

Media Update

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WFP

Press Release

Community based Disaster Risk Management and School Safety Programmes launched in Balochistan

QUETTA - The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) - Balochistan in collaboration with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS) Pakistan launched two new programmes aimed at reducing the risks posed by natural disasters in Balochistan – Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) and School Safety programmes.

The Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE) has provided the financial support for the implementation of these projects in two hazard-prone districts Nasirabad and Jaffarabad of Balochistan. WFP's CBDRM and school safety programmes will benefit as many as 6,546 people including school children, teachers, school safety committees, local community members, trainers, local and district government officials from 40 schools in 14 villages in two selected districts. The programme initiatives will also benefit more than 3,000 community members by increasing their knowledge on minimizing loss of lives and properties during disasters or emergencies.

In addition, WFP will provide school safety kits; search and rescue kits; first aid kits; and information, education and communication material, including a students' learning booklet, a teachers' guidebook and flip charts of major hazards, to all selected schools and local communities to create awareness on disaster preparedness and response.

The launch ceremony was attended by the Minister Education - Mr. Abdul Rahim Ziaratwal, the Minister Planning and Development- Dr. Hamid Khan Achakzai, the Minister for Home & Tribal Affairs, Prison and PDMA, the Director General (DG) PDMA- Balochistan - Muhammad Tariq, WFP Pakistan Head of Policy and Programme - Mr. William Affif and WFP Provincial Head-Quetta Office- Ms. Ilaria

Martinatto, the FOCUS Pakistan - Nawab Ali Khan, representative from disaster risk management authorities, education department, INGOs and media.

The chief guest at the occasion, the honorable Minister Education Mr. Abdul Rahim Ziaratwal said that the “Government of Balochistan is working to improve the lives of the people through providing basic necessities of life including food, education, shelter etc. The Government is also working to raise awareness among the communities to prevent them from natural disasters, with its partners including UN agencies, INGOs/NGOs and research institutions. The Government welcomes the launching of the United Nations World Food Programme’s CDBRM and school safety programmes in Balochistan”.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director General PDMA - Muhammad Tariq said that “the Government of Balochistan is working together with its partners to minimize risks to human lives during disasters. There is a dire need to spread the CBDRM and School Safety programmes across the province”.

WFP Pakistan Head of Policy and Programme Mr. William Affif said that “Pakistan has suffered from consecutive natural disasters and emergencies in the recent past including devastating earthquakes and flooding, causing the unfortunate loss to human as well as to the animal lives. These losses can be minimized by educating the people on disaster risk management and disaster response strategies”. He also said that “WFP Pakistan is working together with the Government of Pakistan and other partners to extend its support to implement specially designed CBDRM and School Safety programmes for the local communities in Balochistan”.

Nawab Ali Khan, Chief Executive Officer, FOCUS highlighted the importance of these initiatives in Pakistan as the communities living in hazard prone areas are suffering from natural disasters like earthquake, floods and land sliding etc. for last couple of years. He further added that “disaster risk management is a shared responsibility and this partnership in between agencies is a source to play our roles for creating a safer habitat in hazard prone areas to ensure safer generations” .

The Norwegian Embassy in Islamabad is pleased to have contributed to the School Safety Program in Balochistan. “We congratulate the NDMA, PDMA Balochistan, WFP and FOCUS on the launch. As a long term development partner of Pakistan, it is important for the government and people of Norway to help Pakistan prepare for and cope with a variety of natural disasters. We believe that a smart and efficient way of doing this is to teach children and local communities how to reduce risks, act in emergency situations and respond when disaster hits.

We hope that this CBDRM project will help the targeted communities reducing their vulnerability to natural disasters”.

The CBDRM and School Safety programmes are part of the joint 2017-18 Annual Work Plan Agreements of WFP, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and PDMA and also of the Framework of Cooperation signed between WFP and NDMA for 2016-18. These two programmes have already been launched in districts Tharparkar and Sanghar of Sindh as well as in districts Shangla and Chitral in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

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