



Photo: © UNOCHA

# UN SUPPORT FOR FLOOD RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION IN PAKISTAN



UNITED NATIONS  
PAKISTAN *اتوأم متحده پاکستان*

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## SITUATION OVERVIEW

Catastrophic floods in 2022 devastated lives and livelihoods across Pakistan, leaving millions in need of urgent help.

The impact is unimaginable. Unprecedented rainfall between June and August 2022 left one-third of Pakistan under water. Over 33 million people were affected (one in seven Pakistanis) with 8 million displaced, 13,000 injured and 1,700 killed – one in three were children. Flood waters washed away everything in their wake, killing 1 million livestock animals, and damaging 4.4 million acres of agricultural land and 2.2 million houses. Flooding destroyed critical infrastructure nationwide – with everything from hospitals to health centres, schools, water and sanitation facilities, irrigation schemes, roads, bridges and government buildings left in ruins. As of October, 94 districts had been declared ‘calamity-hit’, more than half of all districts in the country – especially in the provinces of Balochistan, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – including 19 of Pakistan’s 25 poorest districts. Livelihoods have been decimated across the country, affecting 4.3 million people. The risks of food insecurity, malnutrition and waterborne diseases have skyrocketed as a direct result of the floods. So have the risks of gender-based violence, including child marriage, especially due to displacement and gender disparities in the distribution of non-food relief items.

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*I have seen many humanitarian disasters in the world, but I have never seen **climate carnage** on this scale. I have simply no words to describe what I have seen today: a flooded area that is three times the total area of my own country, Portugal.”*

– Antonio Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, visiting Pakistan in September 2022



Photo: © UNICEF Pakistan/Asad Zaici

The loss of livelihoods, assets and human capital is likely to exacerbate existing disparities for Pakistan's most vulnerable and marginalized people, with a disproportionate impact on women and girls. The national poverty rate is expected to rise by 3.7 to 4.0 percentage points, pushing between 8.4 and 9.1 million more people into poverty. The toll taken on the mental health of women, men, girls and boys is immense. **The depths of human suffering are unquantifiable.**

The floods have only added to the multi-faceted crises Pakistan is facing. First, economic challenges abound, pre-dating the flood disaster. Confronted by large fiscal and current account deficits, compounded by rising global prices, the Government took steps early in 2022 to stabilize the economy, including implementing difficult energy tariff adjustments and passing a contractionary budget for the 2023 fiscal year (FY23). Second, Pakistan's economic outlook worsened after the floods, with their devastating toll on the sectors of agriculture, housing, food, livestock, fisheries, transport and communications. Market risk perceptions are on the rise, growth is expected to slow, the trade deficit is likely to expand, and revenues are projected to decline. Third, the floods have taken a disproportionate toll on the poorest households in the poorest parts of Pakistan. Areas where human development outcomes were lowest before the floods have been hardest hit. Fourth, Pakistan is one of the 10 countries most affected by climate change, and the floods in 2022 demonstrate how vulnerable it is to climate-induced disasters, despite contributing less than 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Floods and erratic weather patterns are ever more common and severe, drought and heatwaves are increasingly frequent, agricultural patterns are changing, biodiversity is being irretrievably lost, freshwater supplies are declining, glaciers are receding, and glacial lakes are forming and bursting at an alarming rate. August 2022 was the wettest August in Pakistan since records began, with rainfall 243% above average.

Months after the floods ravaged Pakistan, vast swathes of cropland and scores of villages remain submerged. Millions of people are in need of shelter, food, clean water and sanitation facilities. While the Government is mobilizing domestic resources to reach those in need, it requires urgent support to provide lifesaving assistance, restore livelihoods and build back better. Strengthening resilience across Pakistan will be critical to breaking the cycle of disaster-induced poverty, discrimination and displacement and discrimination.

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*[The floods] show what happens, what are the consequences when we do not stop global warming. The scale of it is beyond imagination. It is a climate change disaster that you can see from space.”*

– Julien Harneis, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Pakistan

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*“I saw the water level rising, so I grabbed my three children and fled [...] The water washed away everything I had made with my own hands.”*

– Kavita, a young woman from Khairpur, Sindh, Pakistan

*“Most of the families in our areas are underprivileged. They can’t afford to rebuild or repair their houses and winter is approaching fast.”*

– Muhammad Ilyas, a young man from Nowshera, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

*“I am in a constant state of fear and anxiety [...] Our children are exposed to direct sun, flies and dangerous diseases.”*

– Zahida, a young woman from Quetta, Balochistan, Pakistan

Testimonies collected by UN Women and UNDP Pakistan [2][3]

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## HOW THE UN IS SUPPORTING HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE, RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION

The UN has been on the frontlines of the government-led flood response – rallying humanitarian and development partners, providing expert advice and technical support, advocating with donors, and keeping the world’s focus firmly on the crisis by engaging with the media, in Pakistan and abroad, to make sure that no one is left behind.

### Immediate response planning and relief assistance

In August 2022, the Government of Pakistan set up a National Flood Response and Coordination Centre (NFRCC). Its members – representatives of federal and provincial governments and the Armed Forces – have overseen the national response to the floods, with the Armed Forces and civil administration providing search and rescue services, logistical and engineering support, while the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) procured relief supplies and coordinated bilateral in-kind donations for distribution through the army. In the provinces, Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMA) established sector coordination mechanisms to facilitate response coordination in partnership with the humanitarian community. On 19 August, the Government launched a cash-based flood relief programme worth PKR 37.2 billion for 1.5 million families.

As flooding began, the UN rallied humanitarian partners to swiftly put together a flood response plan, estimating immediate needs of US\$160 million, while working closely with the Government on needs assessments. On 30 August, the Government of Pakistan and the UN jointly launched the 2022 Pakistan Flood Response Plan (FRP), outlining humanitarian needs and an action plan to respond to them. The UN hosted the plan’s launch in Geneva, playing its role as a convener and successfully ensuring the presence of major donors, almost all of whom pledged their support. Based on the rapid needs assessment, a revised Flood Response Plan was launched on 4 October. Once more, the UN shared this with donors in Geneva, appealing for US\$816 million to cover the most urgent needs of 9.5 million people.

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*We and civil society are making good use of the funds released from the UN’s Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). [...] Our people have delivered food or cash assistance to hundreds of thousands of people in Balochistan and Sindh, tonnes of emergency supplies to support children and women, but **what we have done is a drop in the ocean of the needs of the Pakistani people.**”*

– Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General



Photo: © UNICEF Pakistan

UN relief efforts have focused on providing shelter, safe drinking water, food items, health interventions and creating employment through small-scale rapid infrastructure rehabilitation. The UN Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) has provided strategic direction to the humanitarian community, supported by the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) – comprised of the humanitarian sectors represented in the Flood Response Plan. Led by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, the HCT is composed of representatives of the UN, the National Humanitarian Network (NHN) of national NGOs and the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF) of international NGOs.

As of December 2022, the Food Security and Agriculture Sector reached 3.4 million people with food, cash and agricultural inputs, while the Shelter/Non-Food Items (NFI) Sector distributed dignified emergency shelter, basic NFIs, kitchen sets, toolkits and site improvements to 1.5 million people. The Nutrition Sector reached 1.5 million people, treating children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM), providing supplementary feeding support and multi-micronutrient powders, and delivering counselling on infant and young child feeding. Health Sector partners reached 1.9 million flood-affected people by setting up medical camps, providing medicines and medical supplies, delivering essential health services, strengthening disease surveillance and responding to disease outbreaks. Partners in the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Sector reached 1.91 million with temporary WASH services, restoring water systems and sanitation facilities, water quality surveillance, providing hygiene kits and promoting basic hygiene. Nearly 1 million people benefitted from actions by the Protection Sector and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Sub-Sector, including awareness raising on child protection services, training frontline workers and birth registration. At the same time, Education Sector partners reached 135,000 people by establishing temporary learning centres, cleaning and sanitizing schools, providing teaching and learning materials, training teachers and Parent-Teacher/School Management Committees on teaching in emergencies, psychosocial support and the safe reopening of schools.

The UN has supported logistics through hubs for the distribution of relief items, creating a network of government, national and international organizations, including donors and humanitarian actors. By the end of November 2022, support for the National Disaster Management Authority on relief cargo handling enabled over 1,450 trucks to transport relief items to areas in need. While the international community and local organizations have provided aid, accessing flood-affected areas remains a challenge due to standing flood water, the destruction of infrastructure, complex topographies and huge funding gaps. For instance, funding for logistical support has been exhausted leaving residual challenges to maintain the timely distribution of relief items for millions of Pakistanis. Allocations to address major challenges like gender-based violence are few and far between because of a scarcity of resources. In this crisis, remoteness has become the unfortunate yardstick of unequal aid distribution. Districts that are closer to bigger cities are receiving more aid, while ones further away are not.

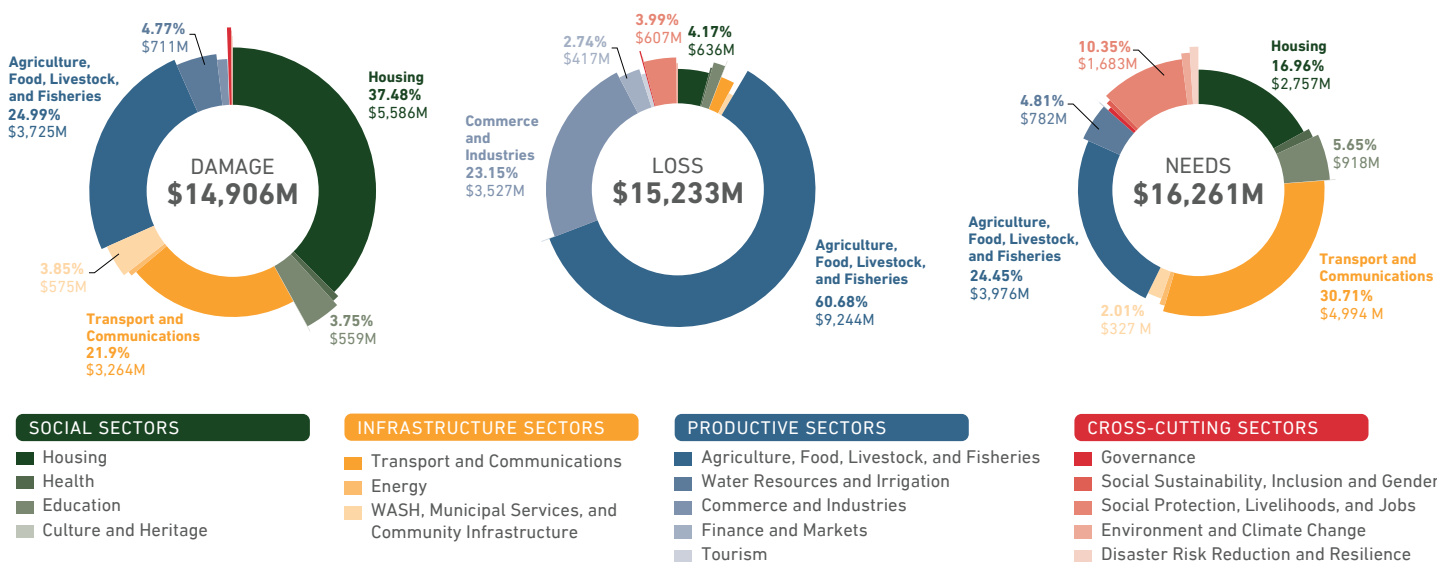
## Assessing damage, losses and needs

In October 2022, the UN, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the European Union (EU), and the World Bank (WB) supported the Government of Pakistan to conduct a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA). It provides a vital initial estimate of damages, losses, and recovery and reconstruction needs in the wake of the floods. UN technical assistance has been instrumental in making assessments like the PDNA and the new Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Framework (4RF) (discussed below) more gender-responsive.

The PDNA estimates that the costs of flood damage exceed US\$14.9 billion – equivalent to 4.8% of Pakistan’s gross domestic product (GDP) in FY22 – economic losses total US\$15.2 billion, and US\$16.3 billion will be needed for rehabilitation and reconstruction. Recovery and reconstruction needs are projected to be 1.6 times Pakistan’s budgeted national development expenditure for FY23.

The sectors that suffered most damage are housing (US\$5.6 billion), agriculture, food, livestock and fisheries (US\$3.7 billion), and transport and communications (US\$3.3 billion). Reconstruction and recovery needs are greatest for the transport and communications sector (US\$5.0 billion), followed by agriculture, food, livestock and fisheries (US\$4.0 billion), and housing (US\$2.8 billion). Protection needs are also huge, particularly due to widespread displacement. Despite the expected rise in gender-based violence, women have been unable to report cases to law enforcement agencies. The loss of identity cards and civil documentation will make it harder for people, especially women and girls, to access lost assets and rebuild their lives and livelihoods. The provinces of Sindh and Balochistan account for 50% and 15%, respectively, of recovery and reconstruction needs.

### DISTRIBUTION OF DAMAGE, LOSS, AND NEEDS BY SECTOR



Source: Government of Pakistan, Post-Disaster Needs Assessment 2022.

As of 15 December 2022, just US\$262.4 million had been secured in funding – just 32% of the US\$816 million required for the flood response. **This is not nearly enough.** Another **US\$553.6 million** is urgently required to meet the needs of 9.5 million people.



Photo: © UNDP Pakistan/Shahzad Ahmad

## Engaging donors and other partners

The UN is tirelessly engaging with donors, in Pakistan and abroad, to plead the case of the country's flood-affected people. Advocacy began in June, as the UN and humanitarian partners raised the alarm on the rapidly evolving flood scenario with the Government, and later with the global community. The UN Secretary-General took to the floor personally – calling for massive support for Pakistan at every forum, paired with global action on climate change. The Secretary-General's visit to Pakistan in September 2022 reaffirmed the UN's solidarity with Pakistan's people and commitment to aiding government efforts to save lives, rebuild and recover from the devastation.

As the Secretary-General's representative and head of the UN Country Team in Pakistan, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (UNRC/HC) has been on the frontlines of the response – visiting flood-affected areas, meeting people whose lives have been upended and, above all, listening to them to understand their needs. The UNRC/HC has taken their messages to the very highest levels, – the Prime Minister and Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Climate Change, provincial governments and the NDMA – advising decision-makers on ensuring accountability through a people-centred response. With UN support, a Provincial Special Committee on Accountability to Disaster-Affected Communities has been set up to oversee the progress of the response and ensure accountability to affected people – guaranteeing that their voices are heard and their demands acted upon across relief and recovery.

UN engagement with donors has boosted confidence in response efforts and elicited commitments to support Pakistan in its hour of need. A communication coordination mechanism initiated by the UN and led by the Ministry of Information is coordinating all communication interventions on the floods. Weekly UN media briefings have enhanced the visibility of real needs on the ground, as has awareness raising with the international and national media through field visits and one-on-one meetings.

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*There will be an increase in child morbidity and it will be pretty terrible unless we act rapidly to support the Government in increasing the provision of health, nutrition and water and sanitation services across the affected areas.”*

– Julien Harneis, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Pakistan

*We will do everything possible to mobilize the international community to support your country and to support all of you in this dramatic situation, in which beyond the numbers, I see families that lost their loved ones, I see families that lost their houses, I see families that lost their crops, that lost their jobs and that are living in desperate conditions.”*

– Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General

## Addressing climate change

For years, the UN has worked on addressing climate risks in Pakistan. With the UN's support, the Government developed a strategic framework to holistically address gaps – the Living Indus Initiative. Launched at the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) to widespread acclaim, the Living Indus is an umbrella initiative that consolidates new and existing projects to increase resilience to floods, restore the Indus Basin's ecological health and combat environmental degradation. Coming on the heels of the worst floods in Pakistan on record, the initiative needs donor support to deliver promising solutions to climate challenges.

UN platforms have given Pakistan the opportunity to raise awareness and advocate for lasting action. One of the biggest gains of the COP27 was the Loss and Damage Fund – with UN backing, governments took the groundbreaking decision to establish new funding arrangements, as well as a dedicated fund, to assist developing countries like Pakistan in responding to the damage wrought by the climate emergency. With UN support, the principles of social inclusion and participation – including in the context of efforts to address climate change – have been included at the heart of strategic documents like the PDNA and 4RF.

As the world's attention turns to other crises, the UN is maintaining engagement with donors, the media and the global community, urging them to donate to Pakistan's recovery and making sure that, six months on, the continued suffering of Pakistan's people is not silenced or forgotten.

## WHAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE

As climate change gains pace, Pakistan will face more disasters like the 2022 floods. It cannot weather them alone – but with international solidarity, we can turn the tide of climate change together.

While UN contributions in absolute numbers are notable, they are not enough. In terms of the percentage of total needs, we have merely met 20% of the needs of flood-affected people across Pakistan. The focus of the UN system, donors and development partners needs to be on meeting the residual needs of Pakistan's people. The massive scale of the 2022 floods must be matched by an equally colossal response. **All of us need to do more, and we need to do so immediately.**

Strategic coordination will be vital to effectively link and transition from humanitarian response to recovery. The size and duration of shocks will vary across locations and households depending on the intensity of the flooding they experienced, the time it takes flood waters to recede, households' socioeconomic status, and the quality and speed of relief and reconstruction efforts. Evidence from past natural disasters suggests that economic impacts may persist for an extended period, with damage to the productive capacity of the economy reducing growth prospects over the medium-term.

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*I can only imagine the power and ferocity of the water as it bore down on villages, roads, bridges and everything else in its path. [...] No country deserves this fate, but particularly not countries like Pakistan that have done almost nothing to contribute to global warming.”*

– Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General

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*People in Pakistan are living through the world's worst climate nightmare. [...] **People in Pakistan deserve climate justice, international solidarity and support from the world** as they deal with this latest climate tragedy.”*

– Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General



Photo: © UNICEF/Pakistan/Asad Zeidi

Even in the best-case scenario, reversing shocks will take time. Some losses – such as losses to human capital and the loss of land productivity – could set in motion long-lasting declines in household welfare that will require specific attention. As climate-induced displacement will increase and change settlement patterns, Pakistan requires support to devise a new approach to territorial planning and development, anchored in a resilient economy. Support mechanisms are also required to help people recover lost identity documents that they need to access aid and rebuild their lives.

Climate devastation in Pakistan is an ominous precursor of catastrophes to come. Significant international support is needed to complement Pakistan’s commitment to increasing domestic revenue mobilization and saving scarce public resources, while reducing the risk of exacerbating macroeconomic imbalances. The global community must rally together to fund the flood response – millions of lives and livelihoods depend on this.

 **IMPERATIVES FOR A RESILIENT RECOVERY**

<b>Participatory and inclusive recovery planning and implementation</b>	<b>Being pro-poor, pro-vulnerable, and gender-responsive</b>	<b>Prioritizing people-centered socio-economic recovery</b>
<b>Community-driven programmes with strong accountability</b>	<b>Building back better</b>	<b>Strengthening long-term resilience</b>
<b>Addressing climate change</b>	<b>Centralizing planning, policy-setting and implementation at the lowest appropriate level</b>	<b>Balancing public and private sector recovery</b>

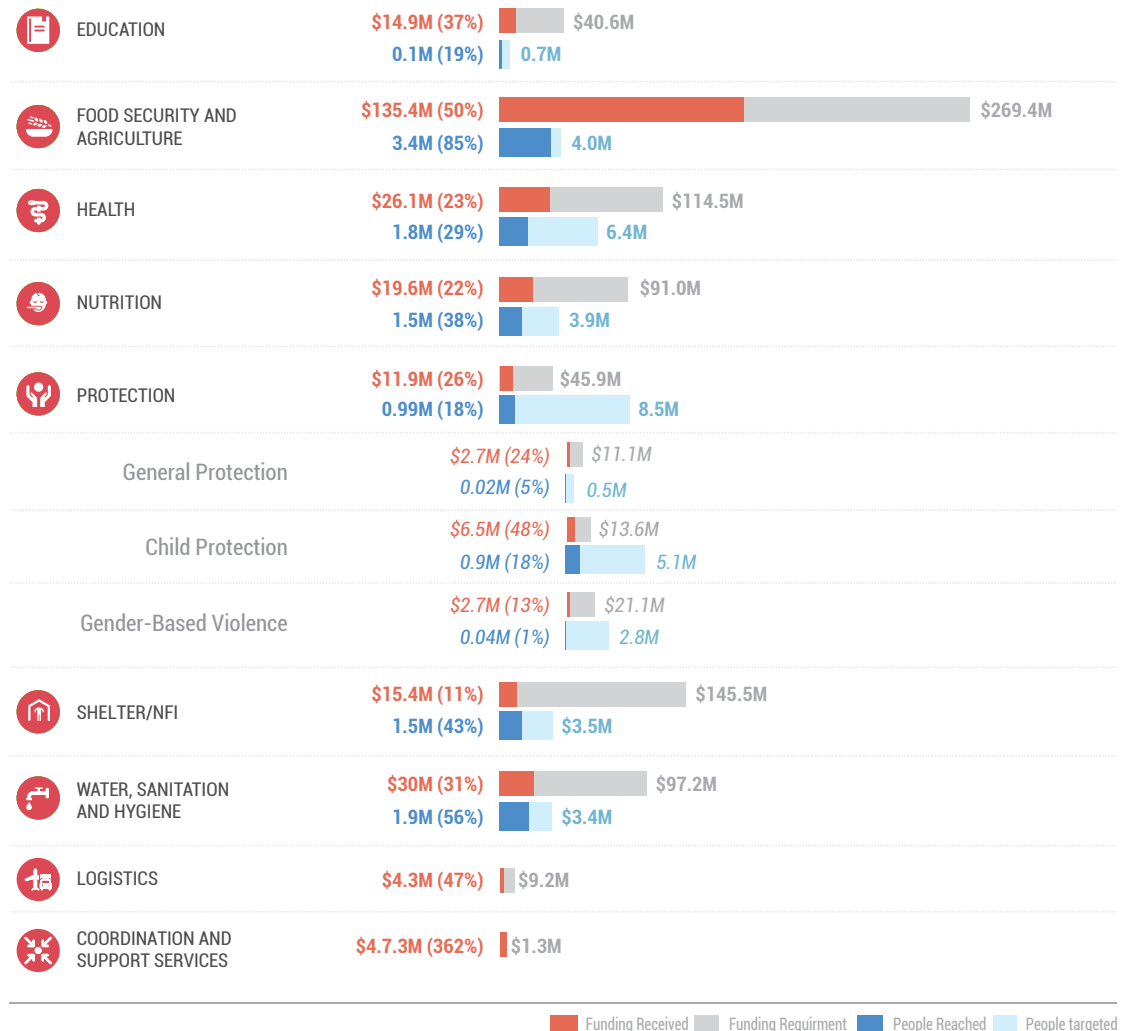




**US\$ 262.4M**  
FUNDING RECEIVED

**US\$ 816M**  
FUNDING REQUIRED

### FUNDING AND REACH BY SECTOR



In December 2022, the NFRCC concluded its mandate and was dissolved. In its place, the government-led Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Framework (4RF) is being rolled out to ensure a more effective, accountable and gender-responsive approach to the next phases of the response. The framework calls for increased commitments by development partners to all aspects of recovery processes – including by pledging resources to address the protection needs of vulnerable groups. The UN Secretary-General will co-host an **International Conference on Climate-Resilient Pakistan** with the Government of Pakistan on 9 January 2023 in Geneva, to present the 4RF, that includes institutional, financial and implementation arrangements for post-flood recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction – secure international support, and forge long-term partnerships to build Pakistan’s resilience and climate adaptation capacities.

We cannot sound this alarm loudly enough. Without urgent action, millions of people in Pakistan will be unable to survive. The global community’s support so far has been invaluable, but much more is needed to save lives, restore livelihoods and deliver the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals – **that no one be left behind**.



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