

8 November 2018 – The World Health Organization (WHO) has received a generous donation from the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (BPRM) to address the unmet health and protection needs of older Afghan refugees and host communities in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces in Pakistan.

The donation of almost US\$ 1 million will fund WHO’s Protecting Rights of Older People with Disabilities (PROD) project, which focuses on people aged 60 or above with disabilities, chronic diseases, psychosocial disorders and trauma, and/or who are survivors of gender-based violence among Afghan refugees and host populations in the country.

The project will be implemented over 12 months and will target 4 771 beneficiaries in 6 districts. It will also target 240 health care providers at public health sector facilities in refugee villages and camps, focusing on training and capacity-building activities to make primary health care services age-friendly and disability-sensitive.

The project also aims to create an enabling environment through community-based interventions and behavioural change communication campaigns, as well as establishing community-protection committees and self-help groups for older men and women with disabilities to strengthen social reintegration of target populations, refugees and host communities. Furthermore, the project will look into the revitalization of existing social and community health networks to establish robust referral mechanisms for target populations to multiple services including health care, psychosocial support and protection services.

“This generous BPRM donation will enable WHO to directly and immediately address the unmet needs of older Afghan refugees in Pakistan,” said Dr Nima Saeed Abid, Acting WHO Representative in Pakistan. “It is essential to ensuring an integrated, multisectoral and comprehensive health and protection package to improve the health, social, and economic well-being of Afghan refugees and their host communities in Pakistan,” he added.

This is the second time that BPRM has funded a WHO project in Pakistan. In 2010, WHO received US\$ 4 million for the Health Cluster response to the internally displaced people crisis in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

WHO has partnered with HelpAge International to implement this project in close collaboration with national and provincial health departments, the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) and the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CAR), as well as other civil society organizations, nongovernmental organizations and United Nations partners, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

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