

Media Update

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United Nations - Pakistan

Press Release

United Nations and Aga Khan Foundation visit Chitral

Islamabad, 4 December, 2015 - Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to disasters whether from climate change or because of earthquakes. Both types of disasters affected Chitral recently, the July flash floods, and the October earthquake that affected many parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan. To better understand the effects on people and development from the floods and the earthquake, and to assess the needs for reconstruction efforts, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Pakistan, Neil Buhne, and the head of the Aga Khan Foundation in Pakistan, Akhtar Iqbal, visited Chitral district today.

Neil Buhne said, “Pakistan’s vulnerability to both natural hazards and climate change has the potential to damage and delay development in the country. However with good preparedness, planning and mitigation measures, we can at least limit the loss to human life and development. This visit today highlights the importance of government efforts to provide relief to the vulnerable people most affected, and also the significance of quickly following up with comprehensive reconstruction done together with the local communities.”

Akhtar Iqbal said, “A stronger humanitarian-development link can help better assess the situation as well as the details for the extent of damages and how the local communities can be made more resilient to future catastrophes. Together with the government and other stakeholders, we can help build stronger capacities to plan for, and respond to disasters. Shared commitment

through engagement with key stakeholders can help prevent disaster-related humanitarian crises and protect development gains.”

The mission was led by Neil Buhne and other members, including UNDP Pakistan Country Director, Marc-André Franche, Head of Office UNOCHA, George Khoury and the Executive Officer of Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS) Nusrat Nasab.

The mission met and interacted with the communities and the local government authority in Chitral. The analysis following this visit will contribute to the overall assessment prepared by the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that will be further discussed at a workshop with international development partners on 10 December.

For more information, contact:

Sarwat Adnan, Senior Coordination Officer, UN Resident Coordinator's Office, sarwat.adnan@one.un.org
