

Coordinated and comprehensive response to Pakistan's floods in 2022

The role of the reformed UN Resident Coordinator system

Devastating floods in Pakistan affected 33 million people in 2022, with 8 million displaced, 13,000 injured and 1,700 killed – the latest in a series of increasingly frequent and severe climate-induced disasters.

The empowered UN Resident Coordinator (RC) system was invaluable for responding to the complex crisis. Thanks to strengthened coordination capacities, including at the sub-national level the RC Office offered support to enable a swift humanitarian response, to augment the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s limited in-country resources in the immediate aftermath. The RC also enabled a focus on a collaborative approach with international financial institutions (IFIs), including for long-term recovery. The Living Indus Initiative, which emerged from the strategic prioritization for Pakistan's UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework led by the RC, became the blueprint for a long-term approach, ensuring that UN efforts went beyond a mere response to a one-off disaster.

The Government valued the consultative, inclusive nature of the RCO support which ensured national ownership. The reinvigorated RC/RCO enabled the mobilization of the entire UN system through a strong UN country team (UNCT), ensuring the highest level of visibility and priority for the floods, including through the Secretary-General (SG)'s engagement.

 **20**

Number of entities in the UN country team

 **US\$ 912.1M**

UN country team's support through the Cooperation Framework (2022)

1. Anticipating the risk of climate change to the Sustainable Development Goals and vulnerable populations before the floods - a risk-informed Cooperation Framework

The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023–2027 – a key feature of the UN reform – enables the UNCT, under the leadership of the RC, to devise long-term sustainable solutions for Pakistan. The Living Indus Initiative, spearheading climate adaptation and environmental restoration, is one of the solutions at the heart of the Cooperation Framework.

Thanks to its centrality in the Cooperation Framework and the UNCT's shared vision of the impacts of the triple planetary crisis for Pakistan, the Living Indus was the Government's go-to solution when the floods hit in 2022 and enabled the UN to approach the floods as more than a one-off disaster.

The leadership of the reinvigorated RC derived from the UN development system (UNDS) reform, ensured the inclusive dialogue necessary to prepare the UN Common Country Analysis (CCA) and, based on its findings, develop a strategic, results-oriented, forward-thinking and risk-informed Cooperation Framework. The UN Development Programme (UNDP)'s role as the UN system's support platform with an integrator function to help countries implement the 2030 Agenda is also key.

Thanks to the RC's direct reporting line to the Secretary-General, relevant, updated and accurate information about the situation in-country flowed in both directions. The SG's visit to Pakistan, discussions in the General Assembly and the COP27 helped to appropriately position Pakistan's needs.



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Families displaced by the floods in Pakistan live in makeshift shelters along standing floodwater in Mirpurkhas district, Sindh province.

2. An empowered RC/RCO serves as a one-stop shop for the Government and external partners for effective coordination of humanitarian and development activities

Pakistan is one of 30 countries where the empowered RC is also the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), responsible for leading the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), representing the UN system and humanitarian partners. This is a single, one-stop shop for the Government, ensuring timely and

effective support, while reducing the Government's coordination burden and bridging gaps in state systems by helping information flow between provincial and national response structures.



"The RC and his office have been an invaluable resource for us at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, acting as a first line of contact on all matters related to humanitarian and development efforts. They are like our 911, always available and ready to respond to any situation."

Director General (UN), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan

3. A strengthened RCO allowed the provision of complementary coordination while the OCHA Humanitarian Advisory Team increased their capacity

When flooding began, RCO staff immediately stepped up to support humanitarian coordination as well. OCHA had a Humanitarian Advisory Team (HAT) in Pakistan with limited presence and the RCO proactivity gave OCHA time to deploy humanitarian surge teams. The RCO national coordinators enabled seamless coordination, as well as the integration of the humanitarian and development response. The RCO economist supported OCHA in tracking funding pledges for the Flood Response Plan and consolidated rehabilitation and reconstruction funding. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs particularly

appreciated how the RCO organized the first appeal, ensuring full consultation, national ownership, and inclusivity.

The RCO ensured a highly coordinated, collaborative response with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), among other international financial institutions (IFIs), both for humanitarian assistance and for recovery and reconstruction. Thanks to the UN reform, the RCO economist ensured day-to-day links with the World Bank and ADB.



"United Nations agencies, led by the Resident Coordinator's Office, worked actively with development partners, including ADB, in facilitating an integrated response to the devastating floods in Pakistan."

Yong Ye, Country Director, Asian Development Bank, Pakistan



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Workers offload food items from a truck at a WFP-supported flood relief distribution point in the city of Jacobabad, Sindh province.

4. By integrating the communications structure of the UN Information Centre with the RCO, a robust standing communication capacity within the UNCT was generated to ensure highest-level visibility of the crisis and the UN's response

The RCO's communication strategy was immediately aligned with the Secretary-General's messaging. As part of UN reform, the UN Information Centre (UNIC) supported the RC/HC's, UNCT's and HCT's communication needs.

Strengthened RCO communication capacities helped sustain global and national media coverage and boosted unified messaging by all stakeholders.

5. Leveraging the UNDP integrator role, the RC worked with member states along with UNDP to provide a technical integration platform to ensure convergence between short-term assistance and longer-term development gains

The empowered UN Resident Coordinator enabled an integrated journey from humanitarian to development response. Building on the strengths of the UN system at all levels, it brought key players together to provide timely, relevant support to the Government for the transition from emergency aid to recovery and reconstruction. UNDP's global integrator role was leveraged for the Post-

Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) carried out by the UN, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the European Union, the Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework (4RF) and the Climate Resilient Pakistan Conference. The Government of Pakistan especially appreciated how the RCO shared their messages with Ambassadors in Geneva and UN leaders

6. A reformed RC/HC-led approach enabled UN agencies, both resident and non-resident, to work together effectively ensuring complementarities

The reinvigorated RC system enabled effective collaboration between resident and non-resident UN agencies ensuring the leveraging of complementarities for SDG implementation in the country. The RCO Team Leader, working with UNDESA, forged strategic partnerships with public administration schools

involving senior civil servants on the Living Indus Initiative. Working with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) on the initiative's implementation prompted the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to fast-track a grant of US\$25 million for the Living Indus.



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10-year-old Areeba Tehmeez (left), 8-year-old Dua (centre) and 10-year-old Humaira (right) play in the tent their parents have setup next to the ruins of their home which was destroyed in the floods. They say they are very happy as today they moved back to their village in Khairpur district for the first time after 6 months. (February 21, 2023, Khairpur, Sindh, Pakistan).