Khaistan Jaan is an elderly woman from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in north-west Pakistan. She was forced to flee her home in 2008 as a result of violent conflict along the nearby border with Afghanistan.

But Jaan’s return in 2010 was short lived. Heavy monsoon rains in July caused the Indus River to burst its banks, leading to the country’s worst floods in living memory. Jaan was uprooted once again.

A single malnourished cow was all that Jaan and her 21 family members managed to salvage from their farm in Swat Valley. They lost their home, their harvest and their prize ox to the deluge. “We’ve got nothing left,” she said.

Jaan’s family was not alone. Over 200 of their neighbours were also left homeless, and more than 20 million people – one tenth of the population – were directly affected.

Within 24 hours of the initial flooding, WFP was distributing relief food rations across much of flood-affected Pakistan. CERF helped start and maintain WFP’s life-saving operations with a $12.5 million allocation. By August, WFP had delivered food assistance to 3 million people. That number rose to 6 million in September as more food, staff and equipment arrived.

After the floodwaters receded, WFP and CERF were still there to help. Jaan’s family began earning their food by working on WFP-led projects to repair flood-damaged infrastructure and rebuild their community. They spent several hours a day digging irrigation canals and reclaiming the padi fields that had been buried by mudslides.

CERF’s assistance saved more than just lives: 55-year-old Nate Amal, a farmer working with Jaan’s family on the WFP project, said that working for food helped restore his sense of control over his own destiny. He explained: “I left my home and all my belongings. I felt helpless, but this work makes me feel strong again.”

CERF allocated $42 million to the response in August and September. This helped ensure that timely assistance was provided by agencies including WFP, UNICEF, WHO, IOM, UNFPA, UNDP, FAO and UNHCR.