

# DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

United Nations Development Programme

PROJECT BRIEF



Reforms mandated by the 18th Amendment will bring decision-making closer to communities.

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## Decentralization, Human Rights and Local Governance

UNDP Pakistan's approach to leaving no one behind through community stabilization, health governance, social inclusion and rights-based development focuses on increased awareness of rights, access to basic social and protection services, as well as building capacities of state institutions to better implement their respective mandates. To achieve these short, medium, and long-term objectives, UNDP's Decentralization, Human Rights and Local Governance (DHL) Project provides conceptual, infrastructural, technical, and capacity development support to national and sub-national governments, statutory bodies, civil-society and community-based organisations, as well as to community members themselves.

### QUICK FACTS

**Duration:** 2013–2022

**Government partners:** Federal Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Inter-provincial Coordination, Inter-provincial Coordination Departments, Local Government Departments, Law Departments, Social Welfare and Human Rights Departments. Ministry of Health, Health Departments

**Funding partners:** Government of Germany, Government of Australia, GIZ Pakistan.

**Location:** Islamabad and all four Provinces

**Annual budget (2021):** US\$ 1,855,197

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Objective



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The project aims to create stronger democratic processes, institutions, and community-based structures at all levels to enable their more inclusivity, responsiveness, and accountability for citizens, as well as effective in equitable service delivery, thereby accelerating access to rights-based development.

### Expected results

- Establish & strengthen constitutional federal organs to conduct devolution-related duties and support their policy, regulatory and supervisory roles, particularly on community stabilization and health governance.
- Support provincial governments for developing inclusive legislative, institutional and policy frameworks on human rights, social protection and access to gender-justice.
- Support local governments in all four provinces to adopt and use innovative initiative, methods and structures for participatory development planning, implementation, and monitoring, improving the rights-based development, local level disengagement, rehabilitation, and social inclusion.
- Integrate decentralized, rights discourse and local governance into advocacy and civil society agendas for community stabilization.

### Key achievements

- In partnership with OHCHR, DHL, Ministry of Human Rights and provincial Human Rights Departments has designed and operationalized Pakistan's first Human Rights Information Management System (HRIMS), a digital human rights data collection, analysis and reporting system and is supporting supported MoHR in the establishment of a National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up (NRMF). Both systems are based on best practices established by OHCHR to strengthen human rights monitoring, implementation, and reporting.
- Capacity building support is being provided through specific programmes to strengthen effective implementation of rights-based policies and legislation federally [i.e., Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2018] and provincially (KP Human Rights Policy, various rights-based legislations in Sindh and Balochistan) and to enhance awareness of rights holders on the scope of rights protection through legislation and available remedies and human rights mechanisms in case of violations.
- Establishment of gender desks in all Newly Merged Areas (NMAs) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Swat, Karachi, and Multan which provide crucial referral services and link local government departments with local civil society organisations. This is complemented by a gender strategy for NMAs, through DHL's support to

the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in taking ownership of its own mandate on women empowerment. This model is now being replicated across Pakistan.

- Support to the Ministry of Human Rights in the development and launch of a National Action Plan on Business & Human Rights through a robust consultative process. UNDP is now coordinating with federal and provincial stakeholders for designing its nation-wide implementation.
- Responding to human rights challenges resulting from COVID-19 pandemic in Pakistan, through support to federal and provincial stakeholders in championing rights-based response and recovery efforts by the Government of Pakistan. This included DHL support to MoHR in undertaking a rights-based analysis of response to COVID-19, including recommendations for the way forward. In partnership with MoHR, DHL has engaged all provinces in taking forward relevant recommendations at the provincial level.
- Support to newly established offices of provincial departments in NMAs, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to better respond to citizen's needs through innovative capacity development approaches, such as twinning (piloted for the first time in Pakistan) or by multiplying state-society dialogues.
- The Local Level Disengagement and Rehabilitation Pilot Project implemented in Swat, Karachi and Multan has helped build resilience in local communities, especially within the vulnerable and at-risk segments of population. This is now being replicated in Quetta.
- Provision of technical assistance in drafting of a bill and consultative process leading to the passing of a first of its kind Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2018 in Pakistan.
- Capacity development of government and civil-society stakeholders on addressing stigma and discrimination against HIV/AIDS is on-going, in close partnership with UNAIDS as the Secretariat of the Joint UN Program on HIV/AIDS and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.
- COVID-19 related support to federal, provincial, and local governments, especially NDMA and MOHR, which included psycho-social support helplines, technical assistance, and formation of a task force on human rights and COVID-19 (and other disasters).
- DHL hosts and leads the Human Rights Task Force (HRTF) and the Informal Human Rights Working Group (IHWRG) as coordination mechanisms aimed for improving synergies on rights-based development programmes being implemented by international partners and UN agencies across the country.

## What's next?

- Improving capacities of national and subnational institutions including civil society organisations to implement their respective mandates for rights-based development, community stabilization and inclusive service delivery, contributing to more cohesive and peaceful communities and more responsive governance structures.
- At the federal level, DHL will continue providing technical assistance to the NDMA and MoHR to ensure a rights-based approach to relief and recovery efforts from health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and any other disasters. DHL will continue to engage at the provincial level to support the implementation of key recommendations on rights-based COVID-19 response and recovery.
- At the provincial level, DHL will continue to support Human Rights, Local Governance and Social Welfare Departments in developing and implementing their respective policies. Building on the institutional digitization support provided to the Ministry of Human Rights, UNDP will support GoP in meeting international treaty body reporting obligations.
- DHL will also focus on social inclusion and social protection of women, transgender persons, and other vulnerable groups. This will be implemented in all four Provinces of Pakistan via the multiplication of Gender Desks providing legal aid, referral services and ensuring that the priorities of women are considered at all decision-making levels.
- To create an enabling environment for community stabilization, DHL will continue working at the community level for vulnerable and at-risk youth, persons with disabilities and minorities by strengthening linkages between communities and the local government stakeholders. This will involve training relevant officials, forming sustainable community structures and providing crucial psycho-social support as well as training in skills development.
- The project will continue supporting the implementation of a comprehensive health governance and social inclusion intervention against HIV related stigma and discrimination programme, in partnership with relevant UN agencies as well as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.
- Under the Joint UN HIV initiative, DHL designed and rolled out an advocacy and communication strategy and behaviour change campaign on HIV prevention tools in collaboration with WHO and UNAIDS under the Business Unusual Fund (BUF) 2021. This will be further expanded in 2022 focusing on human rights, social

inclusion and addressing stigma and discrimination against key populations.

## ▪ Where do we work:

Nationwide.