

- Thousands of flood survivors in southwest Pakistan in desperate need of assistance

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ISLAMABAD, 20 July 2007 - The United Nations launched a \$38 million Flash Appeal on 18 July in Geneva to assist hundreds of thousands of people in southwest Pakistan struggling to survive widespread flooding in the aftermath of cyclone Yemyin, which ravaged Balochistan and Sindh in late June.

An estimated two and a half million people have been affected by the flooding which followed four days of drenching cyclonic rains leaving 296 people dead, 195 missing and over 377,000 people displaced. While some have found sanctuary with friends and relatives, others are living in school buildings, or in improvised roadside shelters enduring scorching heat, dust storms and severe deprivation.

UNICEF's share of the UN Flash Appeal is \$6.3 million for the children and women affected by the floods. With this amount, UNICEF is planning to continue providing safe water to the displaced, restore water and sanitation services that have been damaged by the disaster, distribute hygiene kits as well as sensitize children and their families with hygiene messages.

UNICEF will also support the establishment of supplementary feeding programmes to prevent a deterioration of malnutrition among children and pregnant and lactating women and therapeutic feeding programmes to address the needs of children suffering from malnutrition. UNICEF also aims to support the promotion and protection of breastfeeding. UNICEF will support essential health services through mobile health teams and the provision of medicines, supplies and equipment. What is more, UNICEF and its partners will immunize 630,000 children between the age of 6 months and 15 years against measles to prevent any measles outbreak in these high-risk areas.

UNICEF is planning to provide essential school supplies to ensure that all school children affected by the floods have access to education supplies and activities essential to the normal development of children. In addition, UNICEF with partners is preparing to build the capacity of teachers in dealing with traumatized children in schools.

Furthermore, UNICEF will register separated, unaccompanied and other children and simultaneously trace and reunite children with their families or make temporary alternative arrangements for unaccompanied children in order to prevent trafficking and other forms of exploitation. UNICEF will also develop mechanisms to ensure that vulnerable children and their families are prioritized in the distribution of basic relief services.

One week after the floods that came in the wake of cyclone Yemyin, on 10 July, UNICEF had launched an Immediate Needs document requesting 5 million dollars in order to meet the urgent needs of the affected children and women by providing access to safe water and sanitation facilities, nutritious food (Unimix) and essential medicine.

This Flash Appeal is the result of collaboration between the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) of Pakistan, NGOs (local and international) and the United Nations. The projects identified in the appeal will provide urgent assistance over the next three months, focusing on shelter, water and sanitation, health, food security and early recovery activities. Detailed needs assessments were carried out jointly by the Government and humanitarian community during the second week of July.

(www.unicef.org)