

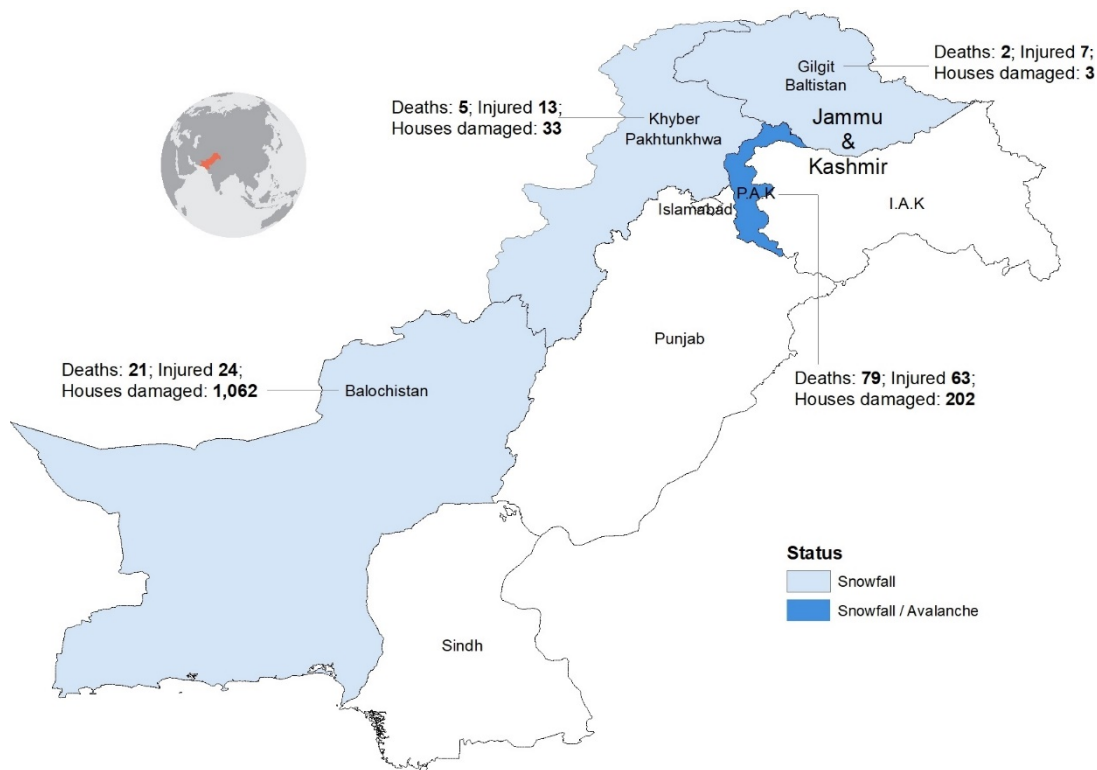


This report is produced by OCHA Pakistan in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers 24 January 2020.



Highlights

- There has been no further increase in reported deaths or house damages while a slight increase in injuries due to the recent avalanche and snow/rain spell in four affected provinces of Pakistan. So far, the highest number of deaths were reported in P.A.K. (79) and Balochistan (21), followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (5) and Gilgit Baltistan (2). According to data compiled from authorities, around 1 million people have been affected while the total number of people in the affected districts stands at 2.5 million.
- More than 1,000 houses were damaged in Balochistan, mainly due to land sliding and heavy snow in 11 notified districts of Balochistan. Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has identified four (4) additional districts as affected. The total tehsils affected are 37 in 15 districts.
- A rapid needs assessment is being carried out starting 29-30 January in Balochistan by humanitarian partners, UN agencies with the support of PDMA
- Access to remote areas / villages is still limited as link roads are being cleared in the affected provinces. Food and NFIs are being distributed by the district/provincial authorities in the affected areas.



Situation Overview

The people of north and south-west provinces of Pakistan namely Balochistan and Pakistan Administered Kashmir (P.A.K.), Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) faced an unexpected heavy spell of rain/snowfall and avalanches between 11-13 January.

According to data compiled from authorities, around 1 million people have been affected while the total number of people in the affected districts stands around 2.5 million¹. The Inter-sector Assessment Working Group has conducted a secondary desk review (SDR) indicating that people are still in desperate need for basic assistance. In absence of proper clothing, shelter and health care in the affected areas, the affected people, particularly children and elderly are vulnerable to pneumonia and respiratory infections.

Partners have reported that most of the remote areas in Balochistan, Gilgit Baltistan, Neelum Valley in P.A.K are covered with snow which has restricted families to their houses/areas while power and water supply remains disrupted. The district administration with the help of local communities are clearing roads and pathways to allow access to basic services. PDMA estimates that more than 8,000 hectares of agricultural land has been damaged which might result in food shortages and affect the livelihood of people in Balochistan. Moreover, most of the affected tehsils in Balochistan are in rural areas where livestock is the main source of livelihood. It is estimated that around 9,000 animals have died by the recent crisis.

The districts affected by the unprecedented snowfall/avalanches in Balochistan are vulnerable from pre-existing drought situation last year while houses in the affected areas of Gilgit Baltistan were already damaged due to earthquake in December 2019. Heavy snow and aftershocks in GB have rendered partially damaged houses inhabitable for the affected families. Road blockages and severe weather conditions are restricting people from relocating to safer locations.

The underlying factors compounded with recent harsh weather conditions have made the population living in these areas more vulnerable and in need of humanitarian assistance.

Response

PDMA in the affected provinces of Balochistan, GB and P.A.K is coordinating with Pakistan Army, National Highway Authorities (NHA) and partners to clear road blockages and provide food and other non-food items (such as tents, blankets/quilts, tarpaulins, rations, plastic mats, solar lights, kitchen sets, mattresses, kitchen sets and warm clothing) to affected families. Considering the number of affected people is 1 million in the affected provinces, the needs far exceeds the response on ground. PDMA has requested for provision of additional helicopters and relief supplies to reach cut off areas. Currently five (5) helicopters are assisting in the rescue and relief operation in PAK (3) and Balochistan (2). Army Urban Search and Rescue team has been deployed to P.A.K for rescue and relief operation.

PDMA has sought support from humanitarian agencies for rescue and relief activities. NDMA has outlined three broad requisites for the current response – Food and non-food items, winterized tents, heavy machinery for clearing roads and accessing people and dewatering pumps. As additional information comes from district/provincial authorities and findings from rapid assessment this week, key priorities will be finalized with NDMA for a targeted response.

NDMA has announced a cash compensation package from the Prime Minister Fund which includes PKR 500,000 (US\$ 3,225) for the family of the deceased person; PKR 50,000 (\$ 322) for the injured person; PKR 100,000 (\$644) for the families with fully damaged or collapsed houses and PKR 25,000 (\$ 160) for partially damaged house.

A rapid needs assessment is being carried on 29-30 January in Balochistan by humanitarian partners, UN agencies with the support of PDMA to understand the priorities needs and services required by the affected people and to identify gaps in the ongoing provision of assistance.

¹ Pakistan Census report 2017