

Alert note

Please write country crisis and date of submission here (*Pakistan, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF), 2025*)

Completed by: CWSA
 Date completed: August 18, 2025
 Forum: ACT Forum Pakistan

Type of emergency: Pakistan Glacial Lake Outburst Floods 2025
 Date of emergency (if rapid onset): July + August 2025 (Ongoing)

1. The nature of the emergency

Pakistan receives monsoon rains each year from June to September, often bringing floods, landslides, and displacement, especially in vulnerable, poorly drained, or densely populated areas.¹ In 2025, the monsoon season has been more intense than usual, with above-normal rainfall recorded since late June in Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Balochistan, and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).²

GB has been hit particularly hard. This summer, temperatures in the mountainous region, normally known for its snow-covered peaks, reached a record 48.5°C, breaking the previous high of 47°C set in 1971.³ This extreme heat, combined with heavy rains, caused rapid melting of glaciers in the Himalayas, Hindu Kush, and Karakoram ranges. As the glaciers melted, glacial lakes swelled and, in some cases, burst, triggering Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) and flash floods.

On 16 August, a flash flood and glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) in District Ghizer caused extensive damage, including the death of a girl from lightning, destruction of homes, a school, a hospital, shops, livestock, and farmland. Roads and bridges were washed away, leaving thousands of locals and tourists stranded, while power, mobile, and internet connectivity were also disrupted.

On 24 July 2025, these conditions led to widespread flooding across GB, with the worst-affected districts being Diamer, Ghizer, Hunza, Astore, Skardu, and Nagar.⁴ The GB government has declared 37 villages as calamity-hit areas including 12 in Diamer, 9 in Gilgit, 5 in Ghizer, 4 each in Skardu and Shigar, 2 in Ghanche, and 1 each in Nagar and Kharmang.⁵ Many areas remain at high risk for further floods and landslides due to unstable glacial lakes and ongoing heavy rains. Over Rs20 billion in damages reported in GB; CM urged federal government intervention to address urgent relief needs.⁶

In August, Gilgit-Baltistan faced a series of severe disasters. On August 11, seven volunteers lost their lives and six were injured while restoring an irrigation channel in Danyore's Manogah Nallah, damaged by late July's flash floods. The following day, August 12, massive flooding in Gulmit Gojal, Hunza, destroyed irrigation channels, link roads, a women-owned restaurant (Bozlanj), a government tourist facilitation

¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1924761/emergency-declared-in-parts-of-punjab-as-heavy-rains-trigger-floods>

² <https://www.ndma.gov.pk/storage/plans/June2025/yMhAUWuWvqAWSzGylIbY.pdf>

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jul/09/accelerated-glacial-melt-and-monsoon-rains-trigger-deadly-floods-in-pakistan>

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jul/09/accelerated-glacial-melt-and-monsoon-rains-trigger-deadly-floods-in-pakistan>

⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1927955>

⁶ <https://profit.pakistantoday.com.pk/2025/07/28/gilgit-baltistan-appeals-for-rs7-billion-in-emergency-funds-as-climate-disasters-cause-widespread-damage>

centre, and a section of the Karakoram Highway, while over 40 locals working on water channel restoration narrowly escaped.

According to the NDMA, since June 26, rain-related incidents in Pakistan have resulted in 707 deaths and 967 injuries. Additionally, 2,938 houses and 152 bridges have been damaged, while 1108 livestock have been lost.⁷ KP has reported the highest number of deaths at 427, followed by Punjab with 165, the northern Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) 34 and Sindh with 29 deaths, Balochistan 22, Azad Kashmir 22 and Islamabad eight casualties.⁸

Irrigation systems, farmland, and roads were also damaged, cutting off some communities from power and clean water.

Pakistan has over 13,000 glaciers,⁹ with around 3,044 glacial lakes in GB and KP. Thirty-three of these lakes are considered highly prone to dangerous outburst floods. Around 7.1 million people¹⁰ in these areas are vulnerable, with over a quarter living below the poverty line. Past incidents, such as repeated flooding in Khaplu and Barah (Ghanche district) and severe damage in Darkut, Sosat, and Badswat (Ghizer district), highlight the ongoing threat.

The NDMA continues to issue alerts for GLOFs, flash floods, and landslides, warning that high temperatures, intense monsoon currents, and a prevailing westerly wave will likely worsen the situation in the coming weeks.

2. The impact and scale of the emergency (please include your source of information)

Ghizer district, with a population of 189,530, and Gilgit district, with 338,968 people¹¹, have been severely impacted by the recent disasters. Across the two districts, **22 deaths, 17 injuries, and damage to 662 houses** have been reported. The main sources of livelihood—**agriculture, horticulture, and tourism**—have suffered greatly, as floods destroyed large tracts of agricultural land, while damaged irrigation channels continue to affect even those areas that were not directly hit by GLOFs and floods. According to official estimates, approximately **70% of the population in these districts has been affected** by the recent incidents.

In general, it is a medium scale emergency but for Gilgit-Baltistan, this is a large-scale, rapid-onset emergency due to widespread multi-district damage to houses, bridges, roads and irrigation, dozens of deaths and many injured/missing, large livestock losses, and a provincial appeal for emergency funding all occurring across multiple, remote districts and overstressing local capacities.¹²

According to GB-PEOC's 18 August report, the disaster caused 45 deaths, 42 injuries, destruction or damage to 993 houses, the loss of 67 livestock, and the destruction of 87 bridges and 40 water channels in 30 villages in GB.

Flooding in GB has damaged irrigation systems, farmland, roads, and bridges, leaving some communities without power or clean water. Many affected people remain scattered or with host families, and detailed disaggregated data is unavailable.

⁷ <https://www.ndma.gov.pk/storage/sitreps/August2025/DDgu9z03TX7Ngv3SHRqV.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.ndma.gov.pk/storage/sitreps/August2025/fLTgY4y6pWGJKaF5cjRa.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/28/pakistan-slams-crisis-of-injustice-as-deadly-flooding-hits>

¹⁰ https://climatepromise.undp.org/news-and-stories/water-access-transforming-lives-women-and-girls-pakistan?utm_source=chatgpt.com

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_districts_in_Gilgit-Baltistan

¹² <https://profit.pakistantoday.com.pk/2025/07/28/gilgit-baltistan-appeals-for-rs7-billion-in-emergency-funds-as-climate-disasters-cause-widespread-damage>

In the short term, there is an urgent need for food, safe shelter such as tents or temporary housing, clean drinking water, emergency healthcare, WASH support, and quick repairs to key access routes for relief efforts.¹³ Displaced families, including children, the elderly, and female-headed households, require protection and psychosocial support to cope with trauma. In the long term, the loss of livelihoods from damaged orchards, livestock, and reduced tourism income could lead to prolonged food insecurity and financial hardship.¹⁴ Rebuilding essential infrastructure, such as bridges, roads, irrigation systems, schools, and health centers will require significant investment, with provincial estimates indicating costs in the billions of rupees for climate-resilient reconstruction. Without sustained funding for long-term adaptation measures like early warning systems, glacial lake monitoring, slope stabilization, and resilient water and sanitation systems, communities will remain highly vulnerable to future GLOF and flash flood events.¹⁵

To date, the federal government has committed Rs 4 billion, but these funds have not yet been fully disbursed, meaning they are not yet functionalized for on-the-ground relief and recovery work. This leaves a shortfall of Rs 3 billion yet to be secured.

A significant challenge exacerbating the relief gap is the limited presence of humanitarian organizations in Gilgit-Baltistan. The limited presence of NGOs in the region hampers effective aid distribution and complicates the coordination of relief and recovery efforts in this remote and mountainous area.

Many affected valleys face access challenges due to remote terrain, while shortages in shelter, WASH, and health services remain. There is also a need for specialized technical support, such as GLOF risk monitoring, climate-resilient reconstruction, and livelihood recovery. Coordinated humanitarian assistance is essential, combining immediate life-saving aid, including food, shelter, WASH, and health services with medium-term recovery and climate-resilience programs.

3. Local and national capacity

Many families are staying with relatives, living in partially damaged homes, or sheltering in tents provided by local authorities while waiting for more permanent solutions. Some emergency food, medicines, and basic shelter materials have been distributed in affected valleys, but needs remain high, particularly in remote areas. Local communities are also taking self-help measures, such as clearing river channels, building temporary footbridges, and supporting each other, but their capacity is limited due to access challenges and the scale of the damage.

In Gilgit-Baltistan, the GB Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA) and District Disaster Management Authorities are leading initial assessments, coordinating relief distributions, and overseeing local repairs, with technical support and situational updates provided by the NDMA and PDMA. Humanitarian actors, including the Pakistan Red Crescent, local NGOs, and community groups, are delivering tents, NFIs, food assistance, first aid, and community support, while international agencies such as WFP and UNICEF are preparing surge support for WASH, nutrition, and logistics as required.

The NDMA's Monsoon Contingency Plan 2025 and the National Disaster Response Plan (NDRP) provide established protocols for activation, emergency operations centres, search and rescue, and sectoral responses such as WASH, shelter, health, and logistics, and these frameworks have been guiding current response efforts. The federal and GB provincial governments have declared multiple villages calamity-affected, mobilised rescue teams, announced cash compensation, and approved emergency projects. The Prime Minister has announced a Rs 4 billion relief and reconstruction package, directing the mapping and prioritisation of critical infrastructure for rebuilding, while provincial governments have submitted appeals for additional assistance. However, implementation remains hindered by the region's remote terrain, ongoing rains, damage to roads and bridges, and limited provincial budgets, necessitating both federal support and further funding requests.

¹³ <https://profit.pakistantoday.com.pk>

¹⁴ <https://www.arabnews.com>

¹⁵ <https://ffc.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/GB-Summer-Flood-Contingency-Plan-2025.pdf>

OCHA is coordinating humanitarian information-sharing and planning with government authorities and partners. UNICEF is mobilising WASH and nutrition support, advocating for child-sensitive responses, and issuing statements on child protection.

OCHA's Inter-Agency Monsoon Contingency Plan 2025 has been published and ReliefWeb / OCHA situation reports show sectoral planning and cluster-level preparedness (WASH, Health, Shelter, Logistics, Protection). This indicates the cluster system is being used to coordinate response planning and information sharing.

4. Key needs and gaps

Many of the most urgent humanitarian gaps span multiple sectors, with access and logistics posing a major challenge as damaged roads and bridges leave remote valleys cut off, delaying shelter, WASH, health, and food assistance. Shelter and NFI needs are high due to extensive housing damage, while WASH systems have been disrupted, heightening risks of waterborne disease and requiring urgent water supply restoration and emergency sanitation. Health gaps include limited access to services, damaged facilities, and the need for mobile teams, medical supplies, and disease surveillance. Food security is threatened by crop, orchard, and livestock losses, demanding both emergency assistance and early livelihood recovery support. Protection risks, particularly for children, women, and older people, are rising due to displacement and overcrowding, while damaged schools necessitate temporary learning spaces and psychosocial support. Geographically, Diamer, Gilgit, Ghizer, Hunza (Gojal), Astore, Skardu, and Nagar are among the hardest-hit, with their most remote valleys requiring priority life-saving interventions and logistical support.

Key information gaps remain, including the lack of disaggregated data (sex, age, gender, ethnicity) on affected and displaced populations, verified figures on house damage, displacement, and infrastructure losses, complete multi-sectoral needs and gap analyses for remote areas, and consolidated health surveillance and WASH risk mapping. Longer-term recovery planning data, such as through a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) or Damage and Needs Assessment (DNA), if undertaken, could take 4–12 weeks to finalise.

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>)	

If you indicate an intention to launch an appeal, the secretariat will activate an Emergency Steering Committee meeting within two working days on receipt of this alert.

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	Gilgit and Ghizar districts of Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan	Emergency Response	Financial	USD 100,000

5. Potential responses

Community World Service Asia has a history of responding to various small and large-scale disasters across Pakistan. Our humanitarian efforts have included responding to earthquakes in 2005, cyclones in 2007, floods in 2010, 2011, and 2012, IDP crises in 2012, earthquake responses in 2015, drought responses in 2018, heatwave emergencies in 2022 and 2025, and flood response 2022. Our expertise spans multiple sectors, including humanitarian response, food security, livelihoods, quality and accountability, WASH, health, and education.

Community World Service Asia (CWSA) is actively implementing the Climate Change Education & Awareness Program in District Hunza, with its Gilgit-Baltistan office established at the KADO Centre in Hunza. This strategic presence is allowing CWSA to coordinate directly with local communities, relevant government departments and other humanitarian actors. Drawing from our past experiences in implementing emergency programs, CWSA has developed effective processes and procedures, contributing to smooth implementation.

Community World Service Asia has launched emergency relief operations in Hunza and Nagar districts of Gilgit-Baltistan, which are among the most affected, and hard to reach areas of Northern Pakistan. Hunza and Nagar are nestled within the Karakoram Range, and are surrounded by some of the highest Karakoram peaks like Rakaposhi, Golden Peak, and Ultar. These districts are most affected by recent climate change impacts, despite zero contribution to emissions. CWSA is distributing Emergency Relief Kits to 150 families in these two districts. These kits include food items, first aid, and hygiene supplies tailored to restore dignity and safety. The needs are higher as multiple districts are affected. So, in response to the growing needs, and to cover the gap, CWSA is requesting support from ACT through its RRF window. The proposed plan is a three-month, multi-sector emergency initiative to provide lifesaving assistance to affected communities in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). The specific target villages and districts will be determined in coordination with local authorities. The key interventions will include:

- **In kind food assistance:** Providing in-kind food assistance to affected families to help meet their immediate food needs and ensure household members have access to essential dietary requirements. This support may include staple grains, pulses, cooking oil, and other basic food items to reduce the risk of hunger and malnutrition, particularly among children, pregnant and lactating women, and other vulnerable groups.
- **Shelter Support:** Assisting affected households with temporary shelter solutions to protect them from harsh weather conditions, ensuring safety, privacy, and dignity during the recovery period.

With an established office in the area, a dedicated project team will be recruited to support the implementation of the proposed activities.

Immediate financial assistance is required to launch this life-saving initiative, as the government has appealed for support, with losses amounting to billions and exceeding its response capacity.

The projected response plan spans three months and requires approximately USD 100,000.