



IOM together with the Ministry of Interior organized a Steering Committee meeting to discuss progress on the Readmission Case Management System Project in Islamabad © IOM

FROM THE CHIEF OF MISSION’S DESK

The first quarter of 2021 was full of events for IOM Pakistan. The Migration Management Department organized a National Workshop to discuss cooperation to combat human trafficking, and a Readmission Case Management Steering Committee meeting, with the aim to strengthen and institutionalize the protection of victims of trafficking, and equip key stakeholders with knowledge, skills and tools to operationalise labour migration policies and programmes. These were a great success and a good start for further collaboration in expanding the number of trained protection experts within the government departments and non-governmental organizations.

As part of its efforts to support the Governments’ responses to humanitarian crisis in Pakistan, IOM released its [Crisis Response Plan](#) to provide donors and partners with an overview of funding needs in 2021 and beyond. The Plan is a response to the evolving needs and aspirations of those impacted by, or at risk of, crisis and displacement. IOM’s appeal for increased humanitarian support calls for mobilization of **US\$ 8.1 million** to implement interventions that respond to the four objectives of the CRP: (i) *to save and respond to needs through humanitarian assistance and protection*, (ii) *address the drivers and longer term impacts of crises and displacement through investments in recovery and crisis prevention*, (iii) *strengthen preparedness and reduce disaster risk*, and (iv) *contribute to an evidence based and efficient crisis response system*.

Additionally, IOM launched a [Strategic Response and Recovery Plan \(SRRP\)](#) for 2021, that will allow IOM to respond to the COVID-19 related needs. IOM Pakistan’s SRRP requires **US\$ 6.23 million** to scale up public health measures, increase equitable access to health services for migrants, displaced persons and other vulnerable groups – including access to vaccines, and to address the humanitarian, socio-economic and protection needs that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

Mio Sato, Chief of Mission
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Emergency and Post-Crisis Assistance

During the quarter, IOM supported over **83,211 families**. IOM has been working with partners on ground to contribute towards the development and widespread distribution of key awareness messages on COVID-19 risks, installation of handwashing stations and ensuring that local health facilities have the infrastructure to meet WASH standards and other Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures, particularly in Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab.

IOM is also coordinating with implementing partners to provide **5,741 shelter repair packages** to flood-affected families, which include rope, saw, hammers, nails, shovels and a range of other equipment. Specialized trainers continuously provided training and monitored shelter construction sites to ensure beneficiaries incorporate cost-effective disaster risk reduction techniques to build safer shelters. In terms of supporting the overall flood early recovery intervention, IOM facilitated installation of **215 communal hand pumps** to secure the water provision, hygiene and sanitation services, so as to avoid WASH-related diseases and allow people to start on the road to recovery. In addition, IOM supported rehabilitation of **WASH facilities in 85 school compounds**. Each school was provided with water supply and adequate handwashing facilities both within and outside the toilet blocks so that children and facility members have access to handwashing facilities easily and more frequently, to prevent the spread of coronavirus. During the quarter, IOM continued to facilitate a wide range of Cash for Work (CfW) activities to support livelihoods. A total of 259 CfW schemes were completed, which benefited **2,590 households**.

Cross-Border Activities

IOM Pakistan is continuing its effort on collecting outflow data of Undocumented Afghan migrants at Chaman and Torkham border crossing points, to better understand migration movements taking place from Pakistan to Afghanistan. Over the quarter, the team recorded **3,015 Undocumented Afghan migrants from Chaman (2,594) and Torkham (421), under its Flow Monitoring activities**. Based on interviews conducted with migrants departing from Pakistan, the main challenges identified by returnees were: (i) livelihood arrangements after return (27%), settling in a new city (27%), and (iii) search of employment opportunities (26%). IOM's flow monitoring reports can be accessed through [Pakistan | DTM – Displacement Tracking Matrix](#) website.

Monitoring the status of **Points of Entry (POE)** in terms of COVID-19 impact on human mobility continued throughout the quarter, with more detailed data collected for 8 airports (Islamabad, Lahore, Sialkot, Faisalabad, Quetta, Peshawar, Multan and Karachi) and 2 land border crossings (Chaman and Torkham).

IOM has implemented a **Longitudinal Study** for Pakistani citizens who returned to Pakistan in 2020 through IOM's Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programme. The study aimed to understand how returnees navigate support services, their living conditions after return and the process of adapting and reintegrating into host communities. Data will be collected in predefined intervals to inform evidence-based decision making and policy choices for improved return and reintegration outcomes.



A family's belongings are laden on a truck at the Chaman Border, while they prepare to return to Afghanistan © IOM

Integrated Border Management and Counter Trafficking

IOM, in partnership with the Pakistan Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), hosted a [National Workshop](#) on identifying victims of Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Smuggling of Migrants (SOM) in January 2021. The workshop was attended by representatives from FIA's Immigration and Anti-Human Smuggling Directorates, Social Welfare Departments, Police and local NGOs. The workshop was the first of a series of workshops to be delivered to support direct assistance and protection to victims of trafficking in all provinces of Pakistan. This initiative has been generously supported by the European Union-funded Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants – Asia and the Middle East to combat and monitor trafficking in persons (GLO.ACT).



Under the [Readmission Case Management System \(RCMS\)](#) project, IOM works closely with various government agencies to facilitate the development and deployment of electronic RCMS to an additional 14 EU Member States. The RCMS, developed by Pakistan's National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) with support from the EU Readmission Capacity Building Facility (EURCAP), is currently implemented by 4 EU Member States (Belgium, France, Greece and Germany) and has digitalized the flow of information between actors involved in the return and readmission process, allowing greater time-efficiency, transparency, accountability and access to real-time data.

In March 2021, IOM hosted the first meeting of the [Readmission Case Management System Steering Committee](#), under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Interior (MOI), to discuss progress on the project and address challenges in order to initiate NADRA's deployment visits to EU countries.

IOM also successfully constituted a [Returnee Reintegration Coordination Committee](#) and hosted its first meeting during March to discuss challenges faced by returnees, current mechanisms of assistance and recommendations to provide reintegration services using data from the RCMS. Participants included officials from Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development, Federal Investigation Agency and National Vocation and Technical Training Commission. Subsequently, the RCMS Steering Committee and Returnee Reintegration Coordination Committee will meet quarterly to discuss their respective agendas in order to maximize the benefits associated with the use of the RCMS.

Additionally, IOM created video tutorials for the use of RCMS. These tutorials will serve as a self-paced learning system for all end-users of the RCMS, allowing them to effectively use the interface and troubleshoot common issues. In the following months, IOM will work in partnership with the Government of Pakistan on strengthening efforts to promote sustainable return and reintegration of irregular Pakistani migrants.

Diaspora Engagement

Through the project "Engaging Diaspora in Strengthening the Health Sector in Pakistan", funded by the IOM Development Fund, IOM aims to build the capacity of the Pakistan Government to engage the Pakistani diaspora and leverage their skills and expertise to support the country's health sector.

In cooperation with the Ministry of National Health Services and Regulations and Coordination (MNHSRC), IOM will identify relevant diaspora and coordinate videoconferences between officials within the Ministry and diaspora professionals in other countries who will be treating cases of patients. MNHSRC is moving forward with registrations on its Yaran-e-Watan platform, having [registered over 2,000 Pakistani diaspora](#) medical professionals and [27 Pakistani health institutions](#) to date.

RESETTLEMENT AND MOVEMENT MANAGEMENT

Through almost three months into 2021, IOM Pakistan has assisted more than **498 migrants** through its Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) and Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) programme. Assistance included the provision of ‘fit-to-travel’ medical screenings and medical escorts before and during travel. Furthermore, IOM also resettled a total of 97 migrants in Canada, Finland and the United Kingdom.

MIGRATION HEALTH ASSESSMENT

IOM Pakistan’s Migration Health Assessment Centers in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi and Mirpur continued providing **migration health services to migrants and refugees** traveling to Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United States of America and the United Kingdom. In addition, IOM’s medical team facilitated COVID-19 PCR testing for prospective departing migrants during their pre-departure health assessment as well as assistance to returnees upon arrival.

STABILIZATION AND RESILIENCE

IOM implements transition and recovery programming to support recovery from a state of crisis and set the foundation for inclusive and sustainable political, social and economic development in Pakistan. IOM and local partners work with communities to bridge divides and resolve conflicts in support of holistic community planning and needs prioritization.

In March 2021, IOM organized **sport activities and tournaments with more than 1,400 participants in Kurram Agency**, with aim of bringing together various tribes, families and backgrounds in support of community cohesion and stability in north-western part of Pakistan. In parallel, to improve the livelihoods of vulnerable households and maintain peacebuilding gains, IOM strives to build the capacity of local stakeholders, in support of their sustainable provision of public and social services in the longer term.

Under a separate project, IOM Mission in Pakistan is implementing ‘Monitoring and Oversight of Infrastructure and Agricultural Projects’, financed by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL). Over the quarter, IOM **conducted 63 field visits** to monitor the progress of infrastructure development, public accommodation facilities of Law Enforcement Agencies, solar-based system for Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS), building and road construction. The five-year project aims to support the Government of Pakistan’s response in combating trafficking in persons, and consequently transnational organized crime, as well as to improve protection mechanisms in providing vulnerable population with appropriate assistance services in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province and Newly Merged Tribal Districts.



IOM organizes sports tournaments in District Kurram as a means to promote peace-building © IOM



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