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By Fatima Aal Amr

JEDDAH – Ten days after the floods, many Quwaizah residents still face an uphill struggle to get food and shelter.

"We've not received any assistance or food. I have three children and I don't know how I'm going to feed them," said Umm Jahra, a Pakistani woman.

Her husband, the Imam of the Al-Falah Mosque, echoed this view. "We have not received any assistance because we are foreigners. We need food and a house to live in," he said.

Hamida Muhammad Ali, a widow who has two sons and is living in a ramshackle house, said she has not found any food and water to feed her children.

She called on the authorities to provide them with shelter because her house was not fit to live in.

Faiza Muhammad Kabi, who is living in a dilapidated house with her old mother, said she has nothing left in her house. The floodwater spoiled all the furniture and clothes.

"We don't have enough money to refurbish our house. We are starving because of the disaster," she lamented.

Another woman, a widow in her forties with eight children, said everything in her house was polluted by mud and she does not have any food.

An old woman staying alone in a room of a broken-down house said she does not even have water to drink.

Nawal Abdoh, whose family has been displaced by the flood, said her house was on the verge of collapse and called on the authorities to provide her with a place to stay.

Fawzia Ahmad, another resident, was in the same situation, but added that help eventually came.

"We experienced difficult days because we didn't get a single day's meal. Also, we didn't have mattresses to sleep on. Nobody came to ask about our condition."

She pointed out that a number of volunteers were in the district to help the families. They were the first to provide assistance to the residents there, she said.

Yasser Ibrahim As'ad, a volunteer in the Patriotism Committee, said that they have been trying to help residents. "Our campaign started six days ago. We work from morning until evening to check the condition of residents in the flood-hit districts."

He said many families were provided with meals by the committee. So far they have distributed over 2,000 meals, mattresses, sanitary ware, medicines and blankets.

The volunteers have also made a list of all the needs of the flood-hit families, he said. They initially had 50 volunteers but now there were over 400, he said. "We are still looking for the needy families so we can help them," he said.

Leena Al-Ma'eena, a female volunteer, said she has also helped out despite her initial fear of disease. She has now called on more people to get involved.

She said there is no disease in the district at the moment. – Okaz/SG

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