United Kingdom’s Department for International Development and FAO join forces to help combat the desert locust outbreak

The Government of United Kingdom through its Department for International Development (DFID) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) today virtually signed a project amendment agreement of the project Building Disaster Resilience in Pakistan for an additional allocation of UK£1 000 000 to continue efforts to contain the desert locust upsurge. The renewed commitment and collaboration between DFID and FAO will contribute towards efforts for effective surveillance and timely control operations of the desert locust outbreak amid the challenges and constraints already posed by COVID19 to the livelihoods of vulnerable small-holder farmers.

The activities supported by DFID will help strengthen Government and farmers’ capacities in surveillance and monitoring of the locust, for identification of the threat and evaluation of risk for informed decisions and to combat the Desert Locust infestation and improve locust management in Pakistan. The agreement was virtually signed by Anabel Gerry, Head of DFID Pakistan and Minà Dowlatchahi, FAO Representative in Pakistan.

“"I’m proud of supporting Pakistan in these testing times with the urgent need of controlling desert locusts in the affected areas. This timely intervention will enable food security and sustainable agriculture for over 18,000 vulnerable farmers,” said Anabel Gerry, Head of DFID Pakistan. “It is great that we were able to work with FAO to rapidly respond to the devastating situation, and save crops and livelihoods especially during the COVID-19 crisis.”
“While Surveillance and control operations are well underway in Pakistan, this contribution is timely in helping equip Government and farmers for an effective response to the largest locust infestation in the last 25 years with upgraded equipment for control operations, technology for surveillance and knowledge for analysis and decision-making,” said Minà Dowlatchahi, FAO Representative in Pakistan.

FAO will work in close collaboration with the National Ministry of Food Security and Research, Departments of the Plant Protection, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs) to build capacities of the relevant government departments and local farming communities living in locust-prone and affected areas.

For media inquiries, please contact Mehr Hassan, Communications Specialist FAO Pakistan at mehr.hassan@fao.org