

A Year of Disasters: Accountability Report 2005



earthquake



food crisis



hurricane



tsunami

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A Year of Disasters: Accountability Report 2005

Introduction

The year that began on December 26, 2004, has been like no other.

On that day, as the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami unfolded for millions of survivors and a horrified world, something seemed to have changed. As shocked as we were at the worst nature had to offer, our hearts were also warmed by the best of human kindness.

Hundreds of donations and other offers of assistance poured into Mercy Corps headquarters in the immediate hours after the disaster. Over the days that followed, those numbers multiplied into the tens of thousands.

Timely donations and other assistance from individuals, businesses, schools, churches and foundations fueled Mercy Corps' tsunami response in India, Indonesia, Somalia and Sri Lanka from the first critical hours following the disaster. That outpouring of generosity is still serving survivors today, nearly a year later.

Unfortunately, in the months that followed the tsunami, four additional disasters have left families vulnerable in their wake. Hurricanes Katrina and Stan, a food crisis in Niger and, most recently, an earthquake

in Pakistan have affected millions of people and created urgent needs for food, shelter and other critical assistance.

Mercy Corps donors stepped up heroically for each of these crises. As it had for the tsunami, rapid giving allowed Mercy Corps to mount a quick, effective response for families in need.

This accountability report outlines Mercy Corps' emergency response over the past year, focusing on program strategy, accomplishments, financial accountability and our vision for future efforts. We feel it is critical to report back to the people who make our work possible with a clear account of what their support has achieved.

We thank all our donors for their extraordinary commitment, especially over the past year. Your contributions have delivered help and hope to millions. Recovery from these crises will take years, not months – but, in partnership with our donors, Mercy Corps will stand with families until the job is done.

The Indian Ocean Tsunami



Background

A massive underwater earthquake, measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale, spawned a series of catastrophic tsunamis across the Indian Ocean. From Indonesia to parts of East Africa, the disaster claimed over 270,000 lives (including 168,000 in Indonesia) and left millions homeless.

Within hours of the deadly waves, Mercy Corps mobilized the largest and most comprehensive emergency response in our 25-year history. Dozens of staff were sent to devastated areas of Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India to provide lifesaving relief and supplies. Our team was one of the first international groups allowed access to Indonesia's Aceh Province, a civil war-torn region near the epicenter of the deadly earthquake, in many years.

The organization expanded relief efforts to tsunami-battered areas of Somalia in April 2005.

Today, Mercy Corps has provided assistance to more than one million people. Hundreds of field staff are helping survivors rebuild their communities and livelihoods.

Program Activities

After initial distributions of food, shelter, cooking supplies and other critical materials to tens of thousands of survivors, Mercy Corps quickly transitioned to activities designed to restore ruined livelihoods and rebuild local economies. Results of these projects include:

Indonesia

- Providing short-term economic opportunities to thousands of people – up to 26,000 local laborers per day – through Cash-for-Work programs in 87 villages.
- Clearing or constructing 238 miles of roads.
- Rehabilitating 235 miles of drainage ditches.
- Cleaning and clearing 33,336 acres of land.
- Restoring 483 drinking water systems.
- Constructing 883 houses, shelters and bridges.
- Reconditioning 2,006 houses and other public facilities.
- Sending children back to school by repairing ruined classrooms and providing supplies, uniforms and tuition to nearly 30,000 students.
- Moving and repairing more than 250 large fishing boats.

Sri Lanka, India and Somalia

- Providing 4,681 families with emergency relief supplies.
- Distributing small grants to 11,081 fishermen, farmers, and skilled tradespeople to re-establish local economies.
- Rebuilding and furnishing 25 preschools.
- Digging more than 100 drainage channels to reclaim over 600 acres of cropland.

After this phase of cleaning up and rebuilding, our programs next shifted to longer-term efforts aimed at getting people back to work, helping families return to their home communities and getting local markets back up and running. In Indonesia alone, Mercy Corps is now helping nearly 80,000 people in 71 villages – this amounts to 16 percent of the displaced population. The agency's primary interventions include supporting community and economic recovery, assisting local business associations and strengthening social institutions. Examples of Mercy Corps' current phase of activities in Aceh Province include:

- Constructing 54 midwife clinics to restore and improve the pre and post natal services available to women in tsunami-affected villages.
- Supporting critical household industries like baking and sewing with small grants.
- Facilitating \$80,000 worth of loans to 20 small businesses.



Shirine Bakhat/Mercy Corps

Small Business Gets Back to Work in Aceh

Bapak Fadly Wahab's business received a loan from a local commercial bank facilitated by Mercy Corps' Financial Access Program in Indonesia's Aceh Province. It helped him restart his fiberglass company in July 2005, and the business remains the only fiberglass manufacturer in the area. "I am very confident about restarting my business because of the support I have received from Mercy Corps," Wahab said. "They helped me get the loan I needed from the bank. They have also helped me secure my first orders; I'm not sure I would have gotten the contract for a petrol tank without Mercy Corps' backing." Wahab has been able to re-employ five of his former workers, and has received further orders from many international organizations operating in Aceh Province.



Shirine Bakhat/Mercy Corps

Ibu Laila (age 27, pictured) and her sister Ibu Safrina (age 24) have been able to restart their sewing business in Lampung with Mercy Corps' support. "I am very happy, my sister and I have enough orders to work every day. Orders come from old customers I had before the tsunami, but also from new customers that have heard about our shop since then. Mercy Corps has helped us buy the equipment we lost (a sewing machine), and we are very happy to be working again."

Mercy Corps' Livelihoods program in Aceh is concentrating on helping families return to traditional livelihoods that were hampered by the tsunami. Over 70 percent of the province's population has been employed in trades such as agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and fishing. The resurgence of local economies and long-term success of villages depends on these trades, so Mercy Corps is committed to helping restore them through a combination of material aid, cash grants and technical support.

In Sri Lanka, Mercy Corps is working in six coastal districts of this island nation, focusing on rebuilding communities and livelihoods while also addressing local sources of tension and conflict. The agency has served over 800,000 Sri Lankans in the past eleven months through projects such as Cash-for-Work, educational and psychosocial support, economic development and fostering the area's nascent tourism industry.

Mercy Corps and four local partners are working with 21 coastal Sri Lankan communities to determine families' most urgent needs for the immediate future. In an initial pilot, Mercy Corps is providing up to \$50,000 per community over a period of four years to carry out development projects. To date, all 21 communities have identified their top priorities, including drinking water, irrigation, toilets and self-employment.

After partnering with two local organizations in India, Mercy Corps provided emergency relief then long-term development assistance to over 44,000 tsunami survivors. The agency and its partners focused mostly on agricultural restoration projects, including drainage and de-silting of salt-damaged crop fields, rehabilitation of contaminated village ponds and provision of small livestock such as goats to families. These activities have resulted in a faster-than-anticipated return to farming for thousands of families.

In Somalia, Mercy Corps is employing laborers from 900 local households to rebuild tsunami-damaged roads, shore up canals and rehabilitate infrastructure critical to the fishing industry. This ongoing program directly supports the livelihoods of over 7,200 individuals and injects much-needed cash into flagging local economies.

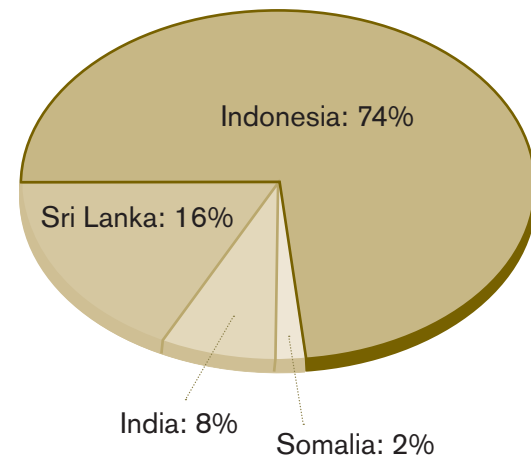
Financial Accountability

To date, Mercy Corps has received \$52 million in overall support for tsunami relief and response. More than \$33 million of this total came from over 100,000 individuals, corporations and foundations worldwide – including gifts of \$500,000 or more from: the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation; the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation; Intel and its employees; the Boeing Company

and its employees; and patrons of Bank of America and Whole Foods Market. We also received nearly \$11 million in donated goods and supplies and \$8 million in grants from governments and institutional donors.

The agency has met its commitment to spending at least 60 percent of total tsunami resources in 2005. As of October 31, tsunami-related spending totaled \$33 million, or 64 percent of all resources. Mercy Corps will spread the balance of funding over subsequent years to ensure ongoing support for long-term community development, small business, education and agricultural programs that benefit thousands of survivors. ✿

Tsunami Spending by Country



Niger Food Crisis



Background

In late 2004 and early 2005, a devastating drought and crop-killing locust infestations destroyed thousands of acres of farmland of the West African nation of Niger. Harvests of staple crops like millet were severely diminished, plunging already-poor families into deeper poverty and malnutrition.

As regional food surpluses failed to come through and the crisis deepened, the United Nations estimated that over 3.5 million Nigeriens were facing the grim prospect of starvation. Families desperate to find some sustenance were forced to scavenge for anything they could find to eat, living off bitter ground leaves, shrubs and even seeds.

Young children account for well over a quarter of the 3.5 million people suffering from extreme hunger throughout Niger.

Mercy Corps responded to the growing crisis in August 2005, when it sent a veteran team of aid workers to Niger. The agency partnered with local Nigerien organizations to identify needs. After an assessment, Mercy Corps and its partners began operations in the country's

underserved Filingue Department (about 175 kilometers northeast of the capital, Niamey) and immediately started delivering food to children and other vulnerable groups.

Program Activities

Since mid-August, Mercy Corps has helped nourish more than 4,000 underfed Nigerien children by initiating feeding programs in tiny village health facilities. The organization procured and distributed several tons of protein-packed UNIMIX food to children throughout Filingue Department. UNIMIX, provided to humanitarian organizations by UNICEF, is a vitamin and mineral-rich food containing corn and soy protein. When mixed with clean water, it makes a porridge that has 400 calories per 100 grams of flour – a lifesaving food supplement for children suffering from hunger.

In order to guarantee long-term health care for vulnerable Nigerien families, Mercy Corps conducted training for representatives from local health clinics. This training ensured that health workers could identify malnourished children, prepare UNIMIX food for them and refer severely malnourished children to the regional hospital in Filingue.

In only one month's time, Mercy Corps nutritionists restored about 650 children to their target weights.

Equipping village-level health facilities with the knowledge and skill to serve malnourished children is at the heart of Mercy Corps' strategy. Food programs are carried out by local facilities, which are usually one-room consultation spaces managed by a community member trained in primary health care and provided a stock of medicines.

To ensure the program's success, two teams of two nutrition aides visited each target village to introduce the feeding and health activities, ensure support of local authorities and train the village health agent and other feeding workers. Mercy Corps employs a nutritionist to coordinate these teams, follow up within villages and support the Health Centers in managing their own programs.

Some measures of success for Mercy Corps' program in Niger include:

- Training over 20 local health staff and community workers in the establishment and management of critical feeding and health programs,
- Negotiating with UNICEF to deliver food and equipment to eight regional health centers in Filingue Department,
- Providing cooking materials and conducting hygiene demonstrations for area mothers, and
- Equipping local health centers and clinics with materials for height/weight measurements.

Another crop failure this harvest season portends hard times for the coming year. Mercy Corps is dedicated to continuing and expanding its programming in Niger to provide food for young mothers and women of child-bearing age, who also suffer from poor health as a result of acute food shortages.

Mercy Corps continues to seek funding, including grants, to support the critical continuation of its work in Niger.

Financial Accountability

Mercy Corps' Niger operations have been entirely funded by private donations. Over \$335,000 has been given, primarily by individual donors. Through October 31, approximately \$109,000 had been spent on food and health programs and equipment. The remaining funds will run out in the first quarter of 2006, underscoring the urgent need for additional resources. ✿



Christy Collins/Mercy Corps

“When I arrived in Niger, I realized that Mercy Corps really needed to be here. By this intervention, we’re saving many, many lives. This is not just an emergency, it’s a long-term challenge to save and improve lives.”

– Susan Romanski,
Deputy Director of
Emergency Operations

Hurricane Katrina



Background

Hurricane Katrina, the first storm of the 2005 hurricane season to reach Category 5 status, made landfall on Louisiana's central Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005. It immediately devastated coastal areas of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama with gale-force winds and a storm surge well over twenty feet.

While the city of New Orleans was spared a direct hit, levees weakened by Hurricane Katrina eventually gave way, flooding most of the city with storm-swollen waters from Lake Pontchartrain. Citizens of the city that had not already left were forcibly evacuated as the waters continued to rise.

Over a million people along the Gulf Coast were displaced by Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. Tens of thousands lost their homes and everything they own and, more than three months after the disaster, thousands of families remain homeless.

Hurricane Katrina claimed more than 1,300 lives and stands as the costliest natural disaster ever to hit the United States. It left a swath of destruction across over 90,000 square miles, an area nearly as large as the United Kingdom. The needs of survivors are immense.

Mercy Corps sent a team to Baton Rouge within days of Hurricane Katrina's landfall.

This group of emergency workers from around the world quickly spread out across the Gulf Coast, partnering with local agencies, determining needs and bringing much-needed relief and supplies to families. To date, Mercy Corps has reached well over 110,000 people in the region with its relief and recovery efforts.

Program Activities

Mercy Corps' first activities centered on delivering material aid such as bedding supplies, water, food, tarpaulins and tools to displaced families and emergency crews along the Gulf Coast. These efforts focused on hurricane-affected communities in Louisiana's St. Tammany Parish, as well as Hancock and Harrison counties in Mississippi. Mercy Corps also provided assistance to families that had evacuated to the Baton Rouge area.

These initial distributions included over \$150,000 in donated chainsaws, power tools and other items from the television music network VH-1, as well as contributions of protective clothing for local cleaning and work crews. This material aid is benefitting approximately 45,000 people along the Gulf Coast.

Through careful coordination with municipal, county, state and federal officials, as well

as close cooperation with other organizations, Mercy Corps determined a four-tiered course of action to help restore normalcy to hurricane-stricken families.

1. Emergency Relief: Providing critical financial, technical and material aid support to survivors of the disaster in coordination with the efforts of other relief organizations.

2. Community Mobilization: Encouraging the participation of local communities in their own recovery and rebuilding process by working with local groups.

3. Economic Recovery: Enabling poor families to rebuild their livelihoods by helping people rebuild their businesses, create employment and earn income.

4. Psychosocial Programs: Supporting psychosocial programs that help the survivors overcome their trauma, with a special emphasis on children, by working with schools, daycare centers, children's service agencies and other local groups to provide appropriate psychosocial support to children.

Mercy Corps moved quickly to respond to the pressing needs of hurricane-affected children by reprising Comfort for Kids, a program that had assisted thousands of children in New York City in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks. The agency partnered with Bright Horizons Family Solutions, the

Dougy Center for Grieving Children, the YWCA, and JPMorgan Chase to bring comfort and understanding to Gulf Coast children. Comfort for Kids is carefully designed to help children, their teachers and family members to better cope with the distress of displacement and loss. Other partners like Nike provided extensive material aid and other support.

To date, the program has distributed:

- 55,000 Comfort Kits containing a stuffed animal, crayons, books and other small toys for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.
- 15,000 Back-to-School Kits containing notebooks, pens, markers and various school supplies for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12.
- 130 Teacher's Kits, containing materials such as white boards, calculators and rulers, to help local educators restore their classrooms.

In all, well over 70,000 beneficiaries have been reached so far by the Comfort for Kids program.

Mercy Corps is also reaching families through grants to community foundations. The agency is assisting more than 6,500 survivors that are still living in shelters or with host families. This assistance includes basic services, case management and health services for pregnant women and their families.

Future activities will continue to focus on meeting the needs of poor families while rebuilding local economies and social networks.

Mercy Corps is also partnering with local businesses and organizations to help families rebuild homes damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. This program, called ReClaim New Orleans, will concentrate on salvaging and selling materials from homes to provide families with income while they build stronger, more sustainable neighborhoods.

Financial Accountability

Mercy Corps has received approximately \$10 million in cash and donated supplies from a variety of donors – including individuals, community groups, companies and foundations – for its Hurricane Katrina relief and recovery efforts. Through October 31, nearly \$3.6 million has already been put to use in program activities. The remainder of funding, as well as future donations, will be used for upcoming long-term projects like continuing psychological programs and ReClaim New Orleans, as well as supporting grants to local organizations. ✨

Dear Laura,

First, I want to express our deepest thanks for your care and support to us as we strive to recover from Hurricane Katrina. On behalf of everyone involved in the Pre-K Program for St. Tammany Parish Public Schools, I thank you, and the wonderful staff of Mercy Corps, for being there for us in our time of greatest need.

As you know, our school system reopened on October 3rd, after being closed since August 26th. Many of the Slidell schools were damaged by the storm, including Brock Elementary, which will most likely remain closed due to the extent of damage. The Brock students are now attending Florida Avenue Elementary.

Our two Pre-K classrooms at Brock were completely destroyed. Needless to say, the teachers lost supplies and materials that they had used for years. At other elementary schools in Slidell, classrooms and libraries were flooded. All of our fifty-two schools, parishwide, have been impacted by Hurricane Katrina in one way or another.

The delivery of 900 preschool student Comfort Kits and 40 Teacher Kits by Mercy Corps this week was an incredible event. The trucks arrived, the materials were stacked in the hallway of our Instructional Technology Center, and all present were in awe and very excited about the quality and availability of these much needed materials. The next morning, a crew of volunteer parents arrived at 9:00 a.m. and delivered the kits to the 38 Pre-K classes throughout the parish.

Teachers cried. Those who had lost everything were thrilled to see their special deliveries coming in the door. The students loved receiving a special bag of their very own. For the four-year-olds, Pre-K is a fun place where gifts are given and happy times can happen, even when homes, possessions and family stability are lost.

We cannot thank the wonderful staff of Mercy Corps enough. Laura, you met with Beth and Debbie at our Pre-K teachers meeting, and then met me at the St. Tammany Social Services meeting on September 27th. It is amazing that the truck arrived to us on October 3rd, and kits were in the hands of teachers and students by noon on October 4th. We all agree,



Eric Block/Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps Katrina Response Officer Laura Guimond (right) delivers a shipment of Comfort Kits to Meredith Bang, Principal of Pass Christian Elementary School.

without question, that the Mercy Corps organization is the most efficient and well operated group we have seen in this entire relief effort.

I know that the teachers and students are writing their own expressions of thanks for the wonderful donations that they have received from their new friends at Mercy Corps. We are all deeply touched and grateful for your presence and absolute dedication to helping our Pre-K children and teachers.

We look forward to staying in touch. Again, thank you, thank you, thank you.

Sincerely,
Diane Carr
Pre-K Resource Liaison
St. Tammany Parish School Board

Hurricane Stan and Central American Flooding



Background

Hurricane Stan, the tenth hurricane of an already-deadly season, made landfall as a relatively weak Category 1 in southern Mexico on October 5, 2005. Unfortunately, it idled as a tropical storm over a wide section of Central America, dumping over 20 inches of rainfall in some areas in a short time. This deluge led to severe flooding and catastrophic mudslides in areas of Mexico, El Salvador and Guatemala.

Entire villages were swept from hillsides and quickly disappeared under yards-deep layers of mud. Guatemala suffered the largest loss of life in Hurricane Stan's aftermath; the official total of fatalities there stands at 1,036, but hundreds more are missing and presumed dead. Thousands of families have been displaced, with no village left to call home.

Mercy Corps, which has operated programs in Central America for nearly 25 years, mounted an immediate response from its office in Guatemala. Through partnerships with other aid organizations and quick distribution of relief, the agency has reached thousands of families that had nowhere else to turn.

Program Activities

Mercy Corps made immediate, effective contributions to the relief effort by providing logistical support to the Guatemalan government and other international agencies and rushing food and medical aid to affected regions. The agency shipped 16,000 pounds of corn meal, enough to supply 1,500 families for more than two weeks, to hurricane-affected people in the San Marcos Department (state). Mercy Corps is currently coordinating the relief efforts of 10 agencies in the hard-hit Solola Department, home to an estimated 1.5 million people.

As part of its coordination responsibility, Mercy Corps is evaluating current gaps in the collective relief effort. There is a significant deficit in temporary shelters, housing, food and medicine. In late October, the agency welcomed a four-person team from Portland, Oregon-based Northwest Medical Teams and briefed them for duties that include running a temporary clinic in a cold, mountainous area where an existing government health care center was destroyed in the storm.

A little over one month after the disaster, Mercy Corps' efforts are transitioning from immediate relief to more sustainable initiatives that will rebuild damaged infrastructure in the area, address widespread health issues and bring psychosocial counseling to traumatized children. The agency is carrying out this longer-term assistance to Solola Department in its trademark fashion: crafting innovative, effective programs while respecting and incorporating the country's unique cultures.

In the days immediately after Hurricane Stan's deluge, health care workers deployed to affected areas treated more existing health needs – such as respiratory problems and preventable diseases – than injuries caused by Hurricane Stan due to the lack of available medical care in remote areas. The ethnic groups that make their homes in Solola Department's highlands are often marginalized, receiving minimal services from government agencies. As a result, they were especially vulnerable when the hurricane swept through their villages – and are now struggling for a starting point to rebuild their villages and lives.

Mercy Corps has focused on meeting the distinct needs of marginalized ethnic groups in Guatemala's Alta Verapaz Department, another underserved area of the country. In the remote Polochic Valley, a local hospital and its satellite clinics provide culturally sensitive health care to far-flung villages inhabited by the Q'eqchi people. Area families, which once distrusted and avoided health care providers, witnessed a 30 percent decrease in mother and child mortality within three years of the health program's initiation. Mercy Corps will apply those lessons as it works with families, local organizations and other partners in Solola Department.

The agency's long-term development strategy includes Cash-for-Work programs, similar to those used in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami, which will pay local workers to repair and construct water and sanitation systems. In addition, Mercy Corps will train local organizations to better prepare and be ready to respond to future disasters.

Another critical component of the agency's response will be addressing the psychosocial needs of area children. Hurricane Stan and its aftermath robbed them of family members and friends, as well as homes, belongings and familiar spaces like schools.

As it did for crises such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, Mercy Corps is leading efforts to provide assistance to distressed children. Currently, the agency is working with UNICEF to organize a workshop that will train other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on how to effectively address the post-disaster needs of children.

Financial Accountability

Mercy Corps has raised a total of \$358,000 for relief activities focused on Hurricane Stan's aftermath in Guatemala. This includes a generous \$250,000 gift from Starbucks, which supports Mercy Corps initiatives in Guatemala and India, as well as \$108,000 from individual and community donations.

Through October 31, \$39,000 has been spent to support critical programs that have distributed food, water, household supplies and blankets. The remaining balance and subsequent donations will be used to support critical programs, including water, sanitation, infrastructure and health care projects, that address the severity of Hurricane Stan's aftermath. ✿



Janeen Simon/Mercy Corps

Helping Families Cope in a Changed World

Landslides resulting from remnants of Hurricane Stan forced thousands of poor Guatemalan families from the remote highland villages they called home for generations. Most of these families never went very far beyond the borders of their town and lived an isolated life far from the influences of the modern world. Women like Dona Maria Lopez (pictured) never learned to read or use simple mathematics. Dona Maria isn't sure how old she is – it's not a detail she needed to know for the life that was washed away by Hurricane Stan. Today, she and her elderly husband are struggling to find their place in a changed world.

Vulnerable individuals like Dona Maria face new challenges in places much different from the highland villages they called home. Mercy Corps is working with disaster-stricken, displaced Guatemalan families like hers to ensure they have what they need to rebuild stronger, healthier communities while retaining unique, colorful cultures.

Pakistan Earthquake



Background

The Pakistan Earthquake struck areas of northern Pakistan and India in the early morning hours of October 8, 2005. It measured 7.6 on the Richter scale, making it a major earthquake. As of early November 2005, the Pakistani government estimated fatalities at 87,350, although some estimate that the death toll could reach beyond 100,000.

The earthquake reduced remote villages and isolated towns to rubble in seconds and left more than 3.3 million people homeless. Their needs are of particular concern right now, as the harsh Himalayan winter sets in. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned, “A second, massive wave of deaths will happen if we do not step up our efforts now.” A month after the earthquake, there was still a race against time to find and assist poor families scattered throughout northern Pakistan’s mountainous foothills.

Mercy Corps, which has operated programs in Pakistan since the mid-1980s, immediately launched lifesaving efforts from its headquarters in Pakistan’s capital, Islamabad, and

field offices throughout the country. Mercy Corps has over 100 staff based in Pakistan, which enabled an immediate response to this disaster, allowing the organization to draw on existing emergency supply stores in Islamabad.

Program Activities

On October 8, the agency’s relief workers were on the ground readying the first shipments of lifesaving medical supplies for distribution. Mercy Corps rapidly assembled mobile medical teams made up of doctors, nurses and surgeons to provide critical trauma care to those in need.

By October 9, Mercy Corps staff had completed its initial assessment of the earthquake zone. Critical short-term needs including emergency medical care and supplies, food rations and shelter were identified and relief was readied for delivery. Staff in the earthquake-affected region estimated that 50 percent of housing in populated areas had been

destroyed and an additional 30 to 40 percent was heavily damaged. Major hospitals were destroyed and ambulances were overturned in the streets.

On October 11, a Mercy Corps medical team had delivered supplies and treated 150 patients in the remote Siran Valley. This was done without the benefit of medical facilities; patients were treated where they lay. Some were treated for secondary infections; others were stabilized and evacuated to hospitals in nearby Mansehra for further care. By the next day, Mercy Corps had established a crude medical clinic in the Valley, staffed by four Pakistani physicians (two men and two women). The UN subsequently designated Mercy Corps as a leader in medical response for the region.

Six tented medical facilities run by Mercy Corps doctors are treating about 700 people a day. Clinicians report treating infected wounds and scabies – a sign of poor sanitation in flattened villages – and a rising number of respiratory ailments, which suggest exposure to the elements as temperatures continue to drop.



Cassandra Nelson/Mercy Corps

Two Dispatches from the Field

26 October 2005

Hillkot, Hazara District, Pakistan – In one of Mercy Corps' basic health units, Ambreen gave birth to her first child – a boy. Mother and child are both healthy. Ambreen and her husband, who was waiting outside of the tiny medical tent, still need to choose a name for their new son. The family has much more grave concerns for the future as well – they lost their homes in the earthquake and are now living with over 16 relatives in a tent. Mercy Corps is providing for their most basic needs, including health, and is committed to their future well-being.



Cassandra Nelson/Mercy Corps

03 November 2005

Battal, Hazara District, Pakistan – Eight-year-old Natasha is in second grade. Her home and school were destroyed in the earthquake, and her father was killed when the house collapsed. She also lost 36 of her classmates when her school was flattened by the massive tremor. Now she is living in a tent with her mother, brothers and sisters. Her eldest brother, who is in tenth grade, is now responsible for taking care of the family. Natasha is very worried about her future and remains uncertain that they can survive the brutal winter.

Mercy Corps is providing blankets and other essential survival gear for families like Natasha's. The organization has also launched a Cash-for-Work program to build shelters for families facing the long, harsh Himalayan winter.

Over the next several days, Mercy Corps trucked in and distributed tons of food aid, shelter supplies and other critical items. These items included 1,350 family-sized tents designed to shelter large groups of people from rapidly dropping nighttime temperatures. Daily distributions of blankets, sleeping bags, jerry cans and other supplies are continuing at a rapid pace, thanks to the recent build-up of local staff.

At the beginning of November, Mercy Corps' efforts in the region were focusing on:

- Providing ongoing medical care for people impacted by the quake,
- Distributing winterized tents, blankets and food to thousands of survivors,

- Helping reopen and re-supply schools in hard-hit areas, and
- Employing local people in work that will ensure up to 50,000 people have shelter.

Mercy Corps' new shelter Cash-for-Work program is paying local people to clear debris and salvage building materials for building approximately 6,000 cold-weather shelters. The Cash-for-Work program began in the village of Saed Abad, near the town of Hillkot, with more than 1,100 local workers building shelters for homeless families. The program will expand to more than a dozen communities in the coming weeks.

Financial Accountability

To date, Mercy Corps had received more than \$8.4 million in overall support for earthquake response. This total consists of \$6.2 million from individual, foundation, and corporate donors – including generous support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Boeing Company and Intel.

In the first four weeks after the earthquake, Mercy Corps spent \$722,000 on immediate relief needs such as food aid, medical care, blankets and shelter materials. In the coming months, Mercy Corps will provide cold-weather housing and launch Cash-for-Work initiatives to help families survive the winter. The needs of displaced Pakistani families remain high, and Mercy Corps has made a commitment to decisive, ongoing assistance, especially during the harsh winter months. ✨

Summary

This year of disasters, and the consistently generous response of our supporters, has meant unprecedented growth and new commitments for Mercy Corps. With a combined \$71.1 million in disaster-specific contributions since December 26, 2004, we have responded quickly, effectively and responsibly where crises have threatened children and families.

Even as the organization grows and responds to inevitable future disasters, Mercy Corps is dedicated to remaining a nimble, cutting-edge force for change, setting itself apart with trademark speed, innovation and accountability. We take our responsibilities to both the people we serve and our supporters very seriously.

In the disaster areas and conflict zones where Mercy Corps works, as well as the nearly 40 nations where we help millions of people every day, our agency will continue to build its programs by listening to the people who will benefit from them. The most powerful ideas for long-term development come from the poor families themselves. We believe this is the best way to help vibrant communities re-emerge from disasters – perhaps even stronger than before.

Thank you once again for your support of Mercy Corps, and for standing with us during this year of disasters.



Be the change

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