

Refugee Management Support Programme

Support to the Government of Pakistan in Refugee-Related Matters

Context

After more than four decades of protracted displacement, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan continues to host approximately 1.3 million of the 2.7 million registered Afghan refugees globally. The majority reside in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (56%) and Baluchistan (26%), with 78.8% living in urban and semi-urban areas alongside their Pakistani host communities relying on national public services. Approximately, 54% are men, 46% are women and 44% children.

The Solution Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) is the comprehensive regional response framework, developed by the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, with UNHCR's support in 2012. The Support Platform for the SSAR, launched at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum, reaffirmed commitment to the objectives of the SSAR: create conditions conducive to facilitating voluntary repatriation, build Afghan refugee capital in host countries to enable sustainable reintegration, and provide enhanced support for host communities, preserving protection space. In Pakistan, the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), in particular the Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CCAR) and its provincial subsidiaries, is charged with the challenging task of implementing the SSAR and working towards durable solutions for Afghan refugees.

Objective

The Ministry of SAFRON is supported on a federal and provincial level in managing refugee-related matters and in ensuring peaceful coexistence between Afghan refugees and host communities.

Approach

RMSP currently supports the Ministry of SAFRON and the CCAR through two main areas of work:

Project name	Refugee Management Support Programme (RMSP)
Commissioned by	German Federal Foreign Office
Project region	Baluchistan, Sindh and Islamabad, Pakistan
Partners	Ministry of States and Frontier Regions
Implementing agency	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
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- Stabilization projects in the refugee hosting areas of Baluchistan and Sindh:** RMSP is supporting local public institutions in the delivery of services to Afghan refugees and host communities, including access to economic opportunities, with a focus on marginalized women in Baluchistan and Sindh. Complementing the Federal Foreign Office's DAFI program, the DAFI Plus initiative, in collaboration with UNHCR, provides digital and English business skills as well as on-the-job training opportunities to DAFI scholars and educated Afghan refugee youth. In past commissions, RMSP implemented Integrated Water Resource Management, livelihood and youth empowerment measures and provided support to persons with special needs in Baluchistan.
- Urban refugee programme for refugee and host communities:** Responding to the needs of refugee and host communities in selected urban areas, RMSP provides social services and opportunities for interaction in Urban Cohesion Hubs (UCHs), including cultural events, health consultations, literacy and skills classes, legal referrals, a safe space for street children, support to persons with disabilities, youth sports, and Community Initiative



Left: Dress-making and fashion-design courses for women community members, Quetta, Baluchistan, 2021.

Right: Children from the refugee and host community enjoy the child friendly space at the Urban Cohesion Hub, Quetta, Baluchistan, 2020.

¹ Data source: UNHCR, Pakistan – Afghan Refugee Infographic Update, 30 April 2022



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Left: Stabilizing livelihoods through Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), Loralai, Baluchistan, 2019.

Right: Community initiative funds for sustainable livelihoods of vulnerable communities, Quetta, Baluchistan, 2021.

Funds. The two UCHs in Quetta/Satellite Town and Islamabad/Rawalpindi have been handed over to UNHCR for continuation after successful piloting. Three new UCHs; 1 in Karachi and 1 in Quetta /Kharotabad are now being established along with a pilot UCH in Chaman. RMSP is focusing to develop sustainability concepts for the UCHs to make them as sustainable as possible.

The following two areas of work have been completed until November 2021 at the request of the Federal Foreign Office:

- **Advisory services and capacity development for the CCAR at federal and provincial level:** Building on the findings of a Capacity and Training Needs Assessment for the CCAR, RMSP provided support to ensure that capacity development measures are tailored and coordinated as part of a comprehensive capacity development strategy, in line with the CCAR's priorities.
- **Cross-border Coordination on Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration:** Bringing together the Ministry of SAFRON and the Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations as well as key international agencies, RMSP was the secretariat of the Cross-Border Coordination Forum to explore synergies in the areas of skills and livelihoods for Afghan refugees and returnees.

Gender Mainstreaming

RMSP's interventions are gender-responsive and based on the collection of gender-disaggregated data and the definition of gender targets for all activities. RMSP ensures that all activities reach both genders equally, particularly engaging women outreach volunteers to encourage participation of women: For example, by ensuring a 50:50 ratio of women and men as beneficiaries of UCHs. Furthermore, RMSP implements gender-specific measures for vulnerable women in the field of livelihoods: For instance, with women-specific skill development interventions for food processing through solar drying technology or for tailoring and fashion design, giving access to women in education, health and protection services, empowering them to be agents of change. Awareness raising on gender-based violence takes place at the UCHs and the provision of menstrual hygiene kits for the safe menstrual management of women beneficiaries of DAFI Plus is planned.

Results

- To foster peace and social cohesion amongst Afghan refugees and host population in urban settings, 2 Urban Cohesion Hubs (UCHs) were established in Quetta and Rawalpindi. These UCHs benefited a total of 60,000 individuals in multiple services with an almost 50:50 ration women/men.
- To respond to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, RMSP implemented a three-pronged response, i.e. (1) Institutional support to the Government; (2) Public health measures; and (3) Community response activities centered around the RMSP Urban Cohesion Hub (UCH). In this way the communities were able to better manage the negative impacts of the pandemic.
- More than 1,000 individuals (74% women) were provided with livelihood trainings that helped them to earn respectable income for their families.
- To foster tolerance among Afghan refugee and host community youth, RMSP implemented creative expression workshops, music lessons, poetry competitions, cricket matches, and empowered youth to develop 33 youth action projects to benefit their communities. These projects were developed by 52 youth action groups (19 women groups).
- To develop a sense of collectiveness, 44 Community Initiative Fund schemes were implemented in Quetta and Rawalpindi/Islamabad.
- To address the issue of water scarcity in Baluchistan, RMSP rehabilitated 50 indigenous irrigation systems and their associated structures to improve rainwater collection. These measures enabled 90% of the beneficiary households to fulfill their domestic and agricultural water needs.
- To improve social service delivery, RMSP rehabilitated a school complex for children with special needs in Quetta, and has established speech therapy rooms, a skills development center and a playground, which can be used by children from both the refugee and host communities.
- 560 DAFI scholarship graduates and educated Afghan refugee youth (187 women) have gained marketable professional experience and digital skills through the DAFI Plus initiative.

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