

## RECOVERY WILL TAKE YEARS

PAKISTAN Floods 2010- Latest Update - 25 August 2010

The recovery from the floods which have wiped out villages, bridges, roads, crops, livestock and livelihoods will Pakistan probably take years. Pakistan faces now the challenges of securing aid, ensuring that militants do not use the catastrophe to recruit members and trying to diminish the long-term economic pain.

As agriculture is the main pillar of Pakistan's economy it is disastrous, that the floods damaged at least 3.2 million ha of crops. The fragile economy in Pakistan is now even more weakened. Pakistan already took out a \$11 billion loan in 2008, if the IMF will not ease the restrictions on that loan the country probably has no chance to recover from this economic crisis. Pakistan's government has to reallocate investments toward higher priorities and find ways to mobilize resources, in times with a growing humanitarian crisis, widespread damage to food crops and infrastructure, lower tax revenues and misgivings among donors about corruption.

As the devastating floods are now affecting a third of the country and about 20 million people, the fear that Islamic militants are taking advantage out of this human crisis is great. Pakistan's army had to move some troops and helicopters from the fight against the Taliban to rescue and relief operations in the flooded regions. This possibly weakens the military push against militants allowing them to regroup.



While the pressure against the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan is weakened by the catastrophe, the 1.7 million afghan refugees in Pakistan are severely affected by the floods. The authorities don't feel responsible for them; they are considered as a security risk and may have contacts to the Taliban bringing insecurity into the bearings.

The phenomena causing the extensive monsoon rains in Pakistan, called La Niña, can be linked to the ongoing climate change. La Niña or also El Niño, have been occurring with more frequency and intensity since the 1970s. The global warming has warmed the water of the Indian Ocean by two degrees since the 1970s. That heats up the air, allowing it to hold more moisture. This temperature anomaly strengthened the wind. And that has implications for the current situation in Pakistan. The now strengthened rainy wind penetrated into the northwest of the country much more than usual, bringing an extra eight percent of water into the monsoon system. This extra bit of water causes devastation and is already called the 'new' normal by some weather experts.

Source: Reuters.com