constructed water supply and latrines in Sadbar Kalay camp |
| | Medical Assistance | Provided medicines to PRCS dispensary in Sadbar Kalay Camp and Dhog Dara Basic Health Unit |
| FATA | Food, Soap | Distributed to 245 IDPs in Khyber Agency |
| | Medical Assistance | Provided medicines to PRCS Torkham Basic Health Unit in Khyber Agency and DI Khan Mobile Health Unit |
| Balochistan | Food Items | Distributed to 2,884 Waziri IDPs living in Quetta, Sibi and Pishin |
| Kashmir | Micro-Economic Initiatives | Over the last two months, 35 people with disabilities received ICRC grants in cash to start small businesses in Muzaffarabad |
| | Medical Assistance | Since January, ICRC Muzaffarabad Physical Rehabilitation Centre has treated 3,768 people |

ICRC in Pakistan

Mission Statement

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It directs and coordinates the international relief activities conducted by the Movement in situations of conflict. It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.



Peshawar Sub-Delegation
40, Jamaluddin Afghani Road
University Town
Peshawar
T 091-5841916

Swat Office
House 25, Sector A
Kanju Township, Mingora
T 0946-811393

Quetta Sub-Delegation
11-A, Chaman
Housing Scheme
Quetta
T 081-2834330

Karachi Office
House 185-D,
KDA Scheme 01
Tipu Sultan Road
Karachi
T 021-34311204

Lahore Office
House 02, 4B,
Aziz Avenue
Canal Bank, Gulberg V
Lahore
T 042-35714975

Muzaffarabad Office
Upper Chattar Housing Scheme
Muzaffarabad
T 05822-434241

Bhakkar Office
Near Pialla Chowk
Mills Road
Bhakkar

Timergara Office
Near Panch Kora Flour Mills
Balambat
Timergara
T 0945-821244



ICRC

ICRC Islamabad Delegation
House 12, Street 83, G-6/4
Islamabad
T 051-2824780
F 051-2824758
E-mail: islamabad.isl@icrc.org
Website www.icrc.org