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Law Department
Government of Sindh

Evolving Needs of Flood Affectees: an Evidence Driven Response Framework

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SLACC

Sindh Legal Advisory Call Center

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Starting in June of 2022, unprecedented amounts of rainfall in the monsoon season caused both riverine and flash floods that affected and displaced millions of people in Pakistan. The disaster impacted both rural and urban areas across the country, with Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Gilgit Baltistan and South Punjab having been severely affected.

Approximately
33 
million people

have been affected by the **2022 floods**,

with an estimated
8 
million people

still exposed to floodwaters.

Many thousands remain displaced from their homes, with the spread of water-borne diseases including malaria, cholera, and dengue fever further aggravating the crisis in flood-affected districts.

With Pakistan being ranked the eighth most vulnerable country to climate change as per the Global Climate Risk Index 2021, it is paramount that we develop climate change resilient processes and systems for the future. Keeping in mind the context of Pakistan's historical experiences with climate related disasters including a similar flood in 2010, and projected future risks of climate disasters, the findings of this report can aid in pre-empting concerns that arise in the months following the floods and in putting forward recommendations for more effective disaster management.

This brief utilizes data from the Sindh Legal Advisory Call Center (SLACC) as of January 2023 to assess the nature of issues faced by people living in flood affected districts of Sindh and Balochistan. The brief further refers to data pertaining to the 2010 floods in order to identify medium and long term issues that arise as a result of natural disasters, particularly in the context of Pakistan, to project and prepare for future consequences of the recent floods. Our findings reveal that while financial aid and access to basic facilities is the top-most immediate priority for flood affected individuals, medium and long-term concerns focus on land ownership of property as a result of loss and damages to property and loss of civil documentation.



METHODOLOGY

This study uses a mixed-methods approach for trend analysis whereby data collected by the SLACC is quantitatively studied for the identification of immediate legal concerns arising in the aftermath of the 2022 floods. The study also makes qualitative references to legal concerns reported to SLACC by affectees of the 2010 floods in the years following in order to establish medium to long term needs of the affected population.

SLACC utilizes a customized Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that documents queries received and legal advice offered by the lawyers with a detailed multi-level categorization system.

For this study, data collected by SLACC between 14th June 2022 – the start of the floods – to 31st January 2023 was quantitatively assessed, covering the time period during the flooding and few months post disaster. The research was narrowed to 24 heavily flood affected districts and cities in Sindh and Balochistan. The following are the identified districts:

In Balochistan:

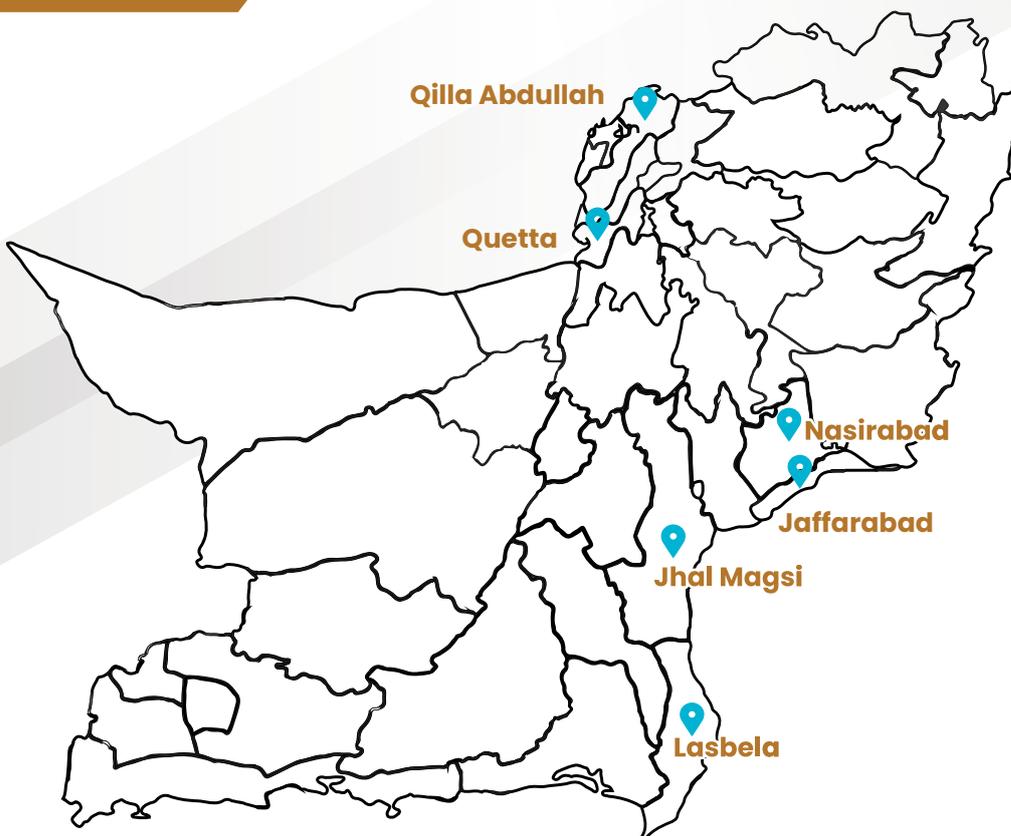


Fig 1: Identified districts in Balochistan

In Sindh

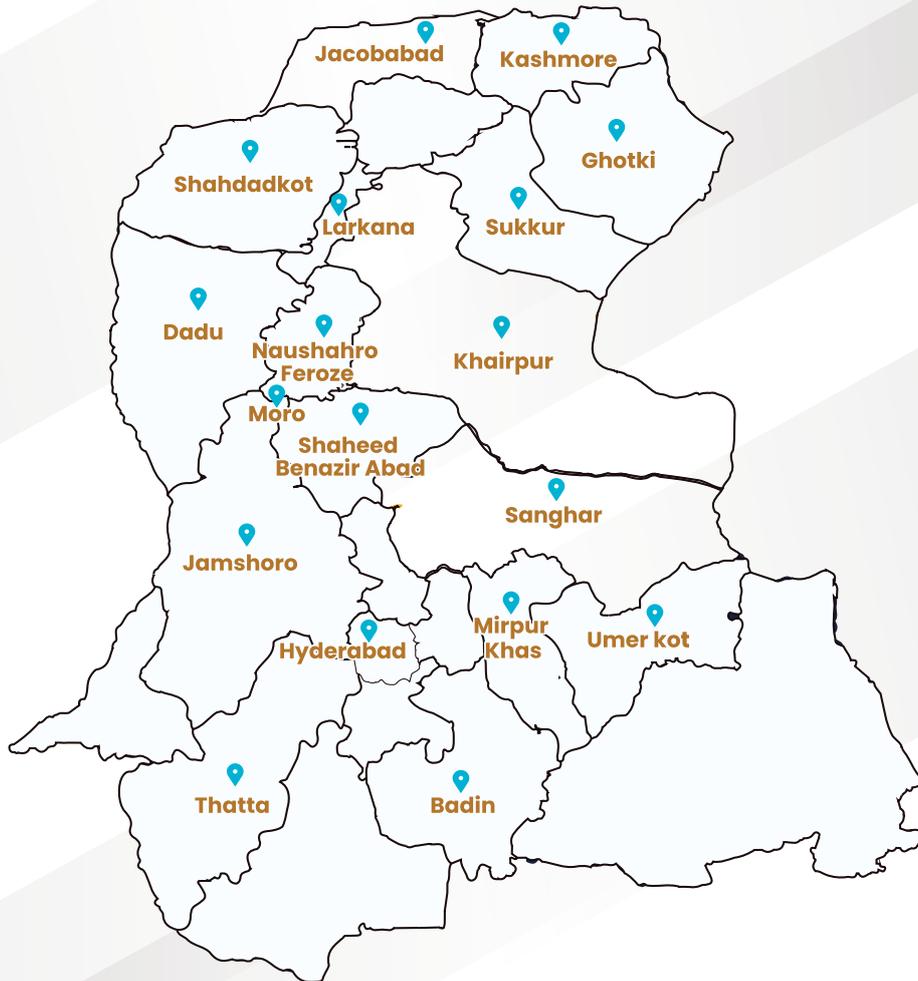
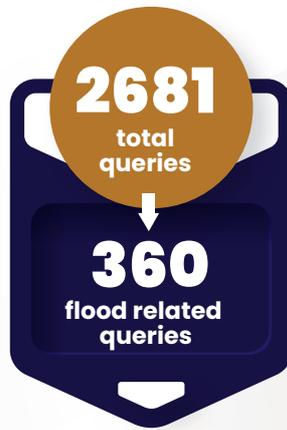


Fig 2: Identified districts in Sindh

Within the dataset, queries are categorized along with details of the reported concern and the solution offered, and demographic information such as district and gender of caller. A total of **2,681** queries were identified during this time period from these districts, spanning the categories of Civil, Criminal, and Public Service Matters.

For the purpose of this study, these queries were narrowed down into those which were related to the floods. All flood related queries were identified and tagged through a qualitative audit, which were then further analyzed to provide a snapshot of types of concerns and demographics of callers. This led to a final dataset of **360** queries.

Since each query may refer to multiple issues arising as a result of the floods, this study further disaggregated queries into **599** specific issues which formed our unit of analysis.



**Final Unit of Analysis:
599 issues**

Fig 3: Funneling of quantitative data into unit of analysis

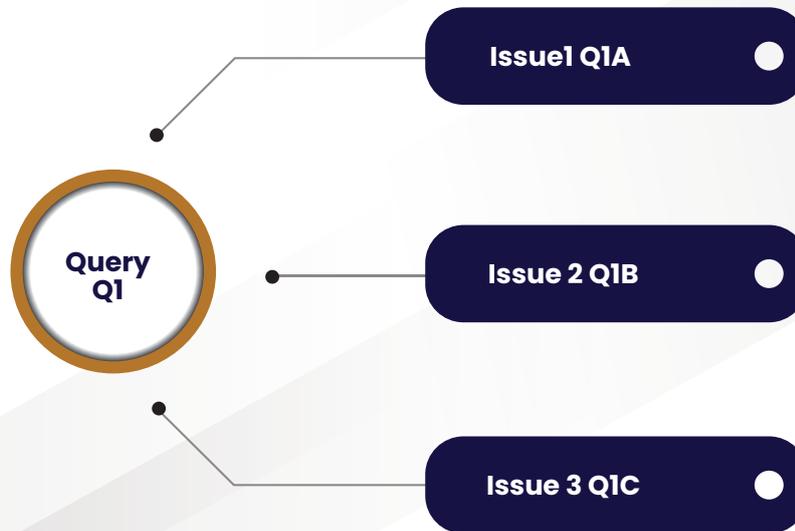


Fig 4: Categorization of flood related queries into flood related issues



In addition, a small sample of SLACC queries with legal issues relating to the devastating floods of **2010** were also identified. These ranged from February **2018** to March **2022**, with most callers originating from Sindh, and a smaller number from Punjab and KP. Since SLACC was not established until **2014**, one limitation of this study is the inability to comparatively assess immediate real-time needs of the **2022** floods with the **2010** floods. We have, however, continued to receive queries from affectees of the **2010** floods requesting legal aid and assistance many years post floods, which has allowed us to chart out the evolution of flood related concerns from the immediate aftermath to the medium and long run. Largely, the queries identified concerned on-going property disputes, financial issues, and loss of legal identification documents all stemming from the floods of **2010** and **2011**. Lastly, a detailed literature review was carried out to triangulate findings and develop a systematic response framework for future flood disasters.

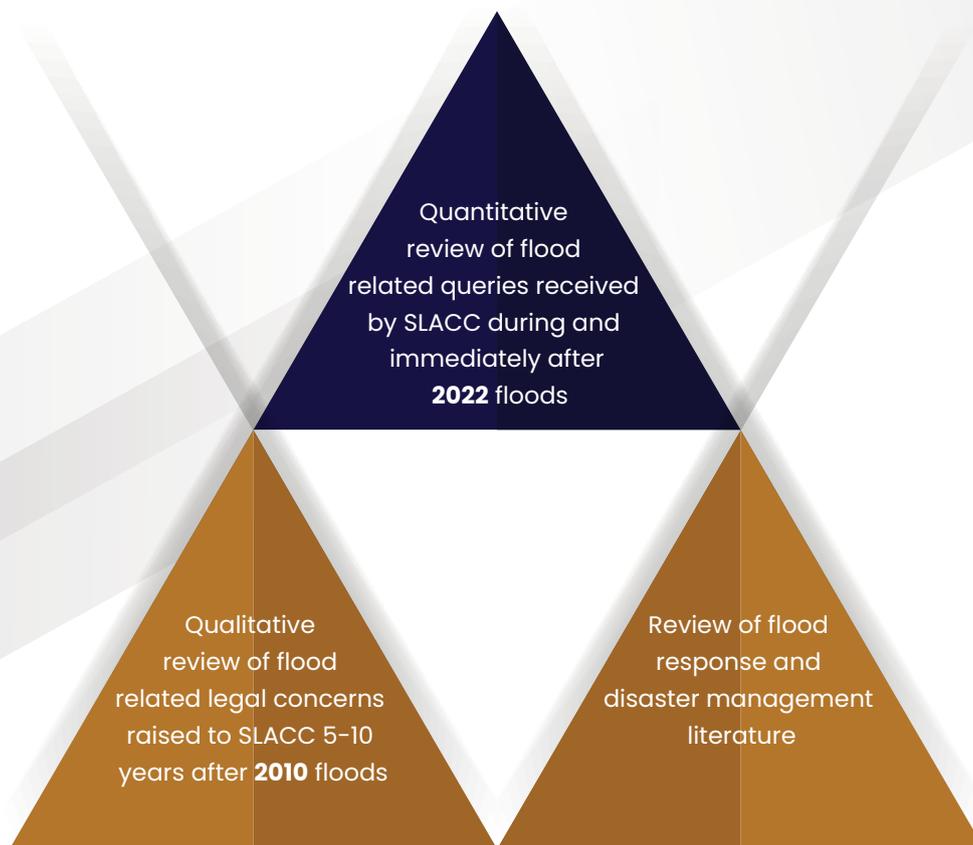
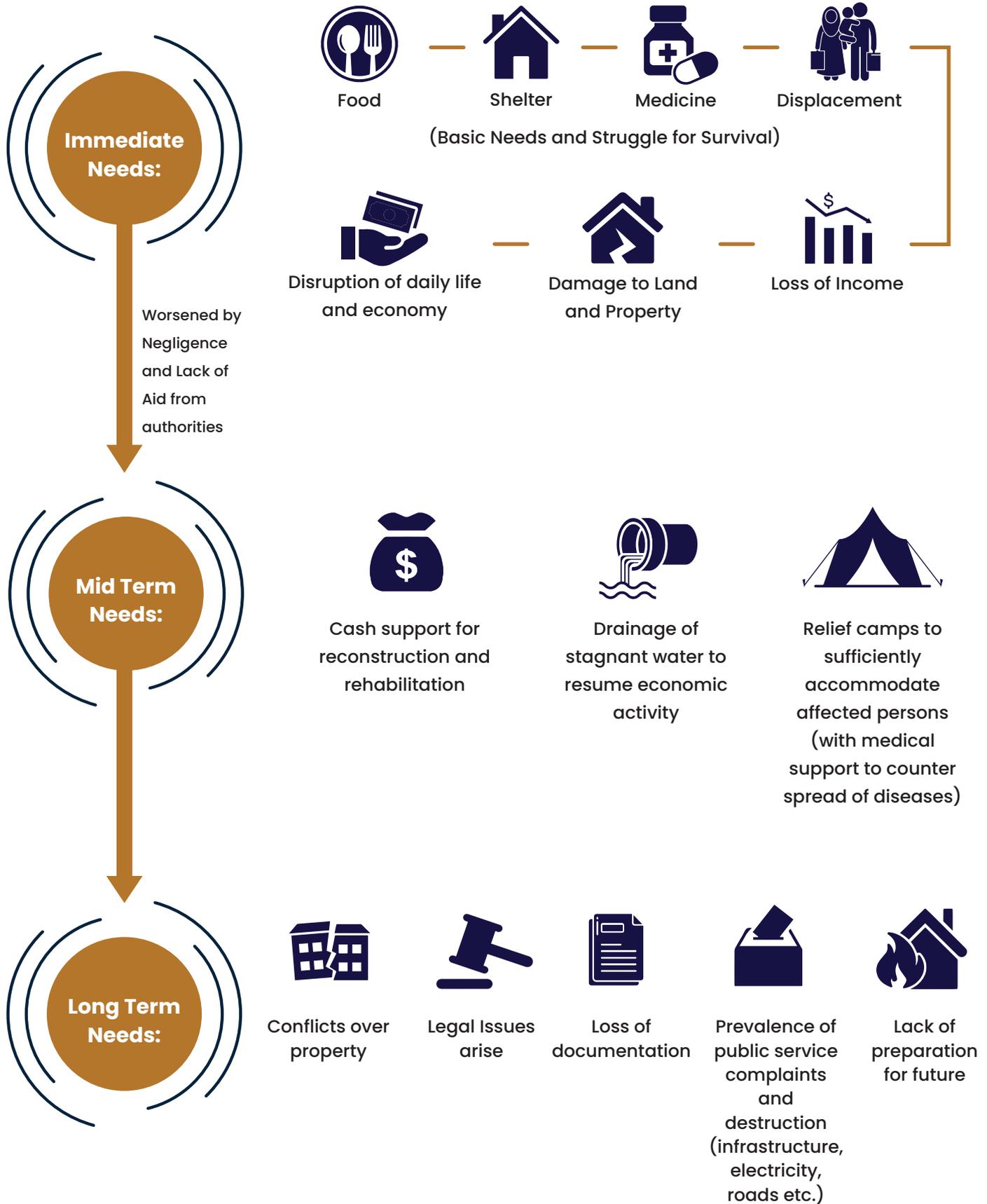


Fig 5: Triangulation methodology for identification of short term and medium to long term needs of flood affectees

SELF REPORTED NEEDS OF FLOOD VICTIMS

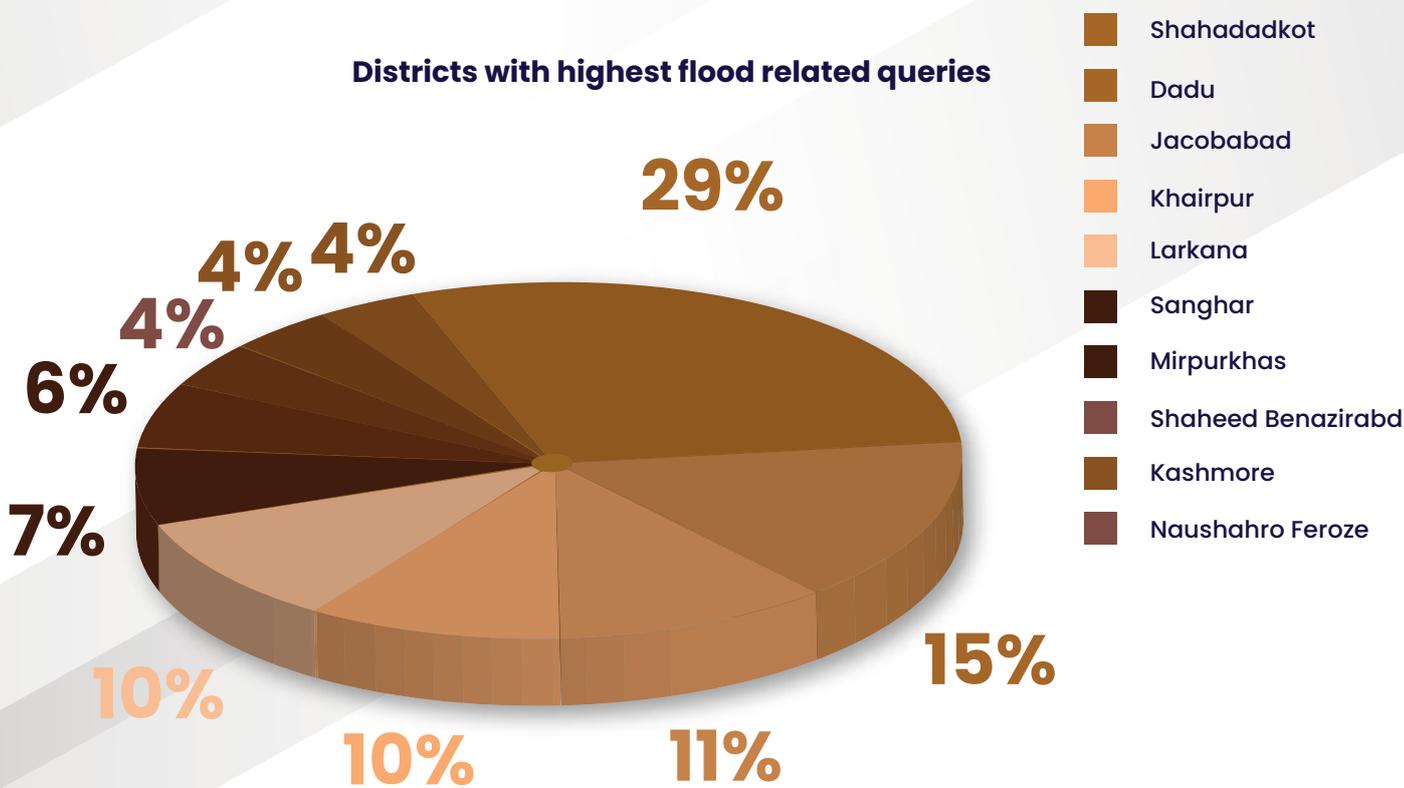


KEY FINDINGS: EVOLUTION OF NEEDS OF FLOOD AFFECTEES

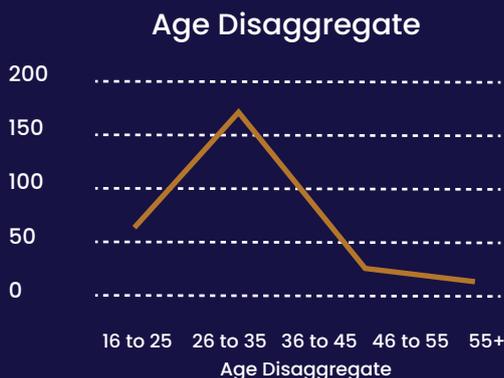
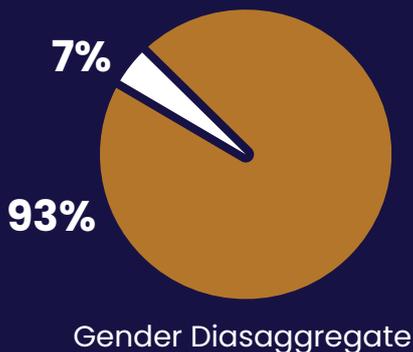
Immediate Needs:

Between 14th June 2022 and 31st January 2023, SLACC advocates responded to **360** queries relating to the floods across **24** highly impacted districts. This dataset was then further broken down to analyze caller demographics and types of aid requested, with **599** total flood related issues identified.

Figure 6 shows the district breakdown of callers with Shahadadkot, Dadu, and Jacobabad reporting the highest proportion of flood-related issues.



An overwhelming majority of callers were male (93%), while an age disaggregate shows that two-third (65%) callers were under 35 years of age.



Analyzing query categorization reveals that there were 8 types of issues being most commonly cited by flood affectees during and immediately after the floods. These were:

1. Rations, Food & Immediate Aid
2. Financial Aid
3. Complaint of negligence and lack of aid from Govt. and Relief bodies
4. Property & Land Damage
5. Flooded Area
6. Displacement & need for shelter
7. Medicine
8. Govt. Income Support Programs (BISP/Ehsaas)

A breakdown of these issues, as shown below, reveals that the largest proportion of reported concerns



pertained to requests for immediate flood relief in terms of rations and food.



pertained to requests for financial assistance,

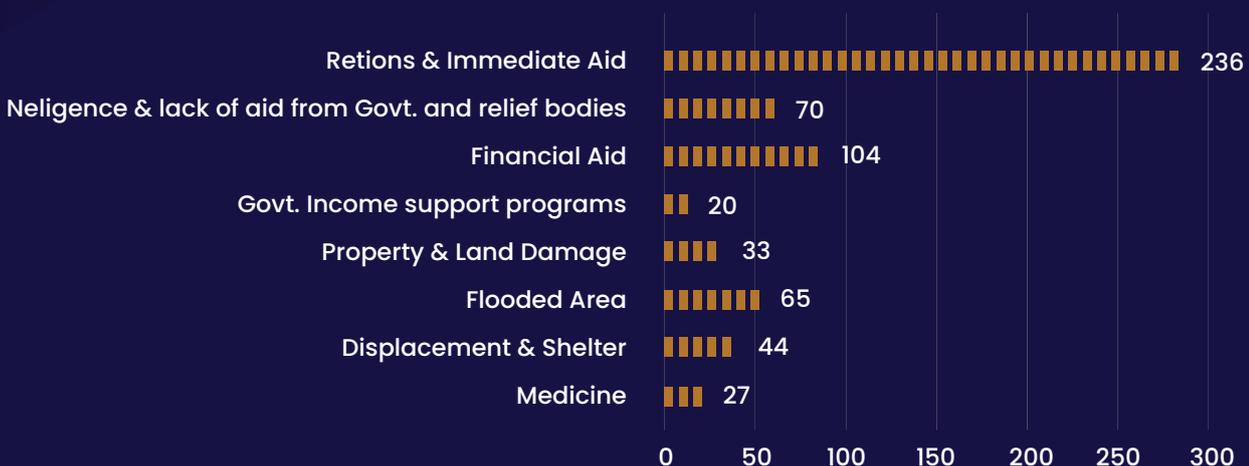


on lack of relief offered, and



referred to flooding in the caller's area and lack of drainage of stagnant water.

Issues Raised By Callers



These complaints remained common even towards the end of the collected data period, as villages and individuals remained unsupported as late as December 2022 and January 2023. A significant number of callers –16 in December and 11 in January – requested immediate aid such as rations, indicating that many individuals were still on the first step of the post disaster rehabilitation stage despite months having passed since the country was affected. It is important to note that the longer individuals still struggle with basic survival needs without sufficient help, the longer it will take for communities and economies to return back to their normal state.

Additionally, **12%** of the concerns pertained to lack of aid from the government with callers citing a lack of support from bodies such as PDMA and various NGOs, alongside lack of responses from government officials such as district commissioners who were supposed to provide aid in the affected areas. This indicates that the current immediate flood response mechanism is not sufficient to support all affected persons, and lags from bodies of authority are a significant problem that needs to be addressed.

Loss of shelter and displacement was also a key need reported in our findings. **7%** of flood related issues in the affected areas were regarding displacement or need of shelter and an additional 6% related to destruction of property. This directly leads into requests for financial aid to overcome this damage. Cash assistance was also reported as the topmost priority according to an early recovery needs identification (ERNI) report by the Pakistan International Rescue Committee (PIRC). If given cash assistance, **83%** stated they would use it for shelter reconstruction. When not addressed sufficiently, lack of shelter is often prolonged into a mid to long-term issue.



Medium to Long Term Needs:

At the onset of the floods, immediate needs related to basic survival are generally seen as the priority. However, SLACC data from 2018 onwards that pertained to affectees of the 2010 and 2011 floods revealed that long-term issues post-disaster include those related to reconstruction, rehabilitation, civil documentation, and other legal concerns which were previously overlooked.

Property disputes were a common legal issue reported by affectees of the 2010 floods, with multiple callers stating that their land was illegally possessed by another following the floods, and often due to the legal landowner being displaced from their land at the time of the floods



March, 2018. Badin, Sindh.

Caller A stated that he had not been provided any house or financial support for reconstruction of his property which was destroyed seven years prior, although he had lodged several complaints to the concerned district commissioner.

Along with destruction of vital land, floods may also lead to land records being destroyed, boundaries and demarcations being erased, and titleholders being killed. Destruction of records, including land titles, identity cards, insurance claims, and business records, can result in conflicting claims making redistribution of land ownership difficult. As during floods, boundaries and other reference marks may disappear causing the issue of identification of property to be exacerbated. Clean-up operations may further destroy any remaining physical markings on land.



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The scale of this issue is evident according to the PIRC report, which observed substantial damage to infrastructure, settlement, and shelter in the aftermath of the floods. In the 10 districts surveyed, **70%** of houses were fully destroyed and **29%** were partially damaged. This was even greater in Balochistan, with **76%** of the population reporting full destruction of houses, and in Sindh with **73%** fully destroyed. Most of these people require urgent assistance for reconstruction and repair, with **44%** of individuals preferring to build a new house and **46%** preferring to repair their existing houses.

Therefore, for the purposes of inheritance, loss of civil documentation and damage to physical land can greatly hamper the process and often lead to illegal possession of property. Problems caused by access to documentation can also obstruct access to assistance on a broader level if left unaddressed. In fact, to receive assistance, populations affected by disaster usually need to be able to demonstrate their identity, where they come from, and what legally belonged to them. It is also a prerequisite to the recognition of multiple other rights and access to public services, including healthcare, education, and freedom of movement along with housing, making it absolutely essential to achieving relief and assistance.



September, 2019. Chakwal, Sindh.

Caller B lost his parents in a flood at the age of 6. He has no birth certificate or any relevant documents, and he only knows the name of parents. With no affidavit from his landlord, he is facing difficulties getting a national identity card.

Despite the passing of over a decade, affectees of the 2010 floods continue to deal with unresolved cases with consequences that are far reaching and have potential impact on future generations. Understanding the evolution of needs of flood affectees is important because it indicates the likelihood of further issues emerging in the long run as a result of the recent 2022 floods, unless a systematic response is developed and implemented.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

	Sr No	Identified Intervention Needs	Proposed Action Items
Short Term Response	1	Food and Ration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening coordination between government institutes and humanitarian actors for mapping of flood affected regions and development of cohesive, coordinated relief provision operation - Review and identification of target districts of active humanitarian relief organizations for mapping of overlapping and missed districts - Identifying community ambassadors for mapping of most vulnerable individuals with restricted access to relief operations (these include women only HHs where mobility is restricted, HHs with elderly, HHs with disabled, HHs with young children, and HHs with lost civil documentation etc.) - Assessing high risk communities for routes and access to closest relief points. Ensuring adequate measures are taken for alternate routes/ transportation for food, ration, and cash disbursement - Ensuring that alternate criteria/ means of verification are established for disbursement of relief matter to individuals without civil documentation/ those that have lost civil documentation as a result of the floods
	2	Financial Aid 	

Short Term Response

	Sr No	Identified Intervention Needs	Proposed Action Items
	3	Shelter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening coordination between state bodies and humanitarian actors involved in shelter provision to minimize unregulated shelter facilities - Formulating safety SOPs to ensure that all shelter facilities account for safety of women and children (including availability of lights, separate toilet facilities etc.) - Identifying community focal persons for mapping of local support personnel such as LHWs, teachers, midwives, spiritual elders for development of a sustainable ecosystem with the shelter facilities
	4	Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying support personnel from within communities (LHWs, midwives, gynaecologists etc.) to create web of immediate and sustainable health response mechanism - Identifying special needs of vulnerable population in shelters to ensure provision of adequate medical facilities - Ensuring access to basic hygiene and sanitary products for women and girls - Proactively ensuring that all shelter facilities are capacitated to deal with outbreak of water borne diseases such as diarrhea or malaria etc. - Ensuring that all shelter facilities are equipped to deal with maternal and neo natal emergencies

Mid Term Response

	Sr No	Identified Intervention Needs	Proposed Action Items
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that shelters follow COVID protocols to minimize risk of outbreak
	5	<p>Health Deflooding/ Drainage of Stagnant Water</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mapping of a de-watering route, with clear strategy on community-wise drainage of water with minimal damage to surrounding communities - Developing a de-watering strategy in consultation with technical experts to integrate into country's flood management response policy - Ensuring drainage of stagnant water from agricultural land to encourage sustainable models of financial and food security - Ensuring availability of de-watering pumps on a community-sharing basis - Identifying relevant individuals (those with basic understanding of mechanical/electrical work) within communities for a Master Training on handling and operating of de-watering pumps to build in-community capacities
	6	<p>Reconstruction and Rehabilitation</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating and maintaining a systematic database on internal displacement (Pakistan Meteorological Department, SPARCO) to help with the rehabilitation process - Ensuring that flood relief operations are designed with a focus on sustainability by providing employment and capacity building opportunities to the affectees

Mid Term Response

	Sr No	Identified Intervention Needs	Proposed Action Items
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that communities are re-imagined with a focus on climate-resilient design and restructuring - Use of sustainable and climate-resilient material in the repair and rebuilding of houses - Systematic mapping of households in need of repair toolkits and construction materials as well as cash assistance for support of the repair process. Cash assistance to be provided to families to allow for procurement of tools and materials based on their specific needs
	7	Recovery of lost documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing SOPs for waivering requirements for documentation recovery of flood affectees - NADRA to ensure special protections for those affected by floods for recovery of documentation, i.e., online portal or system designed with limited prerequisites and requirements for document recovery - NADRA to set-up registration desks inside relief camps for easy access - Facilitating and expediting documentation recovery process for women with special considerations such as unavailability of head of family etc. by amending current procedural requirements - Land authorities in districts (+ land tax collectors etc.) to ensure digital system for ownership documentation, to avoid dependency on physical papers which can be lost or destroyed during natural disasters

Long Term Response

	Sr No	Identified Intervention Needs	Proposed Action Items
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scaling UNICEF's phone birth registration scheme by capacitating LHWs and midwives to register all home births and ensure that all newborns are provided with a birth certificate
	8	<p>Recuperation of public services</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mapping of impaired telecommunication and internet lines at a community level - Mapping of fully inundated locations and damaged roads and bridges - Coordination between relevant national, provincial, and district service providers for timely and targeted intervention - Essential public service facilities like education to be prioritized- education centers that were serving as make-shift relief shelters to be re-capacitated; continued analyses based on student-level tracking of access (enrollment and retention) and learning outcomes for development of evidence-based strategies to promote educational provisions for flood affectees in the long run - Facilitation of temporary restoration of connectivity and accessibility. PTA to issue guidelines for damaged infrastructure of telecommunication companies to be restored immediately, adhering to climate and disaster resilience standards. - Building more climate resilient infrastructure and buildings; telecommunication lines to adopt disaster resilient fibre

	Sr No	Identified Intervention Needs	Proposed Action Items
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Long Term Response</p>	9	<p>Dispute resolution for flood-impelled legal issues</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formulating clearly defined and equitable land rights especially in areas that are most vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters to promote investment in more climate resilient infrastructure - Renewing attention to land rights and security of tenure - Digitization of land records for future issues and disputes - Building capacity for Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms at the community levels for diversion of property and family related disputes from the formal court system - Providing access to legal representation for victims of violence/ damages

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