

Panian, Haripur, 23 February 2020: The World Health Organization, in a ceremony held at Panian refugees camp, distributed assistive devices among old disabled Afghan refugees with the support of the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, on behalf of the American people.

The ceremony was largely attended by U.S. senior State diplomats, US Embassy in Pakistan, [Commissionerate](#) for Afghan Refugees and partner organizations (Help Age International and IMC-UK) and a large number of beneficiaries from the refugee camp in Panian.

The first of its kind, PROD project was launched in September 2018 and has been implemented in the three districts each in KP and Balochistan provinces directly benefitting 4771 old Afghan refugees with disabilities, chronic diseases, psychosocial disorders, and survivors of gender-based violence.

Dr Jamal Nasher, on behalf of the WHO Representative and Head of Mission in Pakistan, distributed assistive devices among older Afghan refugees with disabilities. More than the targeted number of beneficiaries have been delivered age and disability friendly healthcare services. More than 290 healthcare providers have received training on psychosocial counseling, primary eye care, skin infections, physiotherapy, noncommunicable diseases, mental health, health system response to gender-based violence including clinical management, psycho-social support and referrals to survivors and care of carers. Seven healthcare facilities (one in each of the focus villages) have been renovated to make them age and disability friendly.

The project also provided a unique opportunity to undertake an assessment of the prevalence of health and protection issues and related unmet needs of the targeted communities and to develop a behavior change communication framework for effective community awareness on prevention from elder abuse and SGBV issues as well as improving care and referral practices for older people with disabilities.

*“WHO is highly pleased to have made this contribution towards improving quality of life of our brother Afghan refugee population and the host communities and we stand firm in our commitment to continue supporting similar efforts in future.”* stated Dr Nasher; acting Head of

Mission. He also thanked the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees (CAR), as well as other civil society organizations, UNHCR, IMC-UK and HelpAge International as the technical partners for their full cooperation and support.

Ms Carol O'Connell; Assistant Secretary, BPRM, U.S. Department of State Ms Carol O'Connell expressed satisfaction over the progress made by PROD project. She mentioned that it's a happy moment to see the project activities on ground as were conceived by the team. She said that they hope for continued collaboration with partners to serve refugees.

The vote of thanks was presented by representative of [Commissionerate](#) for Afghan Refugees who thanked BPRM and WHO on behalf of the beneficiaries.

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