

ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT REPORT

Rawalpindi Railway Station

A SPRING Association Accessibility Initiative – 2019

Report Title	Accessibility Audit & Improvement Report — Rawalpindi Railway Station
Facility Audited	Rawalpindi Railway Station, Punjab, Pakistan
Implemented By	SPRING Association
Year of Accessibility Intervention	2019
Report Purpose	Assessment and documentation of accessibility improvements introduced at Rawalpindi Railway Station for persons with disabilities.

1. Introduction & Purpose

This report documents the accessibility improvements introduced at Rawalpindi Railway Station in 2019 by SPRING Association to improve access to railway services for persons with disabilities. The intervention focused on identifying practical barriers faced by persons with disabilities and introducing physical accessibility measures, assistive equipment, signage and staff-support mechanisms. The overall objective was to enable persons with disabilities to move through the station with greater safety, dignity, convenience and independence, from arrival at the station through to boarding the train.

2. Scope of the Accessibility Assessment

- Parking and arrival area
- Main entrance
- Separate accessible entrance
- Entry ramps
- Railway platforms
- Tactile guidance for persons with visual impairments
- Signage and visual information
- Waiting areas and common rooms
- Sanitary facilities and washrooms
- Wheelchair availability
- Passenger assistance system
- Portable ramps for train boarding

- Staff support for persons with disabilities

3. Accessibility Assessment & Improvements

#	Accessibility Area	Situation Before Intervention	Status (After)	Priority	Comments / Evidence
1	Accessible Parking	Inaccessible	accessible	High	Designate parking area for the PWDs with Parking logo board near to Main entrance.
2	Main Entrance	Inaccessible	accessible	High	Designated area for the wheelchair users or PWDs.
3	Separate Accessible Entrance	Not provided	Provided	High	Build 2 ramps and use Tactiles for visually impaired. For different entry points. (for ticket booth, to enter into the platform)
6	Railway Platforms	Inaccessible Measures	accessible	High	Different barrier was placed at different places. Barrier free platforms were introduced.
7	Tactile Guidance	Not Provided	Provided	High	Tactile pathways/indicators introduced to support persons who are blind or have visual impairments in navigating the station.
8	Signage for Deaf / Hard of Hearing Persons	Not Provided	Provided	Medium	Visual signage introduced to support persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and reduce reliance on verbal information. Pathway guidance on different places
9	Waiting Areas	Inaccessible with barriers	Accessible and barriers free	Medium	Barrier removed in the waiting rooms from door entrance.
10	Common Rooms	Inaccessible with barriers	Accessible and barriers free	Medium	Common areas included within the accessibility improvements to support inclusive use of station facilities.
11	Sanitary Facilities	Inaccessible with barriers	Accessible and barriers free	High	Sanitary facilities were improved to support persons with disabilities.
12	Gender-Separated Washrooms	Inaccessible with barriers	Accessible and barriers free	High	Congested washrooms redesigned; door barriers removed, spacious wheelchair-accessible areas with grab bars and leveled washbasins provided.
13	Wheelchairs for PWDs	Not Provided	Provided	High	Wheelchairs made available at the station for persons with disabilities requiring mobility assistance.

14	Bell-Based Assistance System	Not Provided	Provided	High	A bell installed so that a person with a disability could alert railway staff when assistance was required.
15	Staff Assistance	Not Provided	Provided	High	Following the bell notification, staff provided a wheelchair and assisted the passenger from the station towards the platform and train.
16	Portable Ramps for Train Boarding	Not Provided	Provided	High	Portable ramps provided to facilitate wheelchair users and persons with mobility difficulties in boarding and leaving trains.
17	Staff Sensitization	Not sensitized	Fully sensitized	High	Staff was not sensitized, but now the staff is full sensitized.

4. Passenger Assistance Mechanism

One of the practical accessibility measures introduced at Rawalpindi Railway Station was a bell-based assistance mechanism. The system was designed to provide direct support to persons with disabilities who required assistance in moving from the station entrance to the train.

1. Arrival at Station — A person with a disability arrives at the railway station.
2. Bell Notification — If assistance is required, the passenger uses the designated bell to alert railway staff.
3. Wheelchair Support — Railway staff respond to the bell and provide a wheelchair where required.
4. Movement Through Station — Staff assist the passenger in moving through the station towards the relevant platform.
5. Platform Access — The passenger is supported in reaching the appropriate platform.
6. Train Boarding — Where required, staff use a portable ramp to facilitate movement between the platform and train.
7. Continued Assistance — Staff provide support during boarding to help ensure that the passenger can enter the train safely.

5. Key Accessibility Findings

8. Parking access was improved for persons with disabilities.
9. The main entrance was made more accessible for wheelchair users.
10. A separate accessible entrance was provided to facilitate easier access.
11. Two ramps were introduced at important entry/access points.
12. Four railway platforms were covered through accessibility improvements.
13. Tactile guidance was introduced to support persons who are blind or have visual impairments.
14. Visual signage was introduced to improve access to information for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.
15. Waiting areas and common rooms were improved to support persons with disabilities.
16. Sanitary facilities and washrooms were improved, with facilities separated by gender.
17. Wheelchairs were made available for persons with disabilities requiring mobility support.

18. A bell-based assistance system was introduced to allow passengers with disabilities to request staff support.
19. Railway staff provided wheelchair assistance from the station through to the platform and supported passengers in boarding trains.
20. Portable ramps were introduced to facilitate boarding and alighting from trains.

6. Prioritized Accessibility Improvement Summary

Barrier / Accessibility Need	Intervention	Priority	Outcome
Difficult access to station	Accessible parking	High	Easier arrival
Physical barriers at entrance	Main accessible entrance	High	Improved entry
Need for alternative access	Separate accessible entrance	High	Additional access route
Steps / level differences	Two ramps	High	Improved wheelchair movement
Platform accessibility	Accessibility measures across four platforms	High	Improved platform access
Navigation for blind persons	Tactile pathways	High	Improved independent navigation
Communication barriers	Visual signage	Medium	Better access to information
Waiting barriers	Accessible waiting/common areas	Medium	Improved comfort and inclusion
Sanitation barriers	Accessible sanitary facilities	High	Improved dignity and usability
Mobility limitations	Wheelchairs	High	Direct mobility assistance
Difficulty requesting assistance	Assistance bell	High	Easy access to staff support
Difficulty reaching train	Staff wheelchair assistance	High	Supported station-to-train movement
Platform/train gap	Portable boarding ramps	High	Facilitated train boarding

8. Conclusion

The 2019 accessibility intervention at Rawalpindi Railway Station by SPRING Association addressed a range of physical, communication and mobility barriers faced by persons with disabilities. The improvements included accessible parking, an accessible main entrance, a separate accessible entrance, two ramps, accessibility measures across four platforms, tactile guidance for persons with visual impairments, visual signage for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, accessible waiting and common areas, sanitary facilities with separate washrooms for men and women, wheelchairs, a bell-based assistance system and portable ramps for train boarding.

A particularly important feature of the intervention was the combination of infrastructure with direct staff assistance. The bell system allowed a person with a disability to request assistance, after which staff could provide a wheelchair and support the passenger in reaching the platform and boarding the train.

The initiative therefore provided not only physical accessibility but also a practical passenger assistance mechanism, helping persons with disabilities access railway transportation with greater safety, dignity and confidence.

The Rawalpindi Railway Station intervention provides a practical example of how targeted accessibility improvements can make public transportation more inclusive and responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities.

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