

## **Children in Pakistan pushed into life-threatening, acute malnutrition**

**USD \$5.5 million UN Humanitarian fund allocation to support lifesaving nutrition interventions in Pakistan as global food prices soar and children suffer from increasingly severe forms of malnutrition.**

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan, 17 April 2023 – Today the United Nations warned that the number of children suffering from wasting in Pakistan’s flood-affected areas had greatly increased compared to the pre-flood situation, which was already reaching emergency levels.

A rapid survey conducted in 15 flood-affected districts suggests that nearly one-third of children aged 6-23 months suffer from moderate acute malnutrition and 14 per cent from severe acute malnutrition -- a life-threatening form of malnutrition -- with girls being more affected than boys\*. The number of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition with medical complications who are admitted for hospital treatment has also gradually increased since the floods, as global food prices soar.

“Even before the floods, child wasting was already reaching emergency levels, but what I am seeing now in villages is very worrying,” said Julien Harneis, the UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan. “We are grateful for the global community’s support so far, but much more is needed to help the Government provide the increasing numbers of children who are at risk of death with immediate therapeutic food and care. We must help the Government avert a nutrition crisis which would have dangerous and irreversible consequences for millions of children, and for the future of Pakistan.”

The Resident Coordinator announced that he would dedicate USD \$5.5 million out of the USD \$6.5 million allocation received from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) -- four-fifths of the grant -- towards emergency nutrition and food security interventions.

This additional USD \$5.5 million will help UNICEF, WFP, WHO and NGOs provide emergency nutrition interventions as part of the Government-led flood response in the most vulnerable communities of Balochistan and Sindh, with OCHA coordinating and ensuring that the funds are used in an efficient manner.

But with only one-third of the nutrition interventions included in the Floods Response Plan funded so far, additional funding is urgently required to implement early identification, integrated prevention and treatment of malnutrition in a greater number of villages and healthcare facilities. There is also a need to increase the number of interventions that improve availability, affordability and accessibility to nutritious foods that protect children from wasting.

Led by the Government of Pakistan, with support from UN agencies and NGOs, the Food Security and Agriculture Sector has provided life-saving assistance to nearly 7 million people and the Nutrition Sector to nearly 1 million people since the climate disaster hit the country last summer, but many needs remain unmet.

*\*Source: Rapid MUAC survey in flood-affected areas, UNICEF*

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**Note to editors:**

Click here to find Infographics: [bit.ly/401UJtR](http://bit.ly/401UJtR) (Reliefweb)  
Click [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) to find photos.

**About CERF**

As an essential enabler of global humanitarian action, [CERF's Rapid Response](#) window allows country teams to kick-start relief efforts immediately in a coordinated and prioritized response when a new crisis emerges. CERF's window for [Underfunded Emergencies](#) helps scale-up and sustain protracted relief operations to avoid critical gaps when no other funding is available. Since its inception in 2006, 126 UN Member States and observers, as well as regional Governments, corporate donors, foundations and individuals, made it possible for humanitarian partners to deliver over \$5.5 billion in life-saving assistance in over 100 countries and territories. Many recipient countries also become a donor to CERF and contribute, making CERF a fund for all, by all.

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