

# Pakistan Flood Incident Reporting System

<http://pakrelief.crowdmap.com/>

---

## Introduction

Devastating floods in Pakistan have claimed over 1600 lives and displaced over 18 million -- or 1 out of every 10 people in the country -- and the disaster shows no sign of abating. Significant resources are flowing into the region to provide immediate relief. But access to relevant, up-to-date, timely, and authentic data from the affected communities, specifying the hardest-hit areas and precise locations of displacement, remains elusive. These gaps in data gathering disrupt initiatives for immediate assistance and for long-term policy planning. To overcome such gaps, **Pakistan Flood Incident Reporting** (<http://pakrelief.crowdmap.com>) was launched immediately after the recent floods. PakRelief CrowdMap, as it is known, is a data portal designed to gather comprehensive and dynamic information on disaster-related variables. The website identifies key information to facilitate better long-term policy analysis.

Because Pakistan enjoys a broad and burgeoning mobile phone user base, mobiles and SMS are the best way to reach large numbers of people. This is especially true in crisis situations where, as in some areas, only cell phone service remains accessible. PakRelief CrowdMap is a direct connection to individuals on the ground level, and allows these individuals to report and access information through easy-to-read maps. **PakRelief simplifies this process: individuals in flood-affected regions can report on the current situation by sending an SMS to 3441.** Humanitarian organizations and relief workers are also encouraged to submit information, either by using SMS, using the online form at <http://pakrelief.crowdmap.com/reports/submit>, or by e-mailing the administrators. To verify the reports, a team of administrators review the received information, update it where necessary, and publish it on the CrowdMap. The administrators are a team of collaborators with significant experience in coordinating global disaster situations.

## Main Components of the Portal

This backend of this portal is based on Ushahidi, an open source software developed for tracking spatial-temporal data. Numerous global projects effectively employ Ushahidi's reliable and easy-to-use technology, including users in Haiti, Nigeria, Gaza, and India. The platform has been used to support a variety of information flows, including disasters, ethnic and political conflicts, and election results. News outlets and media recognize Ushahidi's invaluable contributions to data organization and filtering. See

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/08/145623.htm>  
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/135519.htm>

and

The development of PakRelief CrowdMap unfolded in three key stages:

- ***Technology:***  
The first stage of development involved acquiring the code and integrating it into an online portal. Because of the rapid response time of the initial organizers, this was completed on 12 August 2010.
- ***Spread the Message:***  
The second stage involves spreading the message throughout affected and assisting communities. Currently, the team is focused on designing campaigns to encourage flood-affected victims to contribute to the CrowdMap. The team also seeks to partner with news agencies and humanitarian organizations to create a comprehensive map.
- ***Moderate and Map Reports:***  
The third stage requires the timely verification of reports to the CrowdMap platform. Moderators, equipped with experience from previous deployments of the platform in Haiti and Kenya, will ensure that this process is efficient, effective, and fool-proof.

## Role of Humanitarian Organizations

- ***Help us spread the message:***  
The message is simple: **text your location and your observations about the disaster to 3441, starting the message with "FL", so we can map your reports.** Disseminate this message through small cards printed in multiple languages, and distribute the cards to local staff, camps, and alongside the supply of food and medicines in the area. Please publicize this message in online, radio, and newspaper campaigns as well. This above message can be disseminated by printing small cards in multiple languages which can be distributed through the local staff, camps and with the supply of food and medicines in the area. Additionally, the organizations can publicize this message in their campaigns on website, radio, and newspapers also.
- ***Submit and use information from the CrowdMap:***  
Humanitarian agencies will undoubtedly observe first-hand the current situation and needs in disaster-affected areas. **Please upload these observations and this valuable information on the portal to ensure that all stakeholders and agencies in the area can benefit from cooperation.**

Humanitarian agencies can also subscribe to the CrowdMap, receiving verified reports to supplement their own information and to send to their staff.

- ***Verify the Reports:***

Humanitarian organizations can also help our team to moderate the reports submitted to the portal. This collaboration will help avoid misleading reports from tainting the data.

## How Individuals Can Help

If you are an individual working in a disaster-affected region, please provide information on your location and its current status as regularly as possible. Even if you are not in the field, your knowledge is valuable! If you are aware of damage done to a certain location, you can report that information through SMS, e-mail, or on the website.

## Report Categories

Information on the website can be submitted based on the following main categories:

- Water and sanitation
- Health
- Logistics
- Camps
- Shelter
- Protection
- Vital Lines
- Emergency
- Service Available

Some of these categories are further stratified which the users can browse online at <http://pakrelief.crowdmap.com/>.

## Key Team Members

The current team members are from following organizations and institutes. The details of the team members will be added on website soon.

- **Mr. Faisal Chohan:** Founder BrightSpyre & Cogilent Solutions. Senior Fellow at TED.
- **Mr. Patrick Meier:** Director of Crisis Mapping and Strategic Partnerships Ushahidi. PhD Candidate at The Fletcher School, Tufts University.
- **Mr. Jonas Welton:** Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Candidate at The Fletcher School, Tufts University as a Fulbright Scholar.
- **Mr. Ali Asjad Naqvi:** Candidate for PhD in Economics, New School for Social Research (New York, USA).
- **Mr. Imad Ahmed:** Master of International Business Candidate at The Fletcher School, Tufts University and at HEC School of Management in Paris as a Schmidheiny Global Business Scholar.
- **Dr. Awab Alvi:** Pakistani dentist, blogger and Fellow at TED.
- **Nabiha Syed:** Yale Law School, J.D. 2010 Marshall Scholar, Oxford University, 2010-2011.
- **Dania Khan:** Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Candidate at The Fletcher School, Tufts University as a Fulbright Scholar.
- **Maria Hasan:** Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Candidate at The Fletcher School, Tufts University as a Fulbright Scholar.
- **Fatima Jafri:** Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Candidate at The Fletcher School, Tufts University and JD Candidate from Columbia Law School.
- **Rizwan Ladha:** Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Candidate at The Fletcher School, Tufts University.
- **Sabah Khan:** Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Candidate at The Fletcher School, Tufts University.
- **Bilal Baloch:** Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Candidate at The Fletcher School, Tufts University.
- **Daniyal Noorani:** Business Developer, Metabolix Inc.

The project is lead and supported by Cogilent Solutions. SMS support and infrastructure for the project is provided by Digitania Pakistan.

## Contact Us

**Email:** [pkfloods@brightspyre.com](mailto:pkfloods@brightspyre.com) or [pkfloods@gmail.com](mailto:pkfloods@gmail.com)

**Address:** #51, street 36, F 6/1, Islamabad