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PRESS RELEASE

Pakistani babies struggling to survive after month-long onslaught of poor nutrition, sickness and stress

World Vision Canada President & CEO, Dave Toycen, in the field now and available for interviews

Aid agency World Vision says infant children affected by the relentless flooding in Pakistan can't survive much longer without immediate and significant aid. Dave Toycen, President & CEO of World Vision Canada, has just touched down in Sindh Province, where hundreds of thousands of displaced children and families have settled in Sukkur, Pakistan's third-largest city.

Toycen says people are camped everywhere, along high banks on the side of the road, in tent camps, in makeshift shelters or on homemade beds. "After three or four weeks in a traumatic situation, without proper food and drinking water, little ones are especially vulnerable to common diseases that can kill.

"Families are in worse shape than they were two weeks ago."

Because access to the hardest-hit areas is so difficult, as much as half of the affected population still hasn't received aid. Floods have taken out roads and bridges, and mobile phone networks are still not working in many areas.

Lack of sanitation and clean water is causing outbreaks of diarrhea and concerns about cholera, and children wearing the same muddy clothes for days are developing skin diseases like scabies.

FACTS

- World Vision plans to set up 20 child-friendly spaces and 20 women-friendly spaces – safe, comfortable areas where children and women can interact with peers, receive psychosocial support and regain a sense of normal life.
- World Vision is running three emergency health clinics in Lower Dir and so far has treated more than 4,100 people suffering from waterborne diseases and other illnesses related to the floods, including 1,845 children under 15. World Vision aims to establish 20 health posts and 40 mobile clinics throughout the hardest-hit areas.
- In addition to the distribution of food, water and shelter supplies, World Vision plans to provide 1,000 cash-for-work jobs to help people restart their lives.
- So far, Canadians have donated \$1.97 million to World Vision's Pakistan relief efforts. To donate, call 1-800-268-5528 (English) or 1-800-363-5021 (French) or visit www.worldvision.ca. Donors can also text the word WORLD to 45678 to make a \$5 donation. The Canadian government will match donations until September 12.

CONTACTS

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"Innocent children urgently need Canadians to set aside any hesitation about helping them. The need in Pakistan is immediate and everywhere. While there are huge challenges to delivering aid – including the physical challenge of trying to access hard-hit areas – children's lives are at stake."

*- Dave Toycen,
President & CEO,
World Vision Canada*