

The IRC in Pakistan: Child and Youth Protection and Development Program Overview:

In Pakistan, the IRC has been providing child and youth protection and development (CYPD) services to refugees and hosts since it began operations in the country in 1980. As part of the IRC's Asia region– the IRC in Pakistan continues to focus on providing emergency relief, health care, education, protection, job training and other essential services in affected communities including Afghan refugees. Since we began working in Pakistan, we have worked with over one million boys and girls, including as part of our ongoing response to the Covid 19 pandemic and long-standing poverty and humanitarian challenges, to

Key Program Areas

Positive Parenting: The IRC's *Families Make the Difference* program is an evidence-based approach that focuses on preventing and decreasing violence against children in the home and improving positive developmental outcomes for children in development contexts and conflict settings. We developed and successfully tested our [positive parenting curriculum](#) in Tanzania in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children and the Institute of Social Work (ISW), and positive parenting has been identified as a priority intervention by the Government of Tanzania as highlighted in the National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children.

In **Pakistan**, nearly 25,568 parents (21,292 women and 4,276 men) attended positive parenting sessions and an evaluation of our parenting curriculum revealed that 98% of all parents who completed the 6-week program improved child wellbeing through parental care.

Safe Healing and Learning Spaces (SHLS): An [SHLS](#) is a secure and caring area where children and adolescents can heal from trauma, learn and feel protected. Our SHLS toolkit includes math and reading lessons to build literacy as well as [Social Emotional](#)



[Learning](#) (SEL). SEL interventions help children acquire

CYPD Program Areas:

- ✓ Child Protection Case Management.
- ✓ Parenting skills to support positive parenting.
- ✓ Social and Emotional Learning.
- ✓ Safe Healing and Learning Spaces.
- ✓ Accelerated Learning Centers.
- ✓ Psychosocial support for adolescent and youth using SAFE curriculum.
- ✓ Life-Skills Based Education.

create a safe environment for children and build their resilience

and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set, and achieve positive goals, feel, and show empathy for others, establish, and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

The IRC currently runs 102 SHLS/CSS/TLCs in 17 districts in **Baluchistan, Sind, and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa**. 78,904 children including (45,086 girls and 33,818 boys) are registered across the 102 SHLS/CSS/TLC and visit the spaces daily to participate in various SEL and recreational activities organized by the IRC.

Other than this, IRC Pakistan also operates through **Mobile Teams** to reach out to the communities in **hard-to-reach areas** and engage them in recreational activities. 1,363 children including (789 Boys and 517 girls) are reached out so far.



Community Awareness and Advocacy: The community plays a key role in protecting vulnerable children. To strengthen their capacity to identify and respond to the needs of vulnerable children, the IRC works closely with the Community-Based CP Committees (**CBCPCs**) to prevent and respond to child protection risks by raising community awareness on child rights including children's right to receive an education; access to basic services and protective care; and the harmful effects of child abuse, child labor. This

is done through several channels such as community dialogues, commemoration of international days in schools, community events, engaging with community leaders, caregivers, community members, and children. Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) strategies on COVID-related risks and measures

Accelerated Learning Centers: Education is not a priority for girls, thousands of refugees and host girls in Baluchistan are out of school and remain illiterate, increasing their vulnerability and exposure to domestic violence and other forms of abuse. Boys are also facing limited access to formal schools in hard-to-reach areas. In response, the IRC is investing in establishing Accelerated Learning Centers (ALP). These ALP centers play the bridging role in mainstreaming learners into the nearby government schools and will follow the government-accredited ALP curriculum, adapted to serve as a shorter-term basic skill-focused bridging program for refugee students to be reoriented to learning, and be supported with transition into formal school. The enrolled students are provided with textbooks, notebooks, school bags, preparation materials for the final exam of their respective packages (A, B), while the centers are equipped with the required TLM. Students are supported with admission fee and related expenses.

During 2020 - 2023, a total of 572 children including 287 Boys and 285 Girls were reached with ALP and enrolled in formal schools.

Adolescent life skills: Through ASRH programs, the IRC has been able to create an enabling environment for youth and youth and adolescents to learn about and be confident about their development and bodily changes. We use an adolescent curriculum to educate youth through peer educators in community groups as

well as at 101 community-based child protection networks are formed (Child Protection Committees) whereby engaging 2035 community members including (1,119 M and 916 Women). These persons have also been provided with the training on Child Protection core concepts and CP case management including case identification and referrals.

Case management: For vulnerable and at-risk children in need of care and protection, case management is the core approach. Through the process individual children and family acquires extensive social care and support through provision of psychosocial support. Since **December 2020 up to June 2023**, IRC has provided direct case management services to 1,296 (468 girls and 828 boys) have been identified and are being supported through case management services. IRC has built the capacity of its staff and key service providers by delivering extensive case management trainings using global standards. the IRC is also providing MHPSS specialized services to children using full time employed counsellors.

Case Management Achievements

- 80% of the communities reported satisfaction with the availability of referral mechanisms in their respective districts.
- IRC has set up 05 child protection units in certain districts of Punjab, KP and Sind for systems strengthening and timely provision of services to the identified cases.
- We have trained social services workforce in the targeted areas to support local communities in accessing available services.

CYPD Priorities for 2023-2025:

- ✓ Safety at home through positive parenting to prevent and respond to violence against children.
- ✓ Scaling up social emotional learning interventions out of camps by working with local organizations while maintaining the work in the camp setting.
- ✓ Specialized MHPSS services
- ✓ Enhancing youth programming by working closely with youth-led organizations for child protection outcomes.
- ✓ Safety in schools through close coordination with the IRC Education sector to achieve learning outcomes for children by making schools safer.



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