

## Humanitarian accountability in response to the Baluchistan earthquake

Type: Natural Disaster – Earthquake

Date & Time: Wednesday, October 29, 2008 at 04:54:18 AM

Magnitude: 6.4

Location: Baluchistan province in south-western Pakistan

Epicenter: The epicenter of the quake was in Chiltan Mountains, 80 kilometers northwest of Quetta (capital of Baluchistan) *aftershocks of 4.5 and more continue to occur.*

Terrain: Harsh and inaccessible

Weather: Extreme

| Estimated Numbers At A Glance |                   | Source           |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Total Dead                    | 166               | NDMA Nov 1, 2008 |
| Total Injured                 | 500               | IFRC Nov 1, 2008 |
| Internally Displaced Persons  | 17,500 households | IFRC Nov 1, 2008 |

On November 1, current Government of Pakistan (GOP) figures and preliminary field assessments indicate the earthquake killed more than 160 individuals and injured approximately 500 others. Reports from media and civil organizations estimate that the death toll is 300 or more persons, with up to 1,000 individuals injured. ICRC has noted that the number of reported deaths may increase significantly as remote areas are reached. As data from rapid assessments becomes available, more comprehensive estimates of affected and displaced populations will emerge.

### Humanitarian Needs

The Government of Pakistan, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), ICRC, and other humanitarian organizations have confirmed an immediate need for *emergency shelter, food and health services* for populations displaced by the earthquake.

### Humanitarian Response

The National Disaster Management Authority and its provincial affiliates along with the Pakistan Army and Airforce are leading the relief and emergency response. National and international organizations have reached the area and/or are working with their partners to provide humanitarian assistance.

### Humanitarian Quality and Accountability

As the harsh winter sets in the remote and inaccessible areas of Baluchistan, a timely, effective and coordinated response mindful of the cultural sensibilities of the disaster survivors is needed. Through the [HAP New Emergencies Policy \(NEP\)](#), Members of HAP-International have committed to make a special collective effort to apply the HAP Principles of Accountability from the outset of all new humanitarian emergencies in recognition that “It easier to do it right from the start” and that “the more difficult the case, the stronger the rationale for accountability”. Special efforts to provide quality services and engage in accountable practices which empower and dignify disaster survivors cannot be suspended or de-prioritized during the response to the Baluchistan earthquake.

This humanitarian response follows a string of natural disasters which have struck Pakistan in the past 4 years. National and international agencies alike have been responding to such crises. The humanitarian response to the earthquake in Baluchistan is an opportunity for all humanitarian agencies to prove how far they’ve come in addressing past challenges and delivering BETTER quality and MORE accountable programmes.

Interested humanitarian organisations and HAP Members\* that are working in Baluchistan directly or through partners will meet in Islamabad to discuss ways for putting into practice their commitment to the NEP. At this meeting, Members will discuss options for ensuring quality and accountability of their humanitarian response, and will identify ways in which, together with the HAP Pakistan Team, they will ensure and assess accountability to disaster survivors using the requirements and means of verification outlined in the [HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management](#).

The NEP meeting will be held on: 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 at 1500 - HAP Pakistan Office, Islamabad.

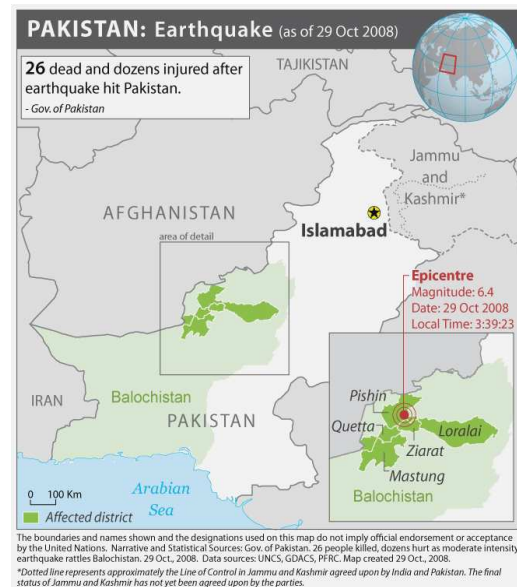
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