

Media Update 2

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WFP

Press Release

WFP welcomes contribution from USA to support Pakistanis in need

ISLAMABAD – The most vulnerable people in Pakistan will continue to receive assistance from the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) thanks to a contribution of US\$25 million from the United States government. The donation was announced by the “Food for Peace” Office of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and will allow WFP to carry on with programmes providing food, cash and education for families in the poorest parts of Pakistan, as well as working to improve the nutrition of women and children throughout the country.

“The United States has again shown its commitment to ensuring that the most vulnerable people in Pakistan have nutritious food that will help them reach their full potential. On behalf of the people we serve in Pakistan, I would like to thank USAID and the American people for their generosity and foresight. We would not be able to carry out this crucial work without you,” said WFP Country Director and Representative Finbarr Curran.

Although Pakistan has made significant gains in recent years in food production, 60 percent of the 189 million people in the country do not eat nutritious meals regularly, mainly because the poorest and most vulnerable – especially women – can’t afford enough nutritious food. An average Pakistani family spends more than half of its monthly income on food.

In the north-western part of the country, where the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) share a border with Afghanistan, and where population displacement and natural disasters have taken a heavy toll on people’s capacities to feed their families, WFP uses the USAID funding to run programmes to help communities adapt to their circumstances. For example, WFP provides cash and food incentives for people to attend classes about



hygiene and nutrition, promoting the use of nutritious, seasonal local foods for a more balanced diet.

Also in FATA, money from the US contribution will be used to give fortified wheat flour to people who have had to abandon their homes due to conflict or natural disasters. The government of Pakistan is supporting the WFP programme with 25,000 MT of locally grown wheat for WFP for its humanitarian activities. The cash contribution from the US will allow WFP to arrange for the milling, fortification and packaging of the wheat, so that those in need can receive flour to make bread, as well as yellow split peas, vegetable oil and iodised salt to make 'dhal', a kind of stew.

In addition, the US donation will enable WFP to continue its work to improve the health and nutrition of young children across the country. Good nutrition during a child's early years is crucial for full physical and mental development, but the latest national nutrition survey found that 15 percent of children under 5 are acutely malnourished, the second highest rate in the region. WFP works with the Government of Pakistan, UNICEF and local organizations on the Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition, known as CMAM.

The CMAM approach enlists community volunteers to identify and start treatment for malnourished children before they become seriously ill. WFP's role is to provide special nutrient-dense food to children between the ages of two and five who are moderately malnourished, in order to improve their health and prevent them slipping into acute malnutrition.

WFP also provides nutrition supplements to malnourished pregnant women and nursing mothers, since nutrition of mothers is crucial for healthy babies and children. Both the nutrition supplement for children and the one for mothers are produced locally to WFP specifications, using local ingredients and suppliers, representing an investment back into the economy and community.

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WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. Each year, WFP assists some 80 million people in 80 countries.



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