

Media Update

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FAO

PRESS RELEASE

WORLD FOOD SAFETY DAY 2023: PROMOTING SAFE FOOD PRACTICES AND COMBATING ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

Islamabad, June 8 - World Food Safety Day (WFSD) was commemorated on June 7th, focusing on raising awareness about the significance of food safety and ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all. FAO Pakistan organized a series of activities in alignment with the theme "Food standards save lives," with a special emphasis on addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR) through collaborative efforts.

The primary objective of these activities was to enhance knowledge about food safety and raise awareness regarding workplace, community, and governmental actions that can effectively promote safe food practices.

Notable among the initiatives was an awareness walk conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), Fleming Fund, and Islamabad Food Authority. This joint effort united key stakeholders in highlighting the importance of food safety and addressing AMR. Participants carried banners adorned with messages promoting safe and nutritious food as well as raising awareness about AMR. Dignitaries and officials shared their insights and underscored the significance of combating foodborne AMR while encouraging the adoption of safe food habits.

To further advance the cause, two awareness seminars were organized in partnership with Fleming Fund, Islamabad Food Authority, the World Health Organization, and the Institute of Food and Nutritious Sciences. The seminars, held respectively at Rawalpindi Women's University and ARID Agriculture University, served as platforms for in-depth discussions on food safety and

foodborne AMR. Renowned experts delivered keynote presentations on various topics related to food safety, emphasizing the pivotal role of Codex standards in promoting both food safety and international trade. The distinguished speakers also shed light on the invaluable contributions of academia in developing innovative solutions. The seminars concluded with a strong commitment to promoting safe food practices and combating foodborne AMR.

Recognizing the significance of the matter, the FAO Pakistan team held constructive meetings with the Commissioner of Capital Development Authority and representatives from the Islamabad Food Authority. During these meetings, pressing issues concerning food safety and the escalating threat of AMR were extensively discussed. The Commissioner highlighted the risks associated with contaminated food containing drug residues and stressed the imperative of collective efforts from all stakeholders in combating foodborne AMR.

Dr. M.Afzal, FMD Management Specialist participated in Radio Pakistan's live program "Zarkhaiz Pakistan" where he emphasized the significance of food safety for all.

FAO Pakistan, together with its esteemed partners, remains dedicated to the pursuit of safe and nutritious food for all, safeguarding public health, and fostering sustainable development. Through these diverse activities, FAO Pakistan aims to significantly increase awareness about food safety, encourage proactive measures to prevent foodborne illnesses, and promote best practices in food handling, storage, and preparations.

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WFP

PRESS RELEASE

French contribution enables WFP to respond to nutrition crisis in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD – The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) welcomes a contribution of EUR 3.5 million from the Government of France in support of the ongoing flood response for women and children affected by life-threatening malnutrition in Pakistan.

The funding will help WFP reach thousands of children under-five and pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls suffering from acute malnutrition with lifesaving support in Sindh and Balochistan.

Although floodwaters have receded in most parts of Pakistan following last year's unprecedented floods, the country now faces a new deadly threat. Against the backdrop of high inflation, especially soaring food prices, millions of people are struggling to afford and access nutritious food and cases of life-threatening severe acute malnutrition are emerging among women and children in several districts worst affected by floods.

“The French Government's support to WFP reflects another step in France's solidarity towards the people of Pakistan and particularly the vulnerable communities in Sindh and Balochistan that were most impacted by the 2022 floods”, said Nicolas Galey, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, in a meeting with WFP today. “This timely contribution will support ongoing efforts to improve food security and to bolster community resilience, with a focus on the nutrition of women and girls, and children under five”, he added.

According to a rapid survey* of 15 flood-affected districts in Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, nearly one-third of children between 6-23 months of age are suffering from moderate acute malnutrition, while 14 percent are affected by severe acute malnutrition.

“WFP is deeply concerned about the looming nutrition crisis in Pakistan. The increase in cases of severe acute malnutrition among women and children is particularly heartbreaking. WFP remains committed to addressing the situation with utmost urgency. The funding provided by the Government of France will help us reach some of the most vulnerable communities and provide them with

life-saving assistance, for that we are extremely grateful,” said Chris Kaye, Country Director of WFP.

The EUR 3.5 million is the latest in a series of significant contributions that underscore the Government of France’s commitment to contribute to eradicating malnutrition alongside partners and supporting Pakistan’s flood recovery. France also previously contributed EUR 1 million in 2022 to the Integrated Nutrition-Safety Net Project for flood-affected pregnant and breastfeeding women in Sindh, and EUR 2 million in support of WFP’s flood response activities last year. The total contribution of EUR 6.5 million will help WFP to provide a lifeline for hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis whose lives and livelihoods have been upended by last year’s devastating floods.

*Source: Rapid Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) survey by UNICEF in flood-affected areas in Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, March 2023.

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The United Nations World Food Programme is the world’s largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies and using food assistance to build a pathway to peace, stability and prosperity for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change.

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