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PAKISTAN

CASE STUDY

9,000 Families Build Shelters

USAID helps earthquake-affected families build stronger shelters



Photo: ACTED

This man from Paras village in Kaghan Valley built a new winter shelter and sanitation facility using money and supplies provided by USAID.

“We will not make the same mistakes as before” says Sultan ur-Arifeen, a Daryal resident who supervised the construction of 32 new shelters in his village.

Telling Our Story
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Challenge

Most families in the mountainous Mansehra District in northern Pakistan’s North West Frontier Province lost their homes in the October 2005 earthquake. With winter approaching, there was an urgent need for temporary shelter and for sanitation systems that would reduce the risk of diseases spreading.

Initiative

USAID helped provide building materials to more than 6,200 households in the Siran and Konch Valleys and gave families \$70 for essential goods. In the neighboring Kaghan Valley, 3,000 families received shelter supplies used to construct temporary homes and sanitation facilities. Supplies included woodworking tools, plastic sheets, corrugated iron, a stove, and bedding. After they built their shelters, many families were able to leave relief camps and return home.

Results

With USAID’s help, 9,200 families in the Mansehra district built earthquake-resistant shelters with wooden walls and tin roofs rather than traditional houses with stone and mud. They also constructed sanitation facilities nearby. “People were hammering away until 10 at night,” said Sultan ur-Arifeen, who supervised the construction of 32 shelters in his 2,600-person village, Daryal, in Siran Valley. Everyone pitched in, he said. Women collected flat stones and sculpted a low mud base for the wooden shelter frame while men did the woodwork. “This is the first time we’ve helped construct a home,” said Sabiha Khanum, a Daryal woman. “We did it because we wanted to help.” USAID’s shelter program helped families build structures resistant to future jolts and provided them with a warm place in which to survive the winter while they gathered the resources to rebuild permanent homes. Also, the new sanitation facilities close to shelters improve hygiene and accessibility to safe drinking water. At the same time, the money they earned through USAID’s cash-for-work projects helped families buy essential goods and jumpstarted the local economy.