

Muslim Aid holds global handwashing day

Muslim Aid marked global handwashing day as the day echoes and reinforces its call for improved hygiene practices. The organisation hold simultaneous events with the participation of school children and the public. The activities demonstrated proper handwashing to prevent sickness and illnesses caused by virus.

Muslim Aid Country Director Khobaib A Vahedy said that Muslim Aid is working on various hygiene projects in the country and the organisation celebrated the day to remind the communities "Clean Hands Save Lives!"

He informed that Muslim Aid had organised various awareness and training sessions in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Mardan, Mansehra, Bagh, Badin, Shehzadkot and Karachi. Hygiene kits were distributed in Jalojai camp, Shehdadkot and Karachi to raise the importance and awareness of the day.

Global handwashing day was the centrepiece of a week of activities that mobilised school children in more than seven cities to wash their hands with soap, he added.

Muslim Aid taught and trained the communities to make it a habit to wash their hands before eating anything. If someone is not in the habit of washing the hands prior to meals, make a commitment to do so in the future on this special day, khobaib urged.

He said that most of people especially children do not realise the danger of eating without washing their hands and this habit causes transfer of germs into our system by eating with unwashed hands. Taking into consideration this fact, Muslim Aid declared a special training sessions to mark the day to wash hands!



Training sessions were being arranged to rise the importance of Global Handwashing Day.

Balochistan earthquake

'Muslim Aid relief & rehab work continues in quake zone'

Muslim Aid Country Director, Khobaib A Vahedy stressed the need for strengthening the disaster response system through institutional capacity building for a timely response to deal with major disasters.

He was speaking at a function to commemorate 1st anniversary of October 29, 2008 Balochistan earthquake tragedy that killed 350 people, destroyed hundred of houses that left 15,000 people homeless. He said that Muslim Aid had evolved a multi-pronged strategy for a comprehensive and composite disaster response by focusing on preparedness, response, recovery and relief activities.

Vahedy said that Muslim Aid had chalked out a plan for preparedness and mitigation. He said we need to strengthen our early warning capacities, especially for droughts and floods, which occurred frequently and had high socioeconomic impact. He said an effective emergency response system was highly imperative for reducing the impact of disasters.

Safer hospitals and schools were vital to disaster risks reduction and for this purpose Muslim Aid is working on the mega

construction projects, he mentioned.

"In Balochistan, we are constructing 21 education and family welfare centres worth of 12 million rupees. We are in contact with the provincial health and education ministries for this purpose", he added. "This is extremely important to build schools keeping in view the importance of education and contributing towards Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)", Vahedy said.

He said disasters, directly or indirectly left catastrophic impact on every one, but the poor was hit hard. Majority of the affected families continued to live in the worn out makeshift shelters in Balochistan. Likewise, a good deal of basic infrastructure like houses, schools, hospitals and roads has yet to be built in quake zone.

For such people Muslim Aid constructed 300 seismic-resistant shelters in Wam, Tangi, Zindra and Zairat (Balochistan). All the seismic-resistant shelters were constructed as per the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) recommendations, he added.

As part of its Emergency Response & Earthquake Rehabilitation Programme, one of the mandated activities of the Muslim Aid is to serve the underprivileged regardless of creed and we are doing it in affected areas of the country including Balochistan, Vahedy said.

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