



## **Pakistan – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 13 July 2011**

### **Information on Honour Killings in particular reports of honour killings, whether there is effective protection from threats from family members and whether internal relocation is a reasonable alternative.**

The 2011 *United States Department of State* country report on Pakistan, in a section titled “Women”, refers to the practice of “honour” killing as follows:

“Every year hundreds of women reportedly were killed in the name of honor. Many cases went unreported and unpunished. The News reported that in 2009, 29 women and 15 men were killed in 25 honor-killing incidents in KP. During the year 39 women and 29 men were killed in 20 incidents of honor killing. The HRCP reported that during the year there were 790 honor killings in the country. The practice of ‘karo-kari,’ which occurred in Sindh Province, continued across the country. Karo-kari is a form of premeditated honor killing that occurs if a tribal court or jirga determines that adultery or some other ‘crime of honor’ occurred. Karo-kari means ‘black male’ (karo) and ‘black female’ (kari), metaphoric terms for someone who has dishonored the family or is an adulterer and adulteress. Once a woman is labeled as a kari, male family members have the self-authorized justification to kill her and any coaccused karo to restore family honor. In many cases the karo is not killed or is able to flee.” (United States Department of State (8 April 2011) *2010 Human Rights Report: Pakistan*)

An Australian *Refugee Review Tribunal* country advice document states:

“Precise numbers of honour killings are difficult to locate and estimates vary widely. It is also likely that many murders are not categorised as honour killings and go unsolved. Reporting on violence against love-marriages in Pakistan in March 2009, a Dawn news report noted that: ‘An annual report published by the Aurat Foundation puts cases of honour killings reported from across the country at 472 and of them an overwhelming majority of 220 were reported in Sindh, 127 in Balochistan, 91 in Punjab, 32 in the Northwest Frontier Province, and two in Islamabad’. A January 2009 report from The News states that 141 cases of honour killing cases resulted in 179 people being murdered in 2008. The article specifically notes that a surprising number of these cases took place in urban areas, including Lahore in Punjab Province. A 2007 article by Pakistan Press International citing UNISEF and Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid stated that 1,567 honour killings occurred in 2006. Murder victims included men, women, and children. The report notes that 428 murders were linked specifically to love marriages and that Punjab was the second highest reporting province for these types of murders. A 2001 study by the Shirkat Gah organisation confirms that such killings occur throughout Pakistan, and with some notable regularity in the Punjab, where honour killings involving illicit relationships are referred to as ‘kala kali’ (kala being man and Kali being woman)” (Refugee Review Tribunal of the Government of Australia (17 November 2010) *Pakistan – PAK37665 – Punjab – Love marriages – Family violence – Protection orders – State protection – Political violence*, p.3)

In a section titled “Do the relevant authorities provide protection to parties in these circumstances?” this document states:

“Some examples of positive police action were located and include an 11 June 2009 Dawn report on a couple who had eloped in Sindh. According to the report: ‘Police sought a protection order for Saira and Ismail, and were ordered to take them to Karachi, a teeming city of 14 million, for their safety’. A December 2006 Agence France Press reported on the situation of a couple from the Pashtun north who were being ‘sheltered at the private Edhi Centre in Karachi’ while awaiting a court hearing. However, the majority of reporting on love marriages indicates that protection is seriously lacking.” (ibid, pp.3-4)

The Executive Summary of a report published by the *Aurat Foundation* states:

“Murder, ‘honour’ killing and suicide that deprive a woman of her basic Right to Life, are probably are the most inhuman aspects of VAW. The three categories taken together reported 2626 offences in 2010 as against 2673 cases during 2009. The small decrease is negligible and does not show any real improvement in the plight of women in Pakistan, long considered an easy target and an expendable item of property sacrificed at the altar of the false notions of family ‘honour,’ inter-clan and tribal vendetta.” (Aurat Foundation (June 2011) *Violence against Women in Pakistan: A qualitative review of statistics for 2010*)

In a section titled ‘Honour’ Killing (section 2.3.2) this report states:

“A total of 557 persons were killed in the name of ‘honour’ (karo kari) all over Pakistan during 2010 as compared to 604 cases in last year, showing a slight decline of 7.78%. Sindh again was the lead offender in this particular genre of violence against women. Out of the 557 reported cases from across the country, some 266 or 47.76% of the total took place in the territories of the Sindh province. Punjab did not lag much behind Sindh in this particular brand of VAW with 233 cases or 41.83% of the total crimes reported during the year. Balochistan also reported 36 cases, bringing down its share to 6.46%, somewhat proportionate to its population in the country. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also reported 22 cases claiming a 3.95% share in national statistics. There was no case of ‘honour’ killing reported in the Islamabad Capital Territory this year.” (ibid, pp.15-16)

In a section titled “Overall Cases of VAW in KP” (section 5.1) this report comments on violence against women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province as follows:

“Murder remained the most frequently committed crime, and murder cases added up to more than half, or 50.46% of all reported VAW cases from the province in 2010. Much like in 2009, domestic violence also showed a high rate of occurrence at 13.69% in 2010 too, clearly pointing to the domination of Pashtun society by males. Women are often not allowed outside the home, not even in emergencies, if she is not accompanied by a male member of the household. Abductions and kidnappings have increased in number and their proportion in the total VAW offences came to 11.85%. This should be seen in the context of the geographical location of KP as the area bordering war torn Afghanistan, and hence subjected to conflict over many years, hosting large numbers of refugees, and in 2010 suffering the worst floods in a century. Suicide rates are also high, and have almost doubled as compared to the data from 2009, accounting for 10.92% of all VAW cases reported from the province. Added to the troubled times, conflicts between the traditional local culture and the Pakhtun code of honour, Pakhtunwali, with modernity, were perhaps responsible for

the even higher incidence of 'honour' killings than last year, which were 3.39% of all VAW crimes in the province." (ibid, p.44)

An *IRIN News* report on "honour killings" in Pakistan states:

"Murders of the kind which ended Saima's life are not uncommon. According to the autonomous Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), over 600 women were killed for 'honour' in 2009. This usually entails the murder of women suspected of having sexual relations outside marriage; choosing who to marry rather than accepting decisions made by families; or behaving in other ways that are seen as 'immoral'. Other 'honour' killings go unreported, especially when they take place in remote, rural areas. 'Such killings occur when the "honour" of male members of a household is perceived to have been injured,' said I.A.Rehman, the secretary-general of HRCP. Though women aged over 18 have the legal right to marry of their own free will 'tradition' means they are expected to go along with parental choices." (IRIN News (27 January 2011) *Pakistan: Hundreds of women die for "honour" each year*)

A report published by the *Human Rights Commission of Pakistan*, in a section titled "Limits of free will", states:

"In January, media reports highlighted the murder of a girl and a boy by the girl's family in a village of Mian Chunnu sub-district of Punjab. The girl, Sonia, and the boy she wanted to marry were clubbed to death and their bodies publicly hanged for the villagers to see that the family had redeemed its honour. The girl had tried to run away from home after her parents arranged her marriage with a man against her will. Police registered a case against eight accused." (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (14 April 2011) *State of Human Rights in 2010 (Chapter V Rights of the disadvantaged: Women, Children)*)

In a section titled "Bargaining chips" this report states:

"Girls and women continued to be forced into marriage against their will, killed or intimidated for asserting their right to choose their spouse or generally to make decisions about their own life." (ibid)

An *Asian Human Rights Commission* news report comments on "honour killings" in 2011 as follows:

"Karo-kari is part of cultural tradition in Pakistan and is a compound word literally meaning lack male (Karo) and lack female (Kari), in metaphoric terms for adulterer and adulteress. The concepts of women as property and honor are so deeply entrenched in the social, political and economic fabric of Pakistan that once labeled as a Kari, male family members get the self-authorized justification to kill her and the co-accused Karo to restore family honor. During the first four months of 2011, as many as seven such incidents took place in the Sindh province of Pakistan. The incidents claimed the lives of 6 women and 5 men making a total of 11. So far, 6 cases have been registered in police stations against these killings; and 6 persons have also been put behind bars. There is only one incident in which neither a case has been registered nor the criminal arrested. In fact he fled from the scene to save his life. Jirga was involved in one case while the remaining six cases are based on self-authorized justification." (Asian Human Rights Commission (12 May 2011) *Pakistan: Eleven persons were killed in the name of honour during the first four months of 2011 in Sindh province*)

Referring to an incident in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (formerly North West Frontier province) an appeal issued by the *Asian Human Rights Commission* states:

“The Asian Human Rights Commission has learned that authorities in North West Frontier province have taken no action to arrange urgently-needed protection for a man, his sister-in-law and her young son; all are in immediate danger of being murdered as a response to a love marriage, and three murders have already taken place. The groom and two of his brothers have all been systematically killed, yet despite evidence identifying the two men responsible, no reports to the police have been investigated in any way. The remaining brother has now been warned that he will be killed unless he gives up the whereabouts of the bride and her young son. This case, and the refusal of police to act on it, has been ongoing since 2006.” (Asian Human Rights Commission (5 March 2010) *Pakistan: Urgent protection needed for the survivors of love marriage-related murders; police refuse to investigate*)

An article published by local newspaper *The Frontier Star* states:

“The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government has dispatched a detailed report to the federal government regarding figures of honour killings in the year of 2010 in the province. According to the report, some 88 persons have been killed thus far in the province.” (The Frontier Star (28 December 2010) *Eighty incidents of honour killings reported in 2010 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*)

A report from *The Telegraph* on the murder of a British couple in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa states:

“The couple had travelled to the village from Britain after their daughter told them she wanted to call off the wedding plans because she didn’t want to marry a man from Pakistan. ‘The husband and wife had already promised their daughter to a man. When that arrangement ended he was not happy,’ a friend of the family said. ‘Gul and his wife went to Pakistan to try to sort it out, but this man went crazy and shot them for breaking off the engagement. This is a tragedy. They were honest, decent people.’ Police said they had begun a murder inquiry into the killings. ‘They were decent people. Very simple and peaceful,’ said Jamil Shah, 45, from the same village. ‘Gul was highly respected and was a regular visitor for weddings in the village. It’s a classic case of honour killing which is very common in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.’” (The Telegraph (8 August 2010) *British couple murdered in Pakistan 'honour killing'*)

An Australian *Refugee Review Tribunal* country advice document comments on the possibility of internal relocation in Pakistan as follows:

“Specific information was not located on relocation for failed asylum seekers in Pakistan. In relation to relocation generally, Article 15 of the Constitution of Pakistan indicates that “[e]very citizen shall have the right to remain in and, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the public interest, enter and move freely throughout Pakistan and to reside and settle in any part thereof.” It is reported that the law in Pakistan provides for freedom of movement within the country, emigration, foreign travel and repatriation, although the government reportedly limits these rights in practice. During 2009, restrictions were placed on politicians, religious leaders and political workers to prevent them from moving freely within Pakistan. The movement of ordinary citizens who resided in insurgency affected areas of Malakand, Swat and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas was also reported to be seriously affected.” (Refugee Review Tribunal of the Government of Australia (20 December 2010)

*Pakistan – PAK37896 – Asylum seekers – Returnees from the West – Internal relocation)*

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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