



Nourish Life

# Pakistan

## 2022–2023 HIGHLIGHTS

### COUNTRY SITUATION

Pakistan grapples with a severe malnutrition crisis, compounded by climate-induced disasters and soaring inflation. In mid 2022, extreme monsoon rains triggered devastating floods affecting a third of the country. This disaster impacted 33 million people, exacerbating food insecurity and pushed an additional 2.5 million people into extreme hunger.

Before the floods, malnutrition was already prevalent among children, adolescents and women of reproductive age, with 40% of children showing stunted growth. Now, over half of Pakistan's 12 million children, including those in flood-affected areas, experience stunting. Maternal malnutrition also affects 650,000 pregnant women and girls in flood hit provinces, many of whom face limited or no access to healthcare facilities.

### OVERVIEW OF WORK

Nutrition International continues to work as a key partner of the Government of Pakistan and other stakeholders for improving child, adolescent and maternal malnutrition indicators in the country through its various nutrition programs and projects.

In partnership with the provincial health and education departments, we launched a school-based weekly iron and folic acid supplementation (WIFAS) program for adolescent girls in 50 schools and later expanded it to 197 schools across three districts in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces.

Our work in Pakistan is supported by 29 staff members and 77 program extenders.

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Multiple micronutrient supplementation (MMS) implementation research conducted in Swabi district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to inform the scale-up of MMS for pregnant women, improving health outcomes for women and their babies.
- 15,800 safe delivery kits and 2,000 hygiene kits donated to the provincial governments to ensure safe deliveries by skilled birth attendants amidst the devastating floods.
- 75,000 doses of zinc and low-osmolarity oral rehydration salts supplies to treat children suffering from diarrhoea in flood affected areas.
- Technical assistance provided to support the enactment of mandatory food fortification legislation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- Nutrition International in collaboration with the Ministry of National Health Services Regulations & Coordination, Provincial Departments of Health, Pakistan Medical Association and the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Pakistan launched NourishMaa – a maternal nutrition campaign to improve the knowledge and capacity of healthcare providers and frontline health workers.



## IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS



**140M**  
people reached through adequately  
fortified edible oil



**111M**  
additional people reached  
with adequately fortified salt



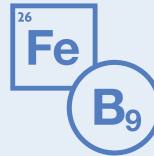
**10.5M**  
additional children received  
two doses of vitamin A



**1.4M**  
additional people reached with  
adequately fortified wheat flour



**427K**  
cases of diarrhoea treated with the  
recommended course of zinc and  
low-osmolarity oral rehydration salts



**178K**  
pregnant women received iron  
and folic acid supplementation



**44K**  
pregnant women received multiple  
micronutrient supplementation



**870**  
preterm and low birthweight babies  
protected through kangaroo mother  
care in Nutrition International-  
supported facilities

### KEY EVENTS

- A national level Nutrition for Growth follow up seminar was organized to discuss progress on the Government of Pakistan's commitments.
- Nutrition International co-hosted the following conferences with the collaboration of various stakeholders to engage a larger audience with nutrition messages:
  - Regional Research2Action Conference – Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
  - International Public Health Conference – Breaking the Manacles: Non-Communicable Disease Control through Universal Health Coverage
  - International Public Health Conference – Transforming Public Health Policy into Practice
  - Sindh Institute of Reproductive Medicine Fertility Conference

### LOOKING AHEAD

Nutrition International remains committed to collaborating with public and private stakeholders to promote sustainable food fortification in Pakistan. As pioneers in school-based WIFAS programs for adolescent girls, we will continue supporting government infrastructure to expand program implementation in selected areas to address adolescent anaemia. We are also poised to provide technical assistance to the federal government for the development of National

Anaemia Guidelines, the National Kangaroo Mother Care Strategy, a National Social and Behaviour Change Strategy on Maternal Nutrition and local production of WHO-recommended Maternal and Adolescent Iron and Folic Acid in Pakistan. Furthermore, Nutrition International aims to enhance the provision of services for the treatment of childhood diarrhoea delivered by Lady Health Workers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with plans to extend coverage to the newly merged tribal districts.

### NEW FUNDING

- Nutrition International was awarded USD \$4.5 million funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to implement large-scale food fortification in Pakistan through edible oil and wheat flour.
- Nutrition International received a USD \$1.568 million two-year grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to undertake a pilot communication campaign focusing on maternal nutrition.
- Nutrition International was awarded an emergency grant of US \$150,000 from Comic Relief US to improve the health and nutritional status of flood-affected children in the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan.
- Nutrition International received a short-term grant of USD \$212,000 from TechnoServe, Inc. to build the capacity of the private sector wheat flour and edible oil mills involved in large scale food fortification.