



KASHMIR FUND DK

Annual Report 2023

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Abbreviations

KFDK Kashmir Fund Denmark
CMW Community midwife

INTRODUCTION

Help for the hardest hit, in the most remote areas, lies deep in Kashmir Fund DK's DNA. That is why we and our local teams always prioritize people who live far away from the cities, in remote and often isolated villages, areas with few resources and with many in need of help, especially families with children and the elderly. Our 18 years of experience have shown that it is necessary to have this focus.

Conflict, climate change in the form of catastrophic floods and continued lack of access to health facilities in large parts of Kashmir have characterized the year and Kashmir Fund DK's work.

The need for humanitarian aid has been increasing in the areas we work in, and so has people's willingness to help. Kashmir Fund DK has had to scale up our activities considerably, and we have experienced that, both financially and on a human level, more people have chosen to come forward to help.

This has had a major impact on our financial ability, as this account shows, is our best result to date. At the same time, the number of active volunteers has more than doubled, which has given the association the opportunity to reach more people. With this great support we have experienced throughout the year, we have been able to help thousands of families in several parts of Pakistan. It has been overwhelming to see so much humanity through these very difficult times of crisis for the people of Pakistan and especially in Kashmir.

Last year we launched our strategic five-year plan, which aimed to ensure a common thread through our activities and continuous development, so that we can build on our ongoing projects, scale up efforts where possible, and reach as many people as possible. This year, we have continued to work with all our focus areas, and there has been really good development in all of them. You can read in-depth reports on each of them in the report.

WORDS FROM OUR PARTNERS

Jakob Linulf, Ambassador, Royal Danish Embassy Islamabad

Et billede af Jakob

I deeply appreciate the outstanding work carried out by the dedicated professionals of the Kashmir Fund Denmark (KFDK) in the Kashmir region. Your commitment and dedication to provide humanitarian assistance and support to the people of Kashmir is very impressive and inspiring.

It is remarkable to witness the Danish medical experts and doctors who volunteered to provide healthcare consultation services to the vulnerable community in Kashmir who are isolated from the basic amenities of life. Moreover, the recent developments by KFDK such as increasing the number of healthcare centers, medical camps, trainings of health care professionals and establishing of mother & child centers are truly making a difference, to counter the challenges of higher mortality rate, malnutrition, infectious and respiratory diseases etc.

Pakistan currently suffers from very high mortality rate with a rate of 65.2/1000 as of 2020 along with other non-communicable diseases including diabetes, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, which are endangering the life of thousands of Pakistanis. One of the major cause of growing health issues in Pakistan is the climate change as Pakistan is one of the top five vulnerable countries to face the impact of climate change.

I took charge as the Ambassador in Pakistan, during the time when this country was facing the aftermaths of the catastrophic floods of 2022. Tremendous damage was caused to villages, infrastructure and people's livelihoods. The calamity was of incomprehensible dimensions, yet the reality for so many people and the Government of Pakistan. It not only hindered the local man to afford healthcare but it also increased the burden of water borne diseases such as dengue fever, malnutrition and heat exhaustion.

I am pleased to acknowledge that Denmark responded to Pakistan's appeal with support through multiple channels and by providing flexible funding to its humanitarian strategic partners. Denmark supported the UN's [humanitarian] flash appeal for Pakistan with 10 million Danish kroner to the UN Refugee Organization, UNHCR. This funding was provided in addition to Denmark's core annual funding of DKK 50 mil to UNCHR's work for Pakistan and the region.

In conference on a Climate Resilient Pakistan held in Geneva in January 2023, Denmark announced a new Danish humanitarian contribution of almost DKK 27 million in un-earmarked funding for UNICEF's work in 2023. This contribution will support children in Pakistan as part of the overall flood response, to cater their health, nutrition, education, water & sanitation needs.

In addition to financial assistance, Denmark also contributed in providing clean drinking water and extended an offer for immediate relief assistance to Pakistan. Water expert team from the Danish Emergency Management Agency set up a drinking water facility in Khipro, Sindh, in early September 2022. With a capacity to provide up to 120,000 litres of clean drinking water a day, the water facility delivered approximately 2.7 million litres of clean drinking water to the people of Khipro and nearby areas.

Organizations like Danish Emergency Management Agency or Kashmir Fund Denmark are doing a tremendous job in improving the lives of people in vulnerable communities. I eagerly look forward to see continued progress and greater accomplishments of Kashmir Fund DK and hope to see them in Pakistan every year to hear about their ongoing successes.

Jakob Linulf
Ambassador

WORDS FROM OUR PARTNERS

Siddique Hussain, Country Director, Chairman Community Services Program (CSP)

Working as KFDK Country Director for over 1 years, I am so grateful to be able to manage and implement various interventions to bring positive change in lives.

In Pakistan, an underdeveloped country with a population of nearly 241.49 million, KFDK has been working for 18 years. To ensure our part for humanity, KFDK has marked indelible impression during COVID-19 and Flood 2022 to bring hopes back. I would like to highlight the efforts KFDK has done specifically for flood Affectees in harder areas of Pakistan including Hana Orack, Quetta, Naseerabad, Jaffarabad and Jhal Magsi Baluchistan. KFDK took lead in relief activities and Ramadan support in Sindh also and facilitated affected communities in Matyari, Benazirabad, Sanghar and shikarpur . KFDK didn't limited its services for Baluchistan and Sindh rather reached Punjab and provided essentials of life in Mailcy and Vehari the most affected areas.

KFDK was also on forefront during rain flood response in Neelum Valley AJK. Our top most priority is provision of health services in remote valleys of AJK including Neelum, Muzaffarabad & Haveli AJK. KFDK has provided health supplies to DHQ Neelum to strengthen the health institute. We are also delighted to reinforce the orthopedic department of DHQ Neelum to make the department operational. KFDK has realized the need of hour and added water services in its scope of work to provide safe clean drinking water to all. During the tenure, we have constructed water supply schemes in Pakhlan (Muzaffarabad) and Phulawai district Neelum.

This year, KFDK has launched a new strategy. This is valid for the next five years and will focus on it. First, strengthen the government health institutions & operation of Mother & Child Health centers. Second, Capacity building of Health practitioners, CMWs and volunteers. Thirdly, water interventions for those who are facing water scarcity and are forced to use contaminated water. Finally, Medical camps, supporting the needy communities during emergencies, Ramadan support program and Qurbani program.

Compared to the previous plan, there are several new things. As the scope of work expands and now includes humanitarian response and a clear focus on the advocacy agenda.

After my one-year journey, I am still passionate to work with KFDK to end the cycle of poverty and improve lives in Pakistan.

Muhammad Siddique
Country Director, Kashmir Fund Denmark

1.000 LIVES FOR KASHMIR

This is our long-term overarching programme, under which other key activities have been implemented. The aim is simply to reduce the deaths of mothers and new-borns during childbirth. The beginning of life should be a moment of joy and happiness, not a moment of sadness due to preventable deaths. Bringing a new life into this world should never be, at the cost of losing one.

KDFK has since 2016, had this as the main focus, and worked to ensure safer childbirths for women in remote Kashmiri villages. We want to ensure that expectant mothers have access to support and counselling during their pregnancies, and access to facilities where a safe delivery can be done, so that the new-born can get a good and healthy start of life.

Many deaths occur in low resource and particularly remote areas, that lack access to hospitals and doctors due to long distances and financial problems. KDFK has therefore initiated the construction of family health care centres in remote parts of AJK. Previously these centres were named as “Mother and Child Health Centres”, but as we have seen a development in the numbers of patients visiting these centres, that include all family members, including a significant number of males, who visit the centres for first-aid and other similar issues, we have decided to rename them as Family Health Centres to better highlight the role these centres play in the local community.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, these centres gained an additional role, as they had to assist with Covid-19- related initiatives to ensure the local populations was provided with relevant guidance and materials. This was in addition to the usual activities of these centres, where the following services are offered to the communities:

- Every 3 hours a child is born under safe conditions in one of our health centres
- Our health centres have created a safe environment for more than 2000 births in 2022
- Over 90 patients seek daily help at one of our health centres
- In 2022, approx. 1,400 women/citizens participated in health-promoting information campaigns
- Over 14,000 people have been vaccinated against tetanus at one of our health centres

During the past two years, the number of health centres established by KDFK have almost doubled. In the summer of 2020, we had 14 health centres in 3 districts. By the summer of 2022, we had 26 health centres in 4 districts of AJK, and at this time in 2023 a total of 32 health centres have been established, and hopefully with the support of the donors the number of functioning Family Health Centres will still increase in future.

HEALTH ISSUES IN KASHMIR

According to data from The World Bank, the number of physicians per citizen in Pakistan is 5 times lower compared to Denmark. Moreover, many doctors, nurses and other health care professionals relocate abroad, and others may not want to establish their practice in remote areas of Pakistan. This is also the case in Kashmir, even though it is one of the most beautiful areas of Pakistan. The prevalence of several physical health issues and mental problems is significantly higher in Kashmir compared to other regions of Asia and Europe.

One of the major issues in this population is a higher mortality rate of new born babies, children under the age of 5 years and pregnancy/childbirth related maternal deaths. Moreover, malnutrition, infectious, respiratory and chronic diseases is another cause of the reduced life expectancy observed in the area. The low availability of health care professionals contributes to the health status of people living in these areas. This is why Kashmir Fund DK has decided to go for a three-step strategy in which we focus on medical camps with free of charges examination, tests and medicine, education of health care professionals, in this case midwives, and establishment of Health centres to provide health care services. Several medical camps, training and educational workshops have been held in Kashmir and will continue to be organized.

OTHER PROJECTS

Water Supply Projects: Fulfilling Essential Needs and Improving Lives

Access to clean water is not only a fundamental human need but also a key objective outlined by the World Health Organization's Sustainable Development Goals. At KFDK, we have always recognized the significance of water projects and have made them a top priority. In 2020, we successfully executed one of the largest water projects in Neelum, benefiting thousands of individuals by providing them with a reliable water supply. Since several water projects have been carried out and provided clean drinking water for thousands of families in Kashmir.

In addition to Neelum, we have undertaken various other water supply projects in different districts, including Kotli, Haveli and Bhimber.

In 2007, due to heavy shooting from Indian troops, the residents of Chaknat village, located near the line of control, were forced to migrate to Jamgar camp. Unfortunately, the 280 families residing in Jamgar faced a significant challenge - the lack of access to clean water. This not only affected their overall well-being but also hindered educational opportunities, particularly for children, and impacted the health of women.

For years, the local community had been appealing to the government for support in establishing a pipeline to bring clean water to Jamgar. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, they reached out to KFDK for assistance. Responding to their plea, we swiftly implemented a water supply system that now caters to the majority of families in Jamgar. As a result, they no longer have to rely on contaminated water or spend valuable time traveling long distances to bring clean water.

Furthermore, we also established a water supply system at the local market in Jamgar to serve those who are not directly connected to the main pipelines. This intervention has significantly improved the lives of over 3000 individuals by ensuring access to clean water. The benefits are manifold - reduced time spent fetching water, enabling children to focus on their personal development, and a decrease in waterborne infections due to the provision of clean water.

At KFDK, we fully understand the wide-ranging advantages that come with establishing a reliable supply of clean water. These benefits include time savings, improved health, and the potential for enhanced educational and economic opportunities. Building on our previous experiences, we remain committed to continuing our efforts in providing clean water to the deserving people of Kashmir.

By prioritizing water supply projects, we aim to make a lasting impact on the lives of individuals, fostering a healthier, more prosperous future for all in the region.

Ramadan and Qurbani

Eid means feast in Arabic and there are two major eids in Islam. The first is called Eid Ul Fitr and marks the end of the Ramadan month. The second Eid Ul Adha marks the end of Hajj. Both festivals are pivotal in the Islamic calendar and are celebrated by Muslims worldwide. In Pakistan a large part of the population lives in poverty and often lack the resources to celebrate Eid in a decent matter.

It is and has always been important for Kashmir Fund DK to support families who live in the most remote and poor areas that are scarcely supported by other organizations, as those families are the most vulnerable. Throughout the past years it has been essential for Kashmir Fund DK to supply deserving families with food packages in Ramadan month. The packages have been adjusted to cover the basic needs for a whole month. Kashmir Fund DK works in all Pakistan and have in 2022 supported several hundreds of families in the remote areas of Kashmir and also families in Sindh and Balochistan affected by the devastating floods. These are families who are struggling every day and would have struggled even more without the food packages. This year we have been able to help and supply hundreds of families during the month of Ramadan.

The end of Hajj month is marked with animal scarification and distribution of meat. It is not achievable for majority of families in Kashmir who lack opportunities to buy and sacrifice an animal. During Eid Ul Adha Kashmir Fund DK distributed Qurbani meat from the Kashmir Fund DK sponsored Mother and health care centers benefitting more than 19000 individuals all over Neelum and Haveli district.

Disaster relief

has also been an important part of our efforts. In November 2020, after violent shootings in the Neelum valley, which left several families homeless just before winter hit the area, we had to move out quickly and were among the very first ones to be present.

During flash floods that hit Neelum valley in the summer of 2021, KFDK was able to provide immediate relief items and food packs to the affected families. Our efforts ensured that all the affected families received clothes, food and other things necessary to get through the hardships.

In the future, we will also be alert and ready to assist whenever disaster hits, so that KFDK teams can bring immediate relief and help in saving precious lives.

Establishment of First aid

We have supported the establishment and training of first aid teams in Bhimber district near the LOC, so they can react quickly in case of an emergency in the region.

Vaccination campaigns and equipment for hospitals

We have supported vaccination campaigns in district Haveli, and other smaller measures in Kashmir.

KFDK has supported District Hospitals in Haveli and Neelum with upgrading and buying necessary equipment especially for laboratories, Maternity wards and operations theaters. As bloodtests could not be taken, orthopedic operations were limited and instruments could not be sterilized and very limited light at delivery beds in maternity wards. Equipment as bloodanalyzing machines, lamps, sterilization machines and heaters have been bought, so as many people as possible can be diagnosed correctly, treated and operated safely in the local hospitals.

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FINAL THOUGHTS

Kashmir Fund DK wants to help women and children in some of the most vulnerable areas. We want to give them a helping hand wherever we can. Our efforts are 100% dependent on our donors and volunteers.

A special thank you goes out to all those generous donors, that have made it possible for us to be on the ground, and able to help with disaster relief and our long-term health projects. It has only been possible to implement all the amazing projects mentioned in this report, because of the hard work of our volunteers, generous support from our donors and sponsors, and assistance from friends, family and partners in Denmark and Pakistan. Without their efforts and support, none of this would have been possible. We sincerely hope that you will continue to support us and our projects in the years to come.

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!

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