

Pakistan: Earthquake survivors receive aid

Thousands of people affected by an earthquake that struck the border region of Pakistan and Iran last month have received vital aid from the government, UN agencies and humanitarian partners.

The magnitude 7.8 earthquake hit south-east Iran on 16 April. An estimated 30,000 people in Pakistan were affected, with communities in the area of Mashkel, on the eastern edge of Balochistan particularly hard hit.



Muhammad Omer, 70, lost his two-roomed mud-brick home when an earthquake hit the border region of Pakistan and Iran in mid-April. Aid agencies have provided thousands of families with basic but critical assistance.
Photo: Islamic Relief

According to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority in Balochistan, 2,250 houses and shops were damaged with 1,500 homes destroyed. In the worst hit parts of Mashkel, 85 per cent of families were affected. Half of them lost their homes.

Muhammad Omer, 70, lost his two-roomed mud-brick home. Omer, who has six daughters, has been blind for 20 years.

“I was a mason and I could earn my living with respect and dignity. But now I have no other source of income and I have to depend on the help of the community and my two daughters who work in the fields,” he said.

Omer’s family was left homeless and in the days following the earthquake, was forced to live in the open. Soon international NGO Islamic Relief arrived in Mashkel and provided Omer and other affected families with a family-sized tent for shelter, kitchen kits and household items.

“It was quite difficult for me to build back my home, especially because of my small income,” Omer continued. “In this time of difficulty, I am very happy to have received some household items and a tent in which to live.”

Government leads response with UN support

Following the earthquake, government authorities took the lead in assessing the situation and identifying and responding to immediate needs. They were supported by UN agencies, international NGOs and local humanitarian partners. The Government provided 4,000 tents, 2,250 food packages and assorted food and non-food items, while military doctors provided medical assistance. Islamic Relief provided immediate relief assistance to 530 families (more than 3,200 individuals) in Mashkel.

OCHA coordinated the response of UN and local agencies, holding regular meetings that facilitated the sharing of information, ensuring close collaboration with local district and provincial authorities in Balochistan.

“Despite the fact that the impact of the earthquake was relatively small, the close coordination between partners was critical,” said Lynn Hastings, the Head of OCHA in Pakistan. “The areas worst-affected are difficult to reach because of poor road conditions, tough, mountainous terrain and security concerns.”