

SOUTH ASIA EARTHQUAKE

Situation Report as of 9th October

Highlights

- The estimated number of deaths is more than 18000, but the number is rising with time. There have been more than 20 severe aftershocks measuring 5 and above. In addition access to areas is difficult because of landslides.

Health impacts:

- Saving lives through search and rescue activities will continue to be the priority for the next 48 hours. Trauma care and transport of the injured to hospitals along with ensuring basic needs from shelter, food, water to survivors.
- Severe damage to health facilities has been reported. Major hospitals in the effected area have collapsed and/or severely damaged with many health personnel lost.
- Shortage of surgical supplies and medicines has been reported by Government authorities as a result of a dramatic increase in numbers of trauma cases and the severe damages to health institutions. However, there is a risk that an un-coordinated inflow of medical supplies will result in duplication of efforts causing an unnecessary logistic burden.
- Major Public Health concerns continue to be water-borne diseases as a result of massive damage to water and sewage systems.

WHO Response:

- WHO assessment teams of public health, epidemiology, health systems, logistic and water/sanitation specialists are deployed to join the country team already in place. A total of 14 international experts are expected to be fully operative shortly.
- WHO Representative Pakistan is the acting UN Resident Coordinator Designated Official in Islamabad.
- WHO is supporting the Ministry of Health of Pakistan in planning the national health response. Seventeen (17) national surgical teams have been sent to the most affected districts. These teams consist of surgeons, orthopaedic surgeons, anaesthetists and operating theatre technicians.
- WHO and UNICEF will support these teams with regards to supplies and local costs for a period of two weeks.
- WHO Representative will support the Government of Pakistan in establishing a special rescue, search and relief radio and TV programme. It will be operational around the clock to essential life saving information to people living in the affected areas. Where possible programmes will be produced in regional languages.
- The shipment of 4 New Emergency Health kits (NEHK) (each kit is designed to cover the health needs of 10 000 people for three months) and 5 Trauma kits (each kits cover the need for 100 surgical interventions) is under finalization.
- WHO experts are participating in the UN inter-agency relief and assessment missions to NWFP and other affected area from today.
- WHO Country office in India has offered assistance to the Ministry of Health. Related to this the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional office (EMRO) and the WHO South East Asia Regional offices are in contact and exchanging information.

Urgent needs:

- There are pressing needs in restoring emergency health services in the effected areas. Immediate recovery of damaged health facilities and strengthening of health manpower and other alternative solutions are vital.
- Logistics and medical supplies mainly those needed for trauma and water and sanitation will remain vital for the initial period.

- Ensuring a coordinated international health response that is based on assessed needs.

Donations:

- The British Government has donated USD252,000 for WHO support to the disaster response.
- The Swiss Government has donated USD100,000 for WHO support to the disaster response.
- The Norwegian Government has donated USD 250,000 for WHO support to the disaster response.