

PRESS RELEASE

Vision:

To have democratic and just society where all people enjoy equal economic, political, socio-cultural and religious right, equitable opportunities and benefits of development process without any discrimination.

Mission:

PATTAN is committed to mainstreaming marginalized and isolated communities, groups and women into political and economic decision-making processes at all levels through mobilization, networking, capacity-building and advocacy for structural and policy change.

Program Districts

Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Attock, Rawalpindi, Chakwal, Multan, Faisalabad, Jhang, Khanewal, D.G. Khan, Muzaffargarh, Sargodha, DI Khan, Dir, Ghotki, Hyderabad, Badin, Mardan & Manshehra.

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Mushrooming of relief camps is result of dissatisfaction of federal and provincial governments. A large majority of camps are being run by religious parties or religiously motivated organisations.

Islamabad, 1st September. Religious parties appear to have taken the lead in setting up of relief camps for flood affected people in Islamabad city. The mushrooming of relief camps in the latter half of August is likely to be a result of lack of confidence and trust in federal and provincial governments. These organisations are likely to have presence in most of the flood affected areas through their networks. Though, most of the religious parties are organised on sectarian lines, individual donors contributing goods or cash to these organisations care less about these divisions – a highly positive phenomenon.

Interestingly, about 95% of the respondents mentioned ‘sympathy’ and ‘to serve humanity’ as the motivating factors to set up the relief camps, while only 2 persons said it was ‘my religious duty’. Regarding overall challenges in collection and distribution of items/cash most stated (1) ‘reaching out to the worst hit areas due to damaged bridges, and roads, and (2) to get the NOC (No Objection Certificate) from CDA as the most daunting tasks.

These are some of the major findings of Pattan Development Organisation’s preliminary survey, conducted on July 29-30. All the camps our teams visited were set up between 24 and 30 August. In total PATTAN team visited 15 camps in the capital city and interviewed the persons who were managing the camps. A large majority of camps were run by members, madras students, and volunteers of the organisations. And each day roughly three-six persons volunteer their time. Except one, every organisation has set up camps in the aftermath of past disasters somewhere in the country. Besides camps, almost every respondent said they were using multiple means to collect relief items and cash such as social media, door-to-door visits, word of mouth, personal contacts, and announcements made after each prayer.

PATTAN has been working with disaster prone communities since 1992 super floods. Based on our own long experience, observations, and research, it appears charitable organisations have improved their collection-distribution but still they didn’t have proper system to assess the needs of the affected people. For instance, half of the respondents said they were relying on local contacts and most said they didn’t develop any method to identify needs of the needy communities. Therefore, duplication of efforts and overlapping in distribution is likely to take place, which is going to cause adverse implications in future.

PATTAN also found almost all the organisations saying they were accepting every item that was brought to the camp or handed over to them. It is likely to waste huge time of volunteers in sorting-out the items and if the collected items are disposed of without proper need assessment, that is highly likely to cause dumping in the flood affected areas.

To improve distribution system and to avoid duplication PATTAN suggests the following steps to charitable organisations:

Recommendations:

1. Provinces must empower local councils to play lead role at local level.
2. To avoid duplication, the affected areas should be divided amongst charitable organisations.
3. Information sharing on daily basis is essential.
4. NDMA should facilitate the relief actors by providing optimum information about road conditions in the flood affected areas and the areas/communities which are being left out.
5. Collect and disburse cash instead of unnecessary items as people are the best decision -makers about their needs.
6. Reach out to women headed HHs too.