



AID: Children shelter from the rain under an umbrella among tents in a refugee camp in Muzaffarabad

Rebuilding efforts of charities go on

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Six months have passed since an earthquake struck Pakistan and parts of India killing thousands and leaving millions homeless.

Over that time Bradford residents have raised thousands of pounds for food, shelter, clothing and medical supplies to help survivors get on with their lives.

Bradford charities like the Human Relief Foundation and Islamic Relief have been working on the ground in the most devastated areas of Kashmir in the cities of Muzaffarabad, Balakot, Bagh and Rawalacot.

In addition many Bradford residents have been touched by the images of destruction they have seen in newspapers and on television and have taken aid there themselves.

The Telegraph & Argus South Asian earthquake appeal, which was set up in the days following the disaster, has so far raised a staggering £76,630.59, thanks to the generosity of readers.

Schools across the district have also helped to raise thousands of pounds for survivors by holding non-uniform days, sponsored events and bucket collections. Between them primary and secondary schools have raised in excess of £86,000.

The 7.6 magnitude earthquake – which struck on Saturday, October 8 – is estimated to have killed more than 73,000 people, injured a further 128,000 and left more than 3.5 million people homeless.

The earthquake not only destroyed buildings but it also caused considerable loss of agricultural land and much of the 2005 harvest was lost under the rubble. Many families were not able to plant winter wheat as usual because they were still in shock or were trying



SHELTER: A girl in a refugee camp in Muzaffarabad

Telegraph & Argus

SOUTH ASIA



to meet the immediate needs of their family.

Yousaf Razaq, project manager for the Human Relief Foundation based in Great Horton, explained that the charity had spent more than £150,000 providing food

and shelter for 2,116 living in a tent village on the banks of the River Neelam. Now the charity is looking to help families rebuild their homes over the next six months.

"I am very thankful to everyone in the Bradford community who has donated money but to continue to help these families who have lost everything we need everyone to dig deep and keep donating," said Mr Razaq.

Islamic Relief, which has a shop on Carlisle Road, is hosting a concert at St George's Hall on Friday, April 14, to raise funds for children affected by the

earthquake in Kashmir.

The concert features leading Islamic entertainers including Sami Yusuf and Zain Bhikha. Tickets for the Evening of Inspiration Concert are available by calling the box office on (01274) 432000.

To donate money to the Human Relief Foundation telephone on 08700 117 112 or go to www.hrf.co.uk.

Bradford Council is working on setting up its own charity to provide aid and support to survivors of the earthquake with guidance from the Pakistan Government. The board includes Ayaz Hussain, chairman of the Council for Pakistan, a representative from the Government of Kashmir and representatives from all political parties.

Once established the charity will focus on education, health and schools and helping people rebuild their communities.

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