

Relief action in Pakistan

It will be recalled that as a result of the conflict in September 1965 between India and Pakistan considerable displacements took place on both sides of the frontier separating the two States. Fleeing in front of the advancing enemy, the inhabitants of several exposed areas had to fall hurriedly back to the rear, often without being able to take anything with them.

In Kashmir, thousands of families crossed the cease-fire line, seeking refuge in the part of that country under Pakistan control.

The extreme want in which these persons found themselves induced the International Committee of the Red Cross to launch an appeal to National Societies inviting them to come to their aid in both India and Pakistan.

The report published below gives a list of relief sent to the Pakistan Red Cross, either direct or through the ICRC. The action undertaken in conjunction with the Indian Red Cross will shortly be described in the International Review.

1. DESPATCH OF RELIEF TO THE VICTIMS OF THE CONFLICT IN PAKISTAN

The value of medical relief (plasma, blood count kits, medicines) sent at the beginning of September 1965 to the Pakistan Red Cross amounted to 57,030 Sw.frs.

This relief came from the Netherlands Red Cross (17,630 Swiss francs), from the Swiss Red Cross (5,000 Sw.frs.), from the Swiss Confederation (20,000 Sw.frs.) and from the ICRC (14,400 Sw.frs.).

Before the ICRC launched its appeal, the despatch of relief in kind for refugees—new and used clothing—was already announced for a value of 208,944 Sw.frs. (Swedish Red Cross: 60,000 frs., Swiss Red Cross: 15,000 frs. and the Canadian Red Cross: 133,944 frs.

Kashmir
refugees
in 1965.



Mobile dispensaries offered by the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John to the medical mission of the Pakistan Red Cross in Kashmir.



INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

As a result of the appeal made on November 6, 1965, on behalf of refugees, 18 National Societies and one Government informed the ICRC that they would make contributions in cash to Geneva for a value of 194,266 Sw.frs. (Norway, Australia, German Federal Republic, Luxemburg, Japan, Liechtenstein, Denmark, South Africa, Great Britain, Switzerland and the Swiss Confederation, France, Syria, New Zealand, Monaco, El Salvador, Thailand, South Korea, Lebanon), whilst the American Red Cross transferred to the Pakistan Red Cross an amount of \$5000, viz. 21,500 Sw.frs.

Funds received in Geneva and goods placed at the disposal of the ICRC have enabled the following relief supplies to be despatched to the Pakistan Red Cross, all freight charges paid as far as Karachi :

1,200	jackets for boys	
5,593	woollen blankets	
350	towels	
4,152	pullovers for girls	
124	foam mattresses	
305	kgs. cloth	
355	kgs. medical material (medicines, surgical instruments, sanitary appliances)	
2	Landrovers, equipped as first-aid posts	
250,000	Protovit tablets	
9,500	kgs. powdered milk	
2,000	kgs. cheese	
	to a total value of <u>338,000 frs.</u>	

Eight National Red Cross Societies sent relief in kind direct to Karachi. These were as follows :

<i>Australian Red Cross</i>	clothing for women and children, medicines	Sw.frs. 9,400.—
<i>Netherlands Red Cross</i>	food for infants	10,600.—
<i>American Red Cross</i>	clothing for children	21,500.—
<i>British Red Cross</i>	clothing for children and adults	15,212.—
<i>German Red Cross in the German Democratic Republic</i>	tents, blankets	35,000.—

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

*German Red Cross in
the Federal Republic
of Germany*

food for children in bottles 5,500.—

Swiss Red Cross blankets, clothing 37,336.—

Finnish Red Cross vitamin tablets 5,000.—

Total value of relief despatched direct to Karachi
by National Societies Sw.frs. 139,548.—

Thus the Pakistan Red Cross has benefited from aid to the victims of the Kashmir conflict to an overall amount of 743,522 Sw.frs. (In this figure the transfer of \$5,000 by the American Red Cross is not included.)

2. DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF

a) Aid to the wounded

On their arrival in Karachi, about a week after the outbreak of hostilities, emergency medical relief supplies were re-forwarded by the Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Pakistan Red Cross to the Head of the Army Medical Services for wounded undergoing treatment in field hospitals.

b) Assistance to refugees

The distress of the displaced population and refugees at once aroused a great movement of solidarity throughout the country.¹ The West Branch of the Pakistan Red Cross deployed, in liaison with local charitable organizations, remarkable activity, collecting and amassing a considerable amount of relief of all sorts in every town and village.

The Government, for its part, took various emergency measures for the purpose of making a systematic census of all refugees and providing them as rapidly as possible with temporary shelter and the means of subsistence. To this end, it took over the entire dis-

¹ *Plate. Refugees in Kashmir in 1965.*

tribution of relief collected, supplementing this from time to time with small quantities of wheat and cash to each head of families.

As opposed to those returning to their own homes when, as a result of the Tashkent Agreement, troops on both sides re-occupied their former positions, refugees in Pakistan Kashmir were unable to return to their villages of origin. Their re-establishment in an already over-populated region whose inhabitants are extremely poor, resulted therefore in raising a number of arduous problems which are still far from being resolved.

In agreement with the authorities, the Pakistan Red Cross and the delegates of the ICRC, relief sent by National Societies was therefore directed to Pakistan Kashmir where needs of long-term assistance showed themselves to be the most acute. These supplies were distributed in the Poonch, Mirpur and Muzaffarabad districts where official census returns revealed a figure of more than 130,000 refugees at the beginning of the year 1966. On several occasions, delegates, accompanied by representatives of the Pakistan Red Cross, visited distribution centres which they noticed each time were well organized and efficiently run.

The two mobile dispensaries, acquired thanks to a generous contribution of the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John, arrived in Karachi on August 18.¹ They were handed over to the Medical Mission of the Pakistan Red Cross for Azad Kashmir to which has fallen the heavy task of bringing medical aid to refugees for the most part scattered over a vast mountainous area not easily accessible.

¹ *Plate.* Mobile dispensaries offered by the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John to the medical mission of the Pakistan Red Cross in Kashmir.