Maintains is an operational research programme that will develop a stronger evidence base on how health, education, nutrition, and social protection systems can adapt and expand to respond to changing needs during and after shocks, whilst also maintaining existing services.

Maintains is a five-year programme, launched in 2018, and funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). The programme will provide new insights on how to improve the ability of social services to respond more quickly, reliably and effectively to shocks such as floods, droughts, disease outbreaks and population displacement.

Enhanced evidence and practice from six focal countries — Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Kenya, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, and Uganda — will inform policy and practice globally.

Maintains will seek solutions that promote equitable responses and support inclusion; and explore disaster risk financing options to enable a swift and efficient scale-up. Ultimately, the programme seeks to improve health, education and nutrition outcomes for affected populations, especially the poorest and most vulnerable people.
Maintains in Pakistan

Pakistan suffers a wide range of hazards and shocks and is particularly vulnerable to climate change, with flooding and drought affecting millions of people.

Flooding – from monsoon rain as well as glacial melt - is the most recurrent hazard, causing devastation to infrastructure and huge human cost. Unplanned urbanization has substantially increased the exposure and vulnerability of the urban poor to flooding.

Conversely, Pakistan is experiencing an increase in the frequency and severity of drought due to a rise in temperatures and rainfall variability, with Balochistan and Sindh worst affected.

Maintains in Pakistan will research the impact of floods and droughts on social services, allowing for a comparison of the needs and appropriate shock-responsive strategies across rapid- and slow-onset shocks.

Pakistan Research Overview

**Social Protection**

How can social protection targeting be refined to support disaster response, particularly drought mitigation?

- How can social protection systems and services be better adapted to drought-prone areas of Pakistan?
- How can instruments and delivery mechanisms be made more effective through the utilisation of a more disaster-responsive National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER)?
- What are the political economy barriers in making social protection systems more shock responsive?

**Health & Nutrition**

How can health and nutrition systems adapt to respond to droughts and floods?

- What is the current state of emergency preparedness and the response of health and nutrition services to recent droughts and floods?
- What are successful shock-responsive approaches and programmes and how can they be optimised?
- Is there a need to create greater synergy between humanitarian and sustainable nutrition goals and responses, and how might that be achieved in practice?

In conducting these studies, Maintains will work directly with the Government of Pakistan, DFID and other development partners. The research will build on and enhance existing evidence and address knowledge gaps.

For more information on Maintains please see the project website: [https://tinyurl.com/project-maintains](https://tinyurl.com/project-maintains)
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Image: ‘Collecting clean water in rural Sindh’ by DFID/Vicki Francis via Flickr, licensed under CC BY 2.0