

Alert Note**Pakistan Heatwave
(13 May 2022)**

Completed by: Tassaduq Hussain (CWSA)
Date completed: 13 May 2022
Forum: ACT Forum Pakistan
Type of emergency: Heatwave
Date of emergency (if rapid onset): starting from 8 May 2022¹

1. The nature of the emergency
A heatwave emergency has gripped the country for the last two months and still continues. The heat level peaked on 1 May 2022 when one of the districts in Sindh province hit 49.5 degree Celsius, the hottest temperature recorded in 2022. Another district hit the temperature half of the boiling point. It is estimated that about 3.4 million people who are living below poverty line in Karachi and Umerkot, are vulnerable to the effects of the heatwave. ²
2. The impact and scale of the emergency (please include your source of information)
<p>The event is categorized as small level emergency caused by the extreme weather which hit the country before the anticipated time of its normal occurrence. Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has informed that day temperature in certain parts of Sindh province is likely to increase gradually and shall remain between 46-48 degrees. The summer months usually begin from April and last till September³. The weather gets extremely harsh from May to July while August and September are more humid which can cause dehydration, heat exhaustion and heatstroke. The prevailing hot and dry weather could cause stress on water reservoirs, crops, vegetables, and orchards as well as increase energy and water demand that in current crisis is difficult to manage.</p> <p>The commute for local communities has become difficult which is impacting their livelihood situation as most of the communities engage in local labour, doing so in such a harsh weather can be life threatening. There is only one time of cultivation which depends on the rainfall in monsoon season. The communities start cultivation with the first shower of monsoon while a good yield require at least four to five follows on showers. This produce is then enough for the small farmers to last till end of March and then the lean period continues until the next monsoon season which normally starts in the mid or end of July. During this period, the communities go to the urban areas to get some labour for their survival. Absence of labour work will worsen their food security situation and will expose their already vulnerable livelihood to negative effects, such as purchase on credit with high interest rates, selling of household assets, eating less or limiting number of meals etc, to meet with their food needs.</p> <p>Water scarcity is one of the main concerns in the target areas. Communities living in desert areas have water with a very high Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) which does not fit for drinking purpose. But, having no other option, they are compelled to rely on it. The country is also facing power outages that further deteriorate the situation and adding to increase the number of people affected by heatwave.</p> <p>Most of the people have not taken even the precautionary measures such as covering their heads or avoiding direct exposure to sun in peak hours due to lack of awareness. They are exposed to the direct sunlight and hence gets dehydrated. As per the PMD reports, In Sindh province, heatwave will be impacting districts, such as Badin, Daddu, Ghotki, Hyderabad, Jacobabad, Jamshoro, Karachi, Khairpur, Larkana, Mirpurkhas, Nowshero Feroz, Sanghar, Sukkur, Thatta, and Umerkot.</p>
3. Local and national capacity

¹ Source: <https://crisis24.garda.com/alerts/2022/05/pakistan-heatwave-conditions-forecast-across-much-of-the-country-through-at-least-may-13>

² National poverty line in Pakistan is at 21.9% (source: <https://data.adb.org/dashboard/pakistan-numbers>)

³ www.zameen.com

Health department issued an advisory for the health facilities across the Sindh province to follow which include establishment of control room at provincial level, special wards at every hospital for managing heatstroke cases during emergency, availability of air conditioning, ice, backup electricity and water in the wards etc. At the district level, the deputy commissioners have directed all the non-government humanitarian organizations working in the area for establishment of heatwave control camps. They have allocated different areas to different organizations so that the crisis can be managed effectively.

Government is in lack of funds for managing such emergencies and therefore they request humanitarian agencies for extending their support in managing such emergencies. All the national and international organizations are trying to manage funds to establish heatwave camps. Few of them are already managing it from their existing projects but the response is very limited.

4. Key needs and gaps

Health sector in Sindh province is already struggling with lack of human and asset resources and it will not be possible for it to single headedly tackle such situation. They need to establish heatwave facilitation centres for the communities, but it will not be possible for them. As the situation is almost the same in all the at-risk districts, they require immediate support from the humanitarian organizations to fill in for them.

The immediate need is the availability of facilitation centres with all the necessary required services including paramedic staff who can provide first aid treatment. There is a need for awareness raising of the communities to avoid direct exposure to sun, dehydration, availing flexi hours for doing labour activity etc. Mass media campaign is also required so that the key messages to avoid heatstroke and possible mitigating measures can also be disseminated.

Please indicate whether you are considering:

	Indicate your intention with an X below
Rapid Response Fund (<i>intended for small and medium scale emergencies</i>)	X
Appeal (<i>intended for large scale emergencies</i>)	

Capacity details of forum members with the intention to respond are given below.

ACT Member	Geographical focus	Sectors of expertise	Support required	Estimated Budget range
Community World Service Asia	District Karachi and Umerkot, Sindh, Pakistan	Emergency Response	Financial	USD 30,000

5. Potential responses

CWSA has run the heatwave response in the same targeted areas in 2015 and 2016. Currently CWSA is active in the region with livelihood and DRR initiatives. The long-term presence and well-established linkages with the government and non-government organizations working in the area has enabled CWSA to carry out long term and short-term project successfully. In response to the COVID-19, CWSA has managed to immediately start awareness raising of the communities under the available budget in the regular program.

Community World Service Asia will be targeting district Karachi and Umerkot for this response with some of the key activities as given below:

- establishment of heatwave facilitation centre with provision of some basic first aid, cold water, rest area for the affected or at-risk communities at busy communal points in the district,
- awareness raising campaigns through social media, radio, and distribution of IEC material,
- financial support is immediately required to establish these camps and initiated this response as a lifesaving activity. Government is trying their efforts, but the situation is beyond their reach as it is impacting each and every one.

The proposed response plan is for **three months** and it will require approx. **USD 30,000**.