



# Adaptive Social Protection in Pakistan

## Protecting vulnerable households and strengthening their resilience to climate-related and other shocks

### The challenge

The Government of Pakistan has made great efforts in recent decades to extend social protection to its citizens and to address the high levels of poverty in the country. However, at the same time, the impacts of climate change are causing existing hazard events to become more intense and occur with greater frequency. When combined with a fast-growing population, increasing inequality and rising food and energy prices, an ever-greater number of people are placed at risk of poverty.

In today's world of increasingly frequent natural hazards and climate change-related risks, social protection systems must encompass robust crisis preparedness and response capabilities. There is an urgent need to strengthen access to adaptive and dynamic social protection, particularly for women and girls, and to build the resilience of poor and vulnerable households to climate-related shocks and other disasters — before, during and after a crisis.

### Our approach

The Government of Pakistan has laid strong legal and political foundations for social protection. The Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) Project builds on these efforts by improving the necessary institutional, financial and technical structures for implementation. The aim is to enable more people to access the social protection they need, when they need it.

Building on the results achieved by the Support to Social Protection — Social Health Protection Project (2016 — 2023), the ASP Project will increase the efficiency and quality of existing social protection programmes, and link them in a sustainable way with climate change adaptation and disaster risk management systems.

Project Name	Adaptive Social Protection in Pakistan
Partner Country	Pakistan
Volume	EUR 26 million (EUR 11 million Germany + EUR 15 million EU)
Duration	August 2023 to December 2027
Geographic Coverage	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh and Federal
Implementing Partner	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

### Key intervention areas

-  Strengthening the institutional and financial foundations of the social protection system: facilitating dialogue between the **federal government and the provincial governments** to improve **collaboration**.
-  Improving **access** to BISP and other social protection programmes for women: improving women's **financial literacy** and access to digital payment system and banks.
-  Improving the technical and institutional conditions for regular **data exchange** for planning and implementing adaptive social protection programmes.
-  Institutionalising the use of **social protection in disaster management**: support the integrated planning of interventions in both sectors and adapting existing crisis response plans.
-  Developing **models for Social Protection programmes** for adaptation to climate change.

### Facilitating linkages and enhancing coordination

An important, early focus for activities has been the strengthening of dialogue and exchange, both vertically between social protection stakeholders at provincial and federal levels, and horizontally between different stakeholders at the federal level.

For example, the ASP Project is supporting the establishment of an Adaptive Social Protection Secretariat under the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety (MoPASS). This Secretariat will foster effective dialogue between ministries and agencies concerned with social protection,

Implemented by



*Left: In Sindh, a mother and her children sit surrounded by the lasting scars of the flood*



*Right: Women in Sindh wait for their turn to collect scarce drinking water*

including the Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC), the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and international development partners. The establishment of the first Cash Transfer Coordination Group (CTCG) under the auspices of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) marks a significant step in enhancing coordination among development partners.

Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the different social protection institutions at federal and provincial levels is helping to address programme fragmentation and duplication. As part of these efforts, the ASP Project is also working with them to develop the capacities of their personnel.

## Improving women's access to social protection and their financial inclusion

Empowering women and girls is central to the ASP approach. As BISP's dynamic registration system is rolled out from the Tehsil to the Union Council level with support from the ASP Project and other partners, women — as the primary recipients of BISP cash transfers — will benefit the most. Among the three main tiers of local government in Pakistan, Tehsil is the second tier, and the Union Council is the lowest tier of local government.

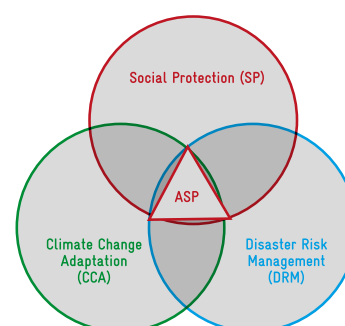
The ASP Project supports women in managing financial resources by assisting them with bank account access and providing financial literacy training. The Project is also building the capacities of female facilitators who are supporting the roll-out of the dynamic registries, training them to take on the key role of social protection case workers while developing their knowledge base to create a more sustainable basis for continued employment. These activities will strengthen women's roles in the community.

## Integrating social protection, disaster risk management and climate change adaptation

Adaptive social protection entails linking social protection systems with the systems required for managing the risks and reducing the impacts of natural hazards and promoting climate change adaptation (see diagram).

The ASP Project is supporting the integration of social protection mechanisms in disaster risk management plans and facilitates integrated planning and risk assessments across the three sectors. In addition, the ASP Project is working on linking social protection systems with anticipatory action to facilitate proactive protection and reduce the impacts of future events on the most vulnerable.

### Adaptive social protection - the intersection with Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation



## Supporting data exchange for planning and implementing social protection

The project will facilitate agreement on data sharing protocols among diverse partners at national and provincial levels. The ultimate aim is to develop a framework where disaster and climate risk data can be combined with social protection data to develop more accurate risk assessment models (such as multi-hazard vulnerability risk assessments) and to guide adaptive social protection interventions.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a social registry is being developed that will be interoperable with BISP's National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER), which will enable two-way automated data exchange so that those in greatest need can be targeted quickly and effectively.

With this broad spectrum of support, the ASP Project aims to support Pakistan in establishing adaptive and sustainable social protection systems at all levels of government and contribute to the long-term development of the population's resilience towards future shocks and crises.

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