



KASHMIR FUND DK

Annual Report 2024

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Abbreviations

KFDK Kashmir Fund Denmark
CMW Community midwife

INTRODUCTION

Adnan Ali Khan, Chairman of KFDK

The last year has been heavily impacted by the fallout from the floods of 2022/2023 and economic hardships in the areas that we operate in. Kashmir Fund DK (KFDK) has therefore been active in all our key target areas; disaster relief, health and water facilities, reaching out to thousands of people in different parts of Kashmir, Sindh and Baluchistan. Since our establishment in 2005, when the catastrophic earthquake hit Kashmir, working in the remotest areas has been a key part of our work, and it will continue to be so in the future. Climate change related flooding will increase the challenges in the regions that we operate in. Increasing hardships faced by the locals, often marginalized communities struggling to survive. We are trying to help these communities by increasing access to clean drinking water and improving local health infrastructure, so they can better handle the challenges.

More than one year after the catastrophic floods ravaged Pakistan, millions of people and especially children were still in the need of humanitarian aid and access to clean drinking water. In several of the hardest hit areas, which were already among the most vulnerable in the country, and where children already suffered from high levels of malnutrition and limited access to clean drinking water, conditions became worse. Destruction of vital infrastructure – including roads, bridges, schools and public health facilities – exacerbated pre-existing inequalities, leaving millions exposed to hunger and disease. In particular, lack of food remained a serious problem for millions of people. KFDK's activities focussed on malnourished children in Sindh and Baluchistan provinces. Areas where KFDK will increase our activities in the future, with many projects already planned for 2024/2025 in these regions.

Water scarcity is also very common in Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK), especially in mountainous terrain where water sources are often far away and polluted. With climate changes, some of these streams are now running dry, making it hard for locals to access clean drinking water. Polluted water is one of the main causes of ill health for many. Women and girls have to walk several kilometres every day to get clean drinking water, which, especially for the girls, has a negative impact on their schooling. We are trying to increase access to clean drinking water where they live, to make life easier for them and for the girls to be able to attend school. To help improve the lives of women and girls, we have now established 41 Family Healthcare Centres, where our 41 midwives or our "super women", offer daily services to remote and vulnerable communities. Under harsh conditions, these midwives have secured help for thousands of women so that they could give birth in safe conditions. They also help the elderly, the young and men with first aid, health awareness or other basic health care they may need. That's why our healthcare centres are for the whole family!

None of this would have been possible without strong support from our donors and volunteers. We have again this year witnessed a strengthen of our team of volunteers, with more people joining in, and those already active, taking up bigger responsibilities. This is key to our success. Hopefully this will lead to KFDK being able to reach out to more remote communities and provide much needed assistance. Thank you all for your support!

WORDS FROM OUR PARTNERS

Jakob Linulf, Ambassador, Royal Danish Embassy Islamabad

Kashmir Fund Denmark (KFDK) offers critical humanitarian assistance to people in desperate need. KFDK's work is indeed impressive and a source of inspiring for all of us to take action against sufferings and poverty.

I sincerely appreciate the outstanding work carried out by the dedicated professionals of KFDK in the Kashmir region. It is with great anticipation that I have learned that KFDK plans initiating actions in the Thar area of Sindh Province. I have visited the area and seen with my own eyes the huge humanitarian needs there.

It is remarkable to witness Danish medical experts and doctors volunteering to provide healthcare services to vulnerable communities in Kashmir who are isolated from the basic amenities of life. The positive 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 suffers from a very high infant mortality rate of 51/1000 as of 2022 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 causes of growing health issues in Pakistan is the climate change as Pakistan is one of World's most 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. Still today it not only hinders local people to afford healthcare but it also increases the burden of water borne diseases such as dengue fever, malnutrition and heat exhaustion.

Denmark collaborates closely with Pakistan on fighting climate change. Since 2022 our countries have demonstrated strong mutual commitment to the cause via our green government-to-government agreement. As a key component the Danish Energy Agency partners with Pakistani counterparts to accelerate the contribution of renewable energy in Pakistan's energy mix.

In 2024 our governments also signed a government agreement to facilitate Danish investments in Pakistan within carbon neutral logistics, infrastructure and green transition. This will lead to an even more substantial contribution from Denmark's leading companies towards sustainability and climate change fighting in Pakistan.

KFDK as well as other Danish organizations and businesses 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 KFDK and hope to see them in Pakistan every year to hear about their ongoing successes.



WORDS FROM OUR PARTNERS

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

As the Country Director of Kashmir Fund Denmark (KFDK) in Pakistan, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Board of Directors, management, and dedicated volunteers of KFDK for their unwavering commitment to humanitarian causes. KFDK has established itself as a prominent organization in both Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, focusing on enhancing healthcare services by setting up family healthcare facilities, Capacity building of CMWs and organizing free medical camps. I am pleased to share that KFDK has successfully implemented two vital water projects in Palri and the Sharda Neelum Valley, addressing the critical need for safe, clean drinking water through two Water Supply Schemes. Throughout the reporting period, we established 13 Family Healthcare Centers in remote villages of AJK, effectively providing essential health services to underserved populations. In our outreach efforts, KFDK has reached marginalized families in Sindh and Balochistan, providing them with food rations during the holy month of Ramadan. We are also proud to have completed the Qurbani project this year, further contributing to the welfare of our communities. Additionally, we organized two free eye camps in Darra Batangi and Bandi Mohri within the Jehlum Valley of AJK, facilitating essential eye care services followed by operations of referred patients.

Looking ahead, a significant initiative for this year includes the Strengthening Health Facilities Project in AJK. KFDK has committed support toward enhancing the Tehsil Head Quarter Kel- Neelum Valley and RHC Chanari, Jehlum Valley by providing essential medical equipment to ensure the smooth operation of the hospital. We have initiated the project and hope to complete it within the agreed timeframe.

As we reflect on our work, I want to share the demise of our esteemed Community Midwife, Ms. Fouzia Qadeer. KFDK has extended financial support to her family during their difficult time, recognizing their challenges in her care.

I am confident that KFDK continues to achieve significant milestones in its mission to uplift humanity, and I believe that our ongoing efforts will exceed expectations.



Considerations from a volunteer

Farah B. Choudry

After much consideration about working with charity and after researching various organizations, I chose to contact Kashmir Fund. I had followed their work since the devastating earthquake in Kashmir in 2005, which formed the basis for Kashmir Fund DK. It has come to my knowledge that it is the only Danish/Pakistani NGO that voluntarily sends Danish/Pakistani doctors to carry out medical camps in Kashmir, which benefit lots of people who do not have basic help available on a daily basis. This work inspired me to contact the organization.

As a doctor, I thought that with my medical knowledge, I would also be able to contribute by helping people with health issues.

Over the past few years, I have gradually become more and more integrated into the core of the Kashmir Fund. I have been met by a lot of dedicated people who spend their free time promoting an extremely important charity, which includes disaster relief, building health centers and training the local population in an area where no other NGOs are present.

The real reason why I have chosen to become a volunteer at Kashmir Fund, however, is due to the professionalism, respect, kindness and, not least, the passion for making a difference, with which I have been met at Kashmir Fund. It is a pleasure to work in an organization with passionate people, where you work as a team to help other people in need. There is no political agenda in the organization. There is a good and respectful tone, ongoing development and innovation, and as a volunteer you have a great influence on shaping and are assigned responsibility for carrying out the charity work.

I have chosen to work with Kashmir Fund DK because the organization's work is compatible with my humane values. In the future, I look forward to continuing to work with these values in hopes of serving people in need.



1000 LIVES FOR KASHMIR

Family Health Centers

This is our long-term overarching programme, under which other key activities have been implemented. The aim is to reduce the pregnancy and delivery related mortality and morbidity of mothers and newborns/infants. 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 observed by time that all family members including a significant number of males visit the centres for first-aid and other similar issues, we decided to rename them as Family Health Centres to better highlight the role these centres play in the local community.

These centres played an important role during the Covid-19 pandemic, as they assisted with Covid-19-related initiatives to ensure that the local populations was provided with relevant guidance and materials. This was in addition to the usual activities of these centres.

Since 2016 KDFK has established 41 Health Care Centres, located in District Neelum, Haveli, Jehlum and Bhimber. All of the centres are managed by skilled community midwives (CMW). Nine of the Family Health Centres are established during 2023.

Each CMW do a lot of efforts in her area to get pregnant women registered to ensure proper follow-up during the pregnancy.

Results from Health Care centres are as following:

- More than 200 000 patients have visited our health care centres
- Over 10 000 deliveries have been conducted under safe conditions in our health centres
- Over 80 000 women have participated in regularly held health-promoting information sessions
- Over 60 000 women have been vaccinated against tetanus at our health centres

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 for People in Kashmir

Access to clean water is not only a fundamental human right but also a critical objective outlined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6), which aims to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Kashmir Fund DK (KFDK) has consistently recognized the importance of water supply projects and have made them one of the top priorities in our work.

In 2020, we successfully executed one of the largest water projects in Neelum, which significantly benefited thousands of individuals by providing them with a reliable source of clean water. Our commitment to improving water access extends beyond Neelum as we have undertaken various water supply initiatives across different districts, including Kotli, Haveli, and Bhimber, ensuring that clean drinking water reaches thousands of families in Kashmir.

The situation faced by the residents of Chaknat village, who were forced to migrate to Jamgar camp in 2007 due to heavy military conflict, resulted in lack of water supply for the 280 families residing at Jamgar. This deficiency did not only compromise their overall well-being but also hindered educational opportunities for children and adversely affected the health of women as water supply is prioritized by the families compared to education. The children had to be a part of the chain to supply the families with water.

For years, the local community appealed to the government for assistance in establishing a pipeline to deliver clean water to Jamgar. Recognizing the urgency of their plight, they turned to KFDK for help. In response, KFDK implemented a comprehensive water supply system that now serves most of the families in Jamgar. As a result, these families no longer rely on contaminated water sources or spending valuable time traveling long distances to obtain clean water.

Additionally, we established a water supply system at the local market in Jamgar to those not directly connected to the main pipelines. We believe, that this project has significantly improved the lives of over 3,000 individuals by ensuring consistent access to clean water. The benefits are manifold: reduced time spent fetching water allows children to focus on their education, while the provision of clean water may have led to a decrease in waterborne diseases.

At KFDK, we fully understand the extensive advantages that come with establishing a reliable supply of clean water. These benefits include time savings, improved health outcomes, and the potential for enhanced educational and economic opportunities. Building on our previous experiences, we have now launched our largest water project to date.

Our aim is to provide clean water for people in Tharparker, Sindh during the upcoming years. The Tharparker Desert in Pakistan faces a severe water crisis that significantly impacts the lives of its residents. This region, characterized by extreme temperatures and limited rainfall, struggles with inadequate access to clean and potable water. Many communities rely on sporadic rainfall and seasonal water sources, which are often insufficient to meet their daily needs. The lack of reliable water supply leads to malnutrition, health issues, and increased poverty levels. Women and children are particularly affected, as they often spend hours each day searching for water.

Despite the government's efforts to implement water supply projects, the persistent scarcity of water in Thar remains a critical challenge.

Our efforts align with the global vision of SDG 6, as we strive to ensure that everyone has access to clean drinking water, thereby contributing to the overall well-being.



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 2024 supported several hundreds of families in the remote areas of Kashmir, Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan who still are affected by the devastating floods in 2022. These are families who are struggling every day and would have struggled even more without the food packages. These households are living in tents having no source of income. Women, children and elderly people of these remote areas are highly vulnerable and facing severe shortage of food items. 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 Maternal & Child Healthcare. The overall socio-economic condition of local communities in these districts of AJ&K is very poor and vulnerable where people are living without having health care and educational facilities. Due to extreme poverty, majority of the community members can't buy meat and other food items having good ratio of protein. Women and children in these rural areas are facing the issue of malnutrition. Kashmir Fund Denmark had organized Qurbani in hard-to-reach areas of Neelum Valley, and Attock Punjab benefitting several hundred families.



Disaster relief

Disaster relief has also been an important part of our efforts. The devastating flood in 2022 in Sindh and Balochistan affected millions and today many of those families are still affected by lack of housing and access to food. We have reached out to them providing them with food supplies.



Equipment for hospitals

KFDK has supported District Hospital in Haveli with upgrading and buying necessary equipment especially for the Maternity wards and operations theaters. It has always been important for us that a woman can have a safe delivery all year round. With our help the District Hospital in Haveli are capable of assisting women to deliver safely.



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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Uniq Logistic

