

# UK locust sprayers arrive in Pakistan to help tackle crises

World news story

20 micro-sprayers from the UK have now arrived in Pakistan and will help immediately to tackle the devastating desert locust swarms



They are the first 20 of 50 sprayers as part of a UK aid package of £1m to support the Government of Pakistan tackle to outbreak, which has been declared a national emergency.

UK funding will ensure:

- 50 sprayers (20 of which have arrived) to be sent to control locusts and help to ensure food security;
- 1,300 PPE kits help ensure surveillance and control operations can continue safely through the coronavirus pandemic;
- 18,000 vulnerable farmers are helped;

The sprayers are from UK-based company, Micron Sprayers Ltd. It has over 50 years of industry experience, and its products are used in over a hundred countries across the globe.

Underlining the close trading relationship between the UK and Pakistan, Micron Sprayers Ltd is also working on a separate agreement to supply 83 sprayers to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in Pakistan. This agreement is not funded by UK aid.

UK aid has given £1 million to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) to tackle swarms of locusts up until 30 September 2020, as part of our help support food security in Pakistan.

Dr Christian Turner CMG, British High Commissioner to Pakistan, spoke at a ceremony to hand over the sprayers to the Pakistan Government today. He said:

Make no mistake, this locust outbreak is a big challenge. That is

why the UK, through aid to FAO, has worked to ensure these UK-manufactured crop sprayers get to Pakistan as soon as possible.

The High Commissioner to Pakistan handed over the UK sprayers at the ceremony in Islamabad to H.E. Syed Fakhr Imam, Federal Secretary, Mr. Omar Hamid Khan from the Ministry of National Food Security and Research; and Mina Dowlatchahi, Country Representative of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, alongside DFID Pakistan Director Annabel Gerry,

**Note to the editors:**

- The desert locust is considered the most harmful migratory pest in the world. Scientists say just a single square kilometre of swarm can contain up to 80 million adults, with the capacity to consume the same amount of food in one day as 35,000 people.
- The Pakistan Global Humanitarian response Plan (GHRP) estimates that around 1.5 million people are affected by the infestation
- Climate conditions in 2019 and 2020 combined to make 2020 likely to be one of the worst on record for severe desert locust impacts. UK aid will strengthen Government of Pakistan and farmers' ability to manage the situation, by strengthening surveillance and monitoring capabilities which will provide information on the level of threat and inform decision making.
- FAO is implementing this work in close collaboration with the Ministry of National Food Security and Research. The Department of Plant Protection has been leading the surveillance and response with the operational support of the National Disaster Management Authority has been, working with provincial governments.
- The UK is providing support to the UN Food and Agriculture Office (FAO), which has the skills and expertise in locust control, to coordinate the response on the ground. DFID will help strengthen the ability of the Pakistan government and farmers in surveillance and monitoring of the locust, to identify the threat and evaluate the risk. It will also help them make better decisions, combat desert locust infestations, and improve locust management in Pakistan.

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