



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General

2 April 2025

Original: English

English, French and Spanish only

Committee on the Rights of the Child

Ninety-ninth session

Geneva, 5–23 May 2025

Consideration of reports of States parties

Replies of Pakistan to the list of issues in relation to its combined sixth and seventh reports*, **

[Date received: 17 March 2025]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The annexes to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



Part one

Replies to the list of issues (CRC/C/PAK/Q/6-7)

Reply to paragraph 2 (a)

1. To address legislative gaps regarding the legal age of marriage of girls, child protection, civil registration of children and implementation of the laws, significant measures have been undertaken by the government of Pakistan in consultation with parliamentary committees, NHRIs, provincial governments, UN partners and CSOs. The Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) conducted consultative sessions with all stakeholders to develop a consensus on legal age of marriage as 18 for both boys and girls. The government also supported a Private Member Bill related to child marriage at ICT level which was introduced in Parliament in **2024**. The MoHR also urged the provincial governments to amend existing laws across provinces to harmonize the response to child marriages. Accordingly, the provincial governments are pursuing legislation for a standard minimum marriage age as 18 years.

2. Through the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act 2013, Sindh became the first province in Pakistan to set the minimum legal age for marriage at 18 for both sexes. This was further supported by the Sindh Child Marriages Restraint Rules 2016, which outline procedures, definitions and penalties. The Sindh Child Protection Authority (SCPA) Act 2011 (amended in 2021) established the SCPA to safeguard children's rights and enhance stakeholder coordination. Additionally, the draft Sindh Child Protection Policy, aimed at preventing abuse, neglect and exploitation, is ready for cabinet approval. Efforts to improve birth registration processes have also been undertaken to ensure accurate age documentation, preventing underage marriages.

3. The draft Punjab Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Bill 2024 was considered by the Provincial Cabinet during its 17th meeting on October 8, 2024. The Cabinet considered and referred the matter for further discussion and constituted a committee comprising of Senior Ministers tasked with submitting recommendations to end discrimination in the age of marriage for both boys and girls.

4. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the proposed KP Child Marriage Restraint Bill aims to raise the legal age of marriage for girls to 18 years. The bill requires age verification through CNICs or birth documents, with strict penalties for violations. The bill is being processed for approval of the Cabinet.

5. In Balochistan, the Child Marriage Restraint Bill 2024 is under consideration of the Balochiostan Assembly.

6. The Juvenile Justice System Act 2018 is being enforced nationwide with designated juvenile courts, legal aid provisions and child-friendly procedures. Additionally, the Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act 2020 has been implemented to expedite the response to cases of missing and abducted children, with the Zainab Alert system linked to police and emergency services for immediate action.

7. Furthermore, the Ministry of Human Rights has set up several initiatives to address human and child rights violations. The Helpline for Legal Advice on Human Rights Violations (Helpline 1099) receives complaints including 1,036 related to child abuse and refers them to the appropriate authorities, with ongoing efforts to standardize data collection nationwide. In addition, the Child Protection Institute (CPI) '1121' Helpline, launched in 2023, has received 6922 complaints concerning child rights violations. The CPI, established under the Islamabad Child Protection Act 2018, focuses on rescuing children, providing safe shelter, offering psycho-social services and facilitating reunification and referral services; it has rescued 380 children and currently houses 9 children.

Reply to paragraph 2 (b)

8. There is effective coordination among the Ministry of Human Rights, the NCRC and the Treaty Implementation Cells in accordance with their respective prescribed functions and mandate, ensuring the seamless implementation of child rights without any overlap in mandates at the federal and local levels.

Reply to paragraph 2 (c)

9. To adopt a comprehensive child rights strategy and action plan in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocols, significant initiatives have been undertaken across Pakistan. At federal level, the ICT Child protection Act 2018 serves as a comprehensive policy document which is being enforced for protection of rights of children engaging the LEAs, ZARRA, CSOs and CPI. Moreover, the MoHR in collaboration with UNICEF and government organizations has finalized a draft ICT Child Protection Policy encompassing prevention, protection, redressal and rehabilitation of vulnerable children. In Punjab, the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (CPWB) has developed a draft Child Protection Policy addressing child begging, exploitation and abandonment and is also collaborating with UNICEF to enhance child protection services by establishing Child Protection Units across the province. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission (KPCPWC) has formulated a holistic child rights strategy aligned with the UNCRC. This includes operationalizing Child Protection Units in 12 districts to provide psycho-social counseling, legal aid and emergency support. District and Union Council-level Child Protection Committees have been set up to address child protection issues at the grassroots level, supported by a toll-free Child Protection Helpline (1121). Awareness campaigns, capacity building initiatives and the establishment of Child Protection Courts in eight divisional headquarters and the Newly Merged Districts ensure accessible, child-friendly justice mechanisms. Sindh Child Protection Authority (SCPA) under the Sindh Child Protection Authority Act 2011 (Amended 2021) has drafted a comprehensive Child Protection Policy. The policy focuses on preventing abuse and exploitation, strengthening the legal framework, capacity building, public awareness and fostering collaboration among government bodies, NGOs and international organizations. In Balochistan, efforts to promote child rights are guided by the Balochistan Child Protection Act 2016, which provides a legal framework for safeguarding children from abuse, exploitation and neglect. The establishment of the Balochistan Child Protection Bureau has been instrumental in coordinating child protection initiatives across the province. The Bureau is working to operationalize Child Protection Units in key districts, ensuring that vulnerable children have access to psychosocial support, legal aid and emergency assistance. Awareness campaigns are being conducted to educate communities on child rights and protection mechanisms, particularly in rural and marginalized areas.

Reply to paragraph 2 (d)

10. Measures to track the State's budget from a children's rights perspective are being adopted at both federal and provincial levels. In the fiscal year 2024–2025, significant funds have been allocated for child-focused sectors. Punjab has set aside Rs 669.74 billion for education and Rs 539.1 billion for health, a 25% increase from the previous year, while also supporting programs such as stipends for female students, free textbooks and initiatives like AAGHOSH, BUNYAD, and Zevar-e-Taleem. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has allocated Rs 362.7 billion for education and Rs 228.8 billion for health, including Rs 34 billion for a health card program and has strengthened its child protection system with community-based measures and district committees. Sindh has budgeted Rs 454 billion for education and Rs 300 billion for health, with oversight provided by the Sindh Child Protection Authority. Balochistan, with a total budget of Rs 930 billion, has allocated Rs 146.9 billion for education and Rs 67.3 billion for health.

11. In addition to these budgetary allocations, each province has undertaken targeted initiatives to protect and support children, particularly those in vulnerable situations. In

Punjab, CPWB operates multiple sections that rescue children from abuse, provide legal oversight, deliver health and psychological services and offer family tracing and immediate assistance. The Bureau also manages Open Reception Centers, Child Protection Institutions and the Child Protection Court and collaborates with the Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTC) to equip children with vocational skills. Sindh has strengthened its social protection systems by establishing the Sindh Social Protection Authority (SSPA) and launching the USD 230 million Strengthening Social Protection Delivery Systems project in partnership with the World Bank. This initiative includes the Mother and Child Support Program (MCSP), which improves maternal, newborn, and child health through conditional cash transfers. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has enhanced its child protection framework by devolving essential services to local offices under the LG&RDD system and by supporting CPUs with funding from both the provincial government and UNICEF. In Balochistan, the government has focused on improving access to education, health and child protection services in remote areas to establish CPUs and address challenges such as child labor and early marriages.

Reply to paragraph 2 (e)

12. To ensure the systematic collection and analysis of quality and complete data disaggregated by age, sex, geographical location, ethnicity, religion and socioeconomic background on the implementation of children's rights, the provincial governments of Pakistan have launched Child Protection Management Information Systems (CPMIS). These systems are designed to facilitate the real-time tracking of child protection cases, ensure centralized data storage and enhance decision-making capabilities. By capturing detailed and comprehensive data, CPMIS ensures that interventions are timely and targeted, addressing the specific needs of children based on these disaggregated factors. The Punjab's CPWB is working to develop a full-scale CPMIS. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the KP Child Protection and Welfare Commission (KPCPWC) has implemented a fully functional CPMIS, integrating data from Child Protection Units (CPUs) across the province. Similarly, Sindh has launched a comprehensive CPMIS to better track cases and enhance service delivery in child protection. In Balochistan, Child Protection Units have been established, while efforts are underway to further strengthen the province's child protection infrastructure.

Reply to paragraph 2 (e)

13. The NCRC was established by the Government of Pakistan under the National Commission on the Rights of Child Act, 2017. The Commission holds a comprehensive mandate to promote, protect and fulfill children's rights in alignment with international obligations and the NCRC Act, 2017. The primary aim is to ensure that the rights of children are safeguarded across various domains, including education, health, protection from exploitation, and access to justice. To uphold the independence of the Commission, special measures have been put in place regarding its funding, mandate, and immunities. These provisions are designed to ensure that the NCRC operates without external influence and is able to effectively carry out its responsibilities.

Reply to paragraph 2 (g)

14. National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights, launched in December 2021, addresses child labor within the framework of Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD). The plan requires businesses to identify and mitigate child labor risks within their supply chains, taking proactive steps to eliminate exploitative practices. MoHR is playing a key role in integrating child labor prevention into national policies, collaborating with both the public and private sectors to enforce legal frameworks and raise awareness. Capacity-building initiatives are also being undertaken to enhance the understanding and implementation of HRDD, ensuring that businesses comply with child protection standards and contribute to a responsible business environment.

15. The Employment of Children Act, 1991, prohibits child labor for those under the age of 14, with an amendment to the law that includes domestic work at the ICT level. The ICT

Domestic Workers Act 2022, further strengthens this by prohibiting the employment of children under the age of 16 in domestic work. Additionally, the ICT Child Protection Act, 2018 aims to prevent child abuse and exploitation, offering protections for children and providing shelter through the Child Protection Institute.

16. In Punjab, the Labour & HR Department enforces the Punjab Restriction on Employment of Children Act, 2016, the Punjab Prohibition of Child Labour at Brick Kilns Act, 2016 and the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2018. These laws prohibit the employment of children under 15 years in commercial and industrial establishments to ensure their education, health and safety. The legislation aligns with Article 32 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions C138 and C182, prohibiting hazardous labor for children under 18. Programs like the Aaghosh and Zavar-e-Taleem provide education and financial incentives for families, ensuring children remain in school instead of engaging in labor.

17. In Sindh, post 18th Amendment several labor laws were enacted to address child employment issues, including the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017, the Sindh Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 2015, and the Sindh Factories Act, 2015. These laws prohibit child labor and hazardous employment under the age of 18 and focus on safeguarding children from exploitation in the workforce.

18. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Labour Department enforces the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2015 which prohibits child labor and hazardous labor. Inspectors regularly monitor compliance, with over 29000 inspections conducted between 2022 and 2024, resulting in fines and prosecutions for violations. The province adopted the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Labour Policy 2018 and established the Child & Bonded Labour Unit (C&BLU) to coordinate efforts and mobilize societal support against child labor. The province completed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Labour Survey 2023, which provides critical insights for revising policies and strengthening implementation.

19. In Balochistan, the provincial government is working to address child labor through ongoing legislative and administrative reforms, focusing on improving enforcement mechanisms and creating awareness about children's rights. Efforts are underway to harmonize provincial labor laws with national and international standards, with particular attention to eradicating child labor in hazardous industries. In Balochistan, in 2023, 11,153 general labour inspections were conducted and 919 cases were registered against violators. Of these, 592 cases were resolved, while 319 cases remain pending. The fines imposed from these inspections totaled Rs. 956,900.

20. The Child Labour Survey has been completed in Punjab and KPK provinces and GB, while being underway across the rest of the country.

Reply to paragraph 3 (a)

21. Pakistan has implemented various measures to eradicate discrimination, negative perceptions, and stereotypes concerning the role of girls and women in society. At the federal level awareness campaign led by MoHR has focused on promoting child rights through its comprehensive Human Rights Awareness Program. During this period, the Ministry conducted numerous awareness sessions on child rights, including distribution of 12,000 posters and broadcasting public service messages on television and radio. Training sessions at institutions such as the National Police Academy and various provincial police departments further educated stakeholders on the legal framework protecting child rights.

22. In Punjab, the Daanish Schools & Centers of Excellence Authority ensures 50% of the schools are dedicated to girls' education. Outreach programs support underprivileged children and seminars focus on girls' and women's empowerment. The School Education Department has implemented measures to address violence against women and girls and harmful practices, with teacher training and monitoring SOPs. Women are encouraged to apply for teaching positions and an e-transfer policy supports their career advancement. The Women Development Department oversees the Women Helpline 1043, addressing issues related discrimination of girls and women including child marriage.

23. The Sindh Child Protection Authority (SCPA) leads campaigns to change perceptions about girls' education and child marriage, promoting gender equality. SCPA partners with UNICEF to offer legal aid and safe shelters for girls. Capacity-building programs help implement gender-equal policies, while promoting positive role models to inspire others. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010 ensures equal opportunities for girls in education, health and social participation. Child Protection Courts address child marriage and abuse, while Child Protection Units provide psychological support. KP's education department oversees 14,101 schools, with more than 2 million girls enrolled, benefiting from various scholarship programs, including the Girls Stipend Program. In Balochistan, the government is working to increase girls' education, offering scholarships and addressing harmful stereotypes through awareness campaigns. The Balochistan Child Protection and Welfare Act protects girls from child marriage and abuse. The provincial government is expanding community-based education programs and engaging local communities to promote girls' education and prevent early marriage.

Reply to paragraph 3 (b)

24. Pakistan's Constitution upholds the principle of non-discrimination. Article 25 ensures equality before the law, stating that all citizens are equal and entitled to the same legal protections. Article 26 prohibits discrimination in access to public places, while Article 27 safeguards against discrimination in government services. Additionally, Article 36 protects the rights of minorities, and Article 33 discourages parochial, racial, and sectarian prejudices, fostering a more inclusive society. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2018 and the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Child Protection Act 2018 both focus on safeguarding transgender persons and children from discrimination, abuse and exploitation. Similarly, the ICT Child Protection Act was established to protect children in the Islamabad Capital Territory from abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect. Both pieces of legislation work to create a safer and more inclusive society for children and transgender persons. Federal initiatives such as the allocation of funds for minority welfare and social programs aim to provide equal opportunities for all citizens, regardless of their background. Provincial governments also support marginalized communities especially children through scholarships, financial aid and infrastructure projects, ensuring that no group is left behind.

Reply to paragraph 3 (c)

25. To implement the concept of the best interests of the child, Pakistan has enacted the Juvenile Justice System Act 2018 and the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Act 2018, alongside similar laws at the provincial level. These legal frameworks ensure that the rights and welfare of children are prioritized in all decisions, including legislative, administrative and judicial processes. The best interests' principle is being integrated into these laws, ensuring effective implementation of these laws across proceedings involving children with a focus on their protection, rehabilitation and overall well-being.

Reply to paragraph 3 (d)

26. To enhance the safety of children and schools from the threat of terrorism and violence, various protective measures have been implemented across Pakistan. These measures include the construction of boundary walls up to 8 feet high, installation of razor wire, CCTV cameras and scanner machines in certain schools. Additionally, schools have been provided with security personnel to ensure safety. Efforts have been made to improve school infrastructure and implement safety protocols outlined in the Pakistan School Safety Framework, particularly in areas with a high concentration of children. In line with these efforts, authorities have issued directives to ensure that schools are adequately protected from terrorist activities. Local law enforcement and field formations are actively involved in ensuring the security of children and taking strict action against individuals or groups posing a threat to child safety.

Reply to paragraph 3 (e)

27. The Juvenile Justice System Act of 2018 explicitly prohibits the death penalty for individuals who committed a crime while under the age of 18. Section 16 of the Act states that no person who was a juvenile at the time of committing an offense shall be sentenced to death. Furthermore, the Act also forbids juvenile offenders from being subjected to corporal punishment, being handcuffed, or being put to labor while in custody. The Act is implemented in letter and spirit. There is no case of death penalty awarded to a juvenile in any part of Pakistan.

Reply to paragraph 3 (f)

28. The Government of Pakistan takes a proactive approach to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including psychological, physical and sexual abuse, rape, burning, acid attacks, harassment, early and forced marriages, forced conversions, kidnapping, abduction, murder, and honor killings. Statistics show a provincial breakdown of honor-related crimes from 2016 to 2023, revealing a decrease, particularly in Punjab, where the number dropped from 248 in 2016 to 150 in 2023, and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, from 190 to 96. These trends indicate that ongoing efforts such as legal reforms, awareness campaigns, and improved law enforcement are starting to yield positive results in combating violence against women and honor-related crimes across the country. Pakistan has made significant strides in addressing violence against women and girls through comprehensive legislative measures. These laws collectively represent the country's zero-tolerance stance on such crimes, including those committed in the name of so-called "honour." For instance, the Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offense of Rape) Act 2016 and the Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) Act 2021 establish a robust mechanism for the investigation and trial of sexual violence, ensuring a speedy and efficient legal process for victims of rape and sexual abuse. These Acts provide for special investigation teams and dedicated courts to ensure timely justice. Further strengthening the legal framework, the Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (Criminal Law Amendment) Act 2011 criminalizes harmful practices, such as forced marriages, while the Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act 2011 imposes severe penalties for acid attacks. Additionally, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Elimination of Custom of Ghag Act 2013 criminalizes the practice of "Ghag," a custom that forces women into marriage, reinforcing the state's commitment to preventing honour killings. The Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act, 2016, Sindh Domestic Violence (Protection and Prevention) Act, 2013, and Balochistan Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2014 all focus on protecting women from various forms of abuse, including those linked to honour-based violence. These acts provide for shelters, protection orders, and support services to aid victims of domestic violence and ensure their safety and well-being. Moreover, the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill, 2024, currently under consultation, aims to establish a comprehensive system for the protection and rehabilitation of victims of domestic violence. To support victims, the government has set up 95 dedicated courts and numerous shelter homes, such as Dar-ul-Amans, offering medical, legal, and psychological aid. Initiatives like Women Safety Mobile Apps and helplines have improved accessibility while centers like the Violence Against Women Centers and Police Gender Protection Units provide integrated services for victims.

Reply to paragraph 3 (g)

29. To ensure meaningful participation of children in decision-making within their families, schools and communities, the Government of Pakistan has introduced several initiatives. The National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) includes two children (one male and one female) as members, allowing them to directly contribute to policies and decisions that affect their lives. Additionally, organizations like the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides empower children to develop leadership skills through various programs and activities. These organizations emphasize a "by the children, for the children" approach, fostering leadership roles where children take on responsibilities, make decisions, and contribute to their communities. Moreover, in Punjab, School Education Department (SED)

has established School Management Councils in both public and private schools, promoting active involvement of parents and local communities. Students are engaged in school improvement processes through representation on committees, and regular Parent-Teacher Council meetings address their concerns and encourage participation. Efforts to empower women and girls are prioritized by enhancing their access to education. The Punjab CPWB focuses on family reunification for rescued children through family tracing and post-reunification support, such as education and vocational training. Between July and December 2024, CPWB rescued 2919 children, reuniting 2705 with their families, while addressing cases of lost, runaway, and abused children. Additionally, in Balochistan, children are actively engaged in awareness campaigns and community sessions ensuring their involvement in decision-making and advocacy for their rights. Initiatives include workshops and training programs aimed at building their capacity to address and prevent child protection issues in their communities. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, adolescents participate in Community-Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPC), where they raise awareness and lead child protection initiatives. Events like International Children's Day, Child Rights Week, and World Day Against Child Labour provide children with platforms to express their opinions. Capacity-building sessions empower adolescents to take on leadership roles, fostering their ability to influence decisions affecting their lives. In Sindh, the Government has established a Children's Parliament and conducted training sessions to enable children to address various issues concerning their rights. Similarly, schools and communities celebrate key international events, providing children with opportunities to engage in meaningful discussions and advocacy efforts.

Reply to paragraph 4 (a)

30. Efforts to strengthen birth registration systems in Pakistan have led to significant improvements in children's access to rights and services. The implementation of birth certificate requirements has increased child registrations with union councils, cantonment boards, and local government departments. A reduction in processing fees has further boosted registrations, with NADRA issuing 65 million Child Registration Certificates as of January 2024. The Ministry of Interior has established a committee to streamline the process, and NADRA now offers 24/7 services, with a fully digitized system for easier access. Provincial governments, alongside NADRA, are enhancing registration through real-time notifications at healthcare facilities and capacity-building for local officials. Reforms include reviewing regulations, removing barriers like court decrees for delayed registrations, and signing agreements for advanced Civil Registration Management Systems (CRMS). Steering Committees and Technical Working Groups are overseeing improvements, with a focus on increasing registrations, especially in marginalized communities.

Reply to paragraph 4 (b)

31. The Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, belief, and conscience, ensuring that religious minorities can practice their faith without discrimination. Blasphemy laws in Pakistan are non-discriminatory and apply equally to all religions. Legal safeguards have been introduced to prevent their misuse, including a mandatory preliminary inquiry by the District Police Officer before registration of a case. The Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018, is fully implemented, ensuring that children, including those accused under blasphemy laws, are dealt with in accordance with child protection principles. Under Section 7 of the Act, investigations of juvenile offenders, including blasphemy cases, are conducted by a Sub-Inspector with a Probation Officer's assistance. Children are exempt from Hadood punishments and are handled under the Juvenile Justice System Act to prioritize their best interests. Special Juvenile Courts have been established to expedite cases, and measures are in place to improve management, investigation, and hearings. Additionally, an independent inquiry process is being developed to investigate allegations of torture or ill-treatment by law enforcement.

Reply to paragraph 4 (c)

32. Steps have been taken to protect the right to free expression of children, including the right to seek, receive and share information, as guaranteed by the Constitution. Courts now consider children's opinions in legal cases, keeping their well-being in mind. Key initiatives include:

- Awareness Campaigns: Educating children, parents and communities about the importance of children's voices and their right to access information;
- Child-Friendly Communication Channels: Establishing helplines, online platforms and community radio programs to ensure safe and accessible modes of expression;
- Supportive Environments: Collaborating with schools and communities to encourage respect for children's opinions through teacher, parent, and community leader training;
- Access to Information: Distributing child-friendly materials on rights, health, and education through publications, social media, and the Internet;
- Media Engagement: Partnering with media outlets to promote awareness of children's issues and portray their perspectives respectfully;
- Digital Literacy: Offering training on internet safety and the responsible use of digital tools to empower children in seeking and sharing information.

Reply to paragraph 5 (a)

33. Pakistan has made significant strides in strengthening its legal framework to combat child sexual abuse and exploitation, offering robust protection for both girls and boys. The Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) and the Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) Act of 2021 mandate specialized investigations and evidence-based prosecutions to ensure maximum convictions and prevent release of offenders or private settlement. The Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (CPWB) in Punjab plays a pivotal role in rescuing and rehabilitating children at risk. They offer essential services such as medical care, psychological support, and education. This initiative ensures legal action under laws such as the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Act and the Child Marriage Restraint Act. In Sindh, the Child Protection Authority (SCPA) focuses on advocating comprehensive child protection laws, and provides critical victim support services, including a 24/7 helpline, psychological counseling, legal aid, and medical care. The SCPA also conducts training for personnel and awareness campaigns aimed at tackling stigma and facilitating rapid investigations. Balochistan has enhanced efforts to combat child abuse by using media, educational outreach, and community engagement to raise awareness while enforcing laws like the Child Protection Act. Meanwhile, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa amended its Child Protection and Welfare Act (KPCPWA) in 2022 to include clearer definitions, non-bailable offenses, severe penalties, and the elimination of parole and probation for offenders. A sexual offenders register has also been introduced.

Reply to paragraph 5 (b)

34. Refer to Para 3 (f).

Reply to paragraph 5 (c)

35. Pakistan has made significant strides in addressing and preventing all forms of violence against children through a comprehensive strategy involving laws, policies, budgetary commitments, and institutional frameworks. The country's Constitutional and legal framework prohibits child labor in hazardous environments and ensures the protection of families. At the provincial level, laws such as the Punjab Destitute and Neglected Children Act, 2007, the Sindh Child Protection Authority (Amendment) Act, 2021, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Act, 2010, and the Balochistan Child Protection

Act, 2016, provide extensive measures to protect children from abuse, exploitation, and neglect, while promoting access to education and healthcare. Strategic policies complement these laws. The MoHR has also made national pledges to end violence against children. Provincial agencies like the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau in Punjab, the Child Protection Authority in Sindh, the Child Protection Institute in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the Child Protection Commission in Balochistan help implement these policies at the local level. Financially, the provincial and federal governments have committed significant resources to child welfare. In the fiscal year 2024-25, Punjab allocated Rs. 669.7 billion for education and Rs. 130 billion for social welfare programs benefiting children. Sindh allocated Rs. 519 billion for education and Rs. 34.9 billion for social welfare, while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa dedicated Rs. 362.68 billion for education and Rs. 9.51 billion for social welfare. Balochistan committed Rs. 126.62 billion for education and Rs. 13.35 billion for social welfare. Institutionally, key bodies such as the NCRC, the CPI, and the Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Agency (ZARRA) coordinate efforts at the federal level. At the provincial level, agencies such as the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau and the Child Protection Authority work to ensure that laws and policies are implemented effectively. The National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up, led by the MoHR, strengthens coordination between federal and provincial bodies, tackling issues such as child labor, child marriages, and cyber abuse.

Reply to paragraph 5 (d)

36. To address and prohibit corporal punishment, several legislative amendments are proposed, particularly to Section 89 of the Penal Code, the Punjab Destitute and Neglected Children Act, 2004, and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Act, 2010. The Punjab Free & Compulsory Education Act, 2014 (amended in 2022), already prohibits corporal punishment in schools, holding teachers and authorities accountable for any physical abuse. The Punjab government is working on further amendments to address physical and cyberbullying. Similarly, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Act, 2010, explicitly bans corporal punishment that harms a child's development, both at home and in institutions.

Reply to paragraph 5 (e) of the list of issues

37. Please refer to 2(a). In addition, the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) includes penalties for harmful practices like badla, wanni, swara, and forced marriages, as well as other forms of violence against women and children. The Government takes a proactive approach in eliminating all forms of violence against women including psychological, physical and sexual abuse, rape, burning and acid attacks, harassment, early and forced marriages, forced conversions, kidnapping and abduction, murder, and honor killing among others.

Reply to paragraph 5 (f)

38. The Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018, is being fully implemented, including provisions related to case registration, investigation, and arrest for children. Under Section 7 of the Act, investigations of juvenile offenders are conducted by a Sub-Inspector, with the assistance of a Probation Officer. Children are exempt from punishment for Hadood offenses, and the law ensures that they are dealt with under the Juvenile Justice System Act. To strengthen the system, measures have been taken to improve management, investigation, diversion, and hearings for juveniles. Special courts have been established to expedite cases under the Juvenile Justice System Act, ensuring a more efficient and child-sensitive process.

Reply to paragraph 6 (a)

39. Government of Pakistan has implemented welfare programs to provide financial assistance, psychological and social support and guidance to families in need, ensuring that financial poverty is not the sole reason for removing a child from parental care. Article 35 of the Constitution mandates the protection of marriage, family, mother and child, while Article

38 directs the state to secure basic necessities such as food, clothing, housing, education and medical relief. The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) plays a key role in supporting families facing hardship. Through Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCTs), BISP provides economic relief, reducing the risk of families losing parental care due to poverty. Additionally, BISP's Benazir Taleemi Wazaif program ensures that children from disadvantaged families access education by offering financial incentives for school enrollment and attendance. The Benazir Nashonuma Program, a Conditional Cash Transfer initiative, focuses on improving health and nutrition for pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and children under two years old with conditions such as attending health checks and ensuring immunization and nutrition. The Benazir Undergraduate Scholarship Project supports low-income students in public universities by providing scholarships for tuition, fees, and a monthly stipend. The program prioritizes female students and offers scholarships to persons with disabilities. To date, over 102,000 students have benefited, ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent access to education. These programs reflect the government's commitment to upholding constitutional guarantees and ensuring that no child is deprived of their basic rights, education, and well-being due to financial hardship.

Reply to paragraph 6 (b)

40. The government is committed to securing children's right to grow up in a family environment where both parents have equal rights in matters relating to marriage and family relations. In line with this commitment, the government is taking steps to harmonize the legal age of marriage. This reform aims to protect the rights of children, ensuring that they are not subjected to early or forced marriages.

Reply to paragraph 6 (c)

41. The Government of Pakistan has made significant efforts across different provinces to ensure children's right to grow up in a family environment, promoting equal rights for parents in matters of marriage and family relations. In Punjab, the CPWB has been instrumental in rescuing and rehabilitating abandoned children. CPWB plays a key role in fostering family-based care, reducing reliance on institutional facilities, and ensuring the safety and well-being of children. Additionally, CPWB handles the entrustment of custody of abandoned children under Section 28 of the PDNC Act 2004. Child Protection Units (CPUs) assess the suitability of potential guardians, conduct home visits, and ensure periodic reviews of placements, following a standardized framework for monitoring and follow-up.

42. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Council (KPCPWC) has initiated important reforms, including drafting minimum standards for alternative care and starting the deinstitutionalization process in Peshawar. In 2024, KPCPWC assessed 360 children for transitioning from institutional care to family and community-based care. The council's efforts focus on reducing institutional reliance and ensuring that children live in nurturing, family-type environments.

43. Sindh has taken a comprehensive approach to securing children's rights to grow up in family environments. The Sindh Child Protection Authority (SCPA) has developed an Alternative Care Policy that emphasizes family-based care options like kinship care. In addition, SCPA has implemented regulations to ensure the quality of care in alternative settings, providing monitoring and support for kinship care providers.

44. In Balochistan, the government has been focusing on strengthening child protection mechanisms to ensure children grow up in a family environment. The Balochistan Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (BCPWB) has been active in rescuing children from hazardous situations and providing them with necessary rehabilitation services. In 2024, BCPWB initiated a program to assess and place children in foster care or kinship care arrangements, reducing the reliance on institutional facilities.

Reply to paragraph 6 (d)

45. To ensure effective monitoring of children under the guardianship system, a standardized process and documentation framework has been developed and adopted. This process includes a uniform format for assessing applicant families, designed in accordance with court guidelines.

46. Assessment Process: To ensure the child's best interests are prioritized, CPUs assess the family's ability to provide a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

47. Court Recommendations: Based on the assessment findings, CPUs prepare detailed reports to inform court decisions including recommendations regarding the suitability of the applicant family and conditions necessary to the child's welfare.

48. Monitoring and Follow-up: After the court's decision, CPUs oversee the periodic monitoring of the child's well-being at intervals determined by the court, typically ranging from six months to two years. CPUs document these monitoring visits, ensuring compliance with the guardianship terms and promptly addressing issues or concerns.

Reply to paragraph 7 (a)

49. Pakistan is fully implementing the ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2020. The law's implementation is overseen by the Council for Rights of Disabled Persons (CRPD), which includes the Medical Assessment Board. To date, the board has issued 3,322 disability certificates at the ICT level, enabling PWDs to access vital services and rights. In the past year, the Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE) provided services to 1,446 individuals with disabilities in Islamabad through its special centers. DGSE focused on enhancing the independence of PWDs by offering tailored education, equipping them with vocational skills, and providing therapeutic support like speech and occupational therapy. Additionally, assistive aids such as hearing devices and mobility tools were provided to help individuals overcome their challenges. Furthermore, DGSE promotes self-employment by distributing toolkits to PWDs, empowering them to start small businesses. The DGSE also operates a Hi-Tech Orthopedic Workshop, which provides artificial limbs to those in need. Beyond these services, DGSE conducts community awareness programs, medical camps, and seminars to support PWDs and their families.

50. Description of Various Centers for Special Education and Rehabilitation Services established under DGSE:

(a) National Special Education Centre for Physically Handicapped Children, Islamabad. This center provides education, pre-vocational skills, and medical rehabilitative services to over 201 children with physical disabilities from the Federal Capital Territory and its surrounding areas. The center offers physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and assistive orthopedic equipment to support the development of children with physical disabilities;

(b) Al-Makhtoom National Special Education Centre for Visually Handicapped Children. The center offers high-quality education, training, and rehabilitation for visually impaired children. Services include free education from Prep to Intermediate, pick-and-drop facilities, Braille books, white canes, low-vision devices, sports, extracurricular activities, and a Parent-Teacher Association. Hostel facilities are available for students from remote areas;

(c) National Special Education Centre for Hearing Impaired Children This center focuses on the education and rehabilitation of hearing-impaired children across the country. It offers free education from nursery to degree level, audiological services, speech therapy, first-aid medical services, parent counseling, and free boarding/lodging for 50 special students. The center also provides library and computer lab facilities, pre-vocational training, and sports;

(d) National Institute of Special Education (NISE) Established in 1986, NISE trains professionals involved in the education, training, and rehabilitation of children with

disabilities. The institute organizes long- and short-term courses for educators, counselors, and experts in special education and rehabilitation sciences;

(e) National Mobility & Independence Training Centre (NM&ITC), Islamabad. The NM&ITC offers free training courses for visually impaired persons, focusing on orientation and mobility, white cane techniques, sports, computer courses, daily living skills, and arts and crafts. The center provides essential training to students, teachers, doctors, parents, and NGO workers;

(f) National Library & Resource Centre. This center serves as a national library and resource hub for individuals with disabilities. It provides technological and digital resources and literature on disabilities;

(g) Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment of Disabled Persons (VREDP). VREDP is a non-institutionalized, community-based rehabilitation program that focuses on the social, vocational, and economic empowerment of persons with disabilities (PWDs) through skills training, job placement, and community awareness initiatives;

(h) Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR). CBR is a community development strategy that empowers persons with disabilities to live fulfilling lives within their communities by focusing on rehabilitation, education, employment opportunities, and the provision of assistive devices.

Reply to paragraph 7 (b)

51. The government of Pakistan has implemented a national strategy to promote the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities, with a particular focus on children. Key initiatives include the establishment of councils on the rights of persons with disabilities and district-level assessment boards, which are involved in disability assessments and issuing certificates. These services are supported through management information systems that facilitate the process of tracking and offering services. Essential services such as free medical treatment, provision of prosthetic limbs and financial assistance are being provided to individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, multiple projects have been initiated to enhance the welfare of disabled students, including the construction of special education centers in various districts, as well as new schools to meet the growing demand for educational facilities for children with disabilities. Efforts have also been made to improve transportation facilities for students, such as the provision of buses, and enhancing Braille printing presses to numerous institutions nationwide that provide specialized education and training, including for visually impaired children, mentally challenged children, hearing-impaired children, physically disabled children, and slow learners. In addition, a significant number of special education centers have been established at the district and tehsil levels to ensure that children with disabilities have access to quality education close to their homes. Moreover, a number of degree colleges have been set up to provide higher education opportunities for disabled students. To ensure that the teachers working with special needs students are adequately trained, teachers' training colleges and in-service training colleges have been established. Special education, vocational training, and rehabilitation services are being offered through various programs across the country.

Reply to paragraph 7 (c)

52. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), as the National Statistical Organization, has successfully conducted the PSLM District Level Survey, which includes a Disability module designed by the Washington Group. This initiative, approved by the Technical Committee for the Disability Module, aimed to ensure reliable district-level disability estimates. To achieve this, the usual PSLM survey sample size of 80,000 households was expanded to 195,000 households, ensuring comprehensive coverage and representation of disability data. The Survey Report is attached as Annex-I.

Reply to paragraph 8

53. The federal and provincial governments across Pakistan have launched several maternal and child health (MCH) programs aimed at reducing neonatal, infant and under-5 mortality rates. These initiatives focus on integrated health projects that emphasize the accessibility of quality healthcare services at the community level. One of the key components of these programs is the deployment of Lady Health Workers (LHWs) who provide essential services in family planning, maternal care and child health at the grassroots level. Additionally, Basic Health Units (BHUs) and Rural Health Centers (RHCs) have been strengthened to offer 24/7 services and specialized care, particularly for antenatal care (ANC), postnatal care (PNC), immunization, and breastfeeding counseling.

Antenatal and Postnatal Services

54. To improve antenatal and postnatal care, a range of strategies have been implemented across the provinces. Enhanced coordination among various health departments, including technical working groups, has led to better resource allocation and planning for maternal and child health services. broader plan to address the immediate health needs of mothers and infants. Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs) have been expanded in several hospitals to provide specialized care to newborns, and home-based newborn care services have been introduced to ensure early detection of health issues. Additionally, healthcare providers across the provinces have received training in Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness (IMNCI), helping them to address a wide range of health issues, from newborn care to maternal education. P&SH Department measures quality & availability of services through Monitoring & Evaluation Assistants (MEA) on monthly basis.

55. The Number of women who took ANC, PNC and FP services plus the number of children served by PWDS from January 2016 to November 2024 is as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of Women took ANC</i>	<i>No. of Women took PNC</i>	<i>No. of Women took FP services</i>	<i>No. of Children Served</i>
2016	163,527	136,356	1,336,082	112,964
2017	168,444	141,833	1,398,113	104,513
2018	175,855	147,256	1,438,558	103,490
2019	200,588	154,130	1,759,026	110,756
2020	197,596	122,032	1,764,089	105,387
2021	203,186	139,453	1,588,208	106,537
2022	156,362	122,129	1,593,559	87,474
2023	132,768	106,532	1,480,095	76,622
2024*	96,391	78,892	1,236,448	54,898
Total	1,494,717	1,148,613	13,594,178	862,641

Strengthening Immunization Efforts

56. Throughout Pakistan, vaccination services are delivered through fixed sites, outreach teams and mobile vaccination sessions, particularly targeting hard-to-reach areas. Awareness campaigns engage health workers, religious leaders and media to emphasize the importance of vaccines. The use of digital tools like the National Electronic Immunization Registry (NEIR) has enhanced the monitoring and improvement of immunization coverage, enabling the government to track vaccination records and identify gaps. In 2024, 2.8 million doses of oral polio vaccine were procured and distributed, surpassing initial targets. 90% of infants born between October 2023 and August 2024 received timely immunization.

Addressing Malnutrition and Stunting

57. The government has implemented various programs to address concerns related to malnutrition, particularly stunting. Prime Minister's National Health Program (PMNHP) is a milestone towards social welfare reforms; ensuring that the identified under-privileged citizens across the country get access to their entitled medical health care in a swift and dignified manner without any financial obligations. The program focuses on improving maternal and child nutrition through breastfeeding promotion, micronutrient supplementation and nutritional counseling. As a result, the initiative has contributed to a reduction in stunting rates, reaching over 5 million children under 5 years old and providing nutritional support to more than 2 million pregnant women in 2024. Food fortification programs, including salt iodization and wheat flour fortification, have benefitted over 40 million people across the country. Furthermore, deworming initiatives have reached over 12 million children, while the treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) has provided direct care to more than 300,000 children.

Reducing Maternal Mortality and Health Indicators

58. Life expectancy at birth in Pakistan has shown modest improvement over recent years. In 2022, the life expectancy for men was 65.1 years, while for women, it was 69.1 years. This improvement is attributed to various government health initiatives, including expanded immunization programs and efforts to control communicable diseases. In 2022, Pakistan's total fertility rate (TFR) stood at 3.6. The birth rate in Pakistan was recorded at 28.1 births per 1,000 people in 2022, reflecting the country's young population and relatively high fertility rates. In contrast, Pakistan's death rate was 6.5 per 1,000 people in 2022. This rate indicates a gradual decline due to better healthcare access and preventive measures. The infant mortality rate, though still high, has improved over the years. It was recorded at 50.9 per 1,000 live births in 2022. Meanwhile, the maternal mortality ratio stood at 137 per 100,000 live births, which shows the persistent challenges in maternal health care despite progress. During the reporting period, there has been significant progress in increasing the uptake of prenatal consultations, with 77% of mothers attending consultations during their last pregnancy. The attended birth rate, assisted by skilled birth attendants, has also significantly increased from 58% to 68%. The Government also administered Tetanus Toxoid injections to 77% of pregnant women to safeguard the health of infants and women during pregnancy and childbirth. Furthermore, the implementation of conditional cash transfer programs showcases a focus on enhanced maternal and child health. These efforts have resulted in a decrease in Maternal Mortality Rate, Infant Mortality Rate, and Neo-Natal Mortality Rate.

Infant and neo-natal mortality rate

<i>Year</i>	<i>Infant Mortality Rate</i>	<i>Neo-natal Mortality Rate</i>
2019	55.7	41.2
2020	54.2	40.4

Mental Health Services and Adolescent Health

59. Mental health services have become an increasing priority in Pakistan, particularly with growing awareness of mental health issues among adolescents. Across all provinces, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) programs have been developed to integrate mental health services with other areas of healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health. Healthcare providers have been trained to recognize and address mental health issues among adolescents and adults, offering services that include counseling, therapy and support for those dealing with anxiety, depression, and other psychological challenges.

Reproductive Health Services

60. The Government of Pakistan has established the National Service Delivery Standards and Guidelines for High-Quality Safe Uterine Evacuation/Post-Abortion Care (2018). This

framework outlines protocols for delivering comprehensive uterine evacuation care during the first trimester and post-abortion care. In addition to this, the Government of Pakistan's Universal Health Coverage benefit packages, the Guidelines on Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality, Intrapartum and Post-natal Care, inclusion of Manual Vacuum Aspiration in the Essential Package of Health Services and Essential Lists as the reproductive health technology of choice for providing safe uterine evacuations and post-abortion care, and LHWs Strategic Plan 2022-2028 serve as the government's commitment to safeguarding women's reproductive health.

61. The Government of Punjab has proposed a new bill, i.e., the Punjab Reproductive Health Rights and Family Planning Bill, 2021, which aims to tackle a range of reproductive health concerns. Similar bill is being considered in Balochistan. In addition to this, the Integrated Reproductive Maternal Newborn Child Health & Nutrition Program in Punjab aims to provide accessible and quality reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health services. The Punjab Health Department has also approved the Service Delivery Standards and Guidelines for High-Quality Safe Uterine Evacuation and Post-Abortion Care in 2015, which are now implemented across all healthcare facilities in the province.

62. Furthermore, provinces have implemented comprehensive family planning and reproductive health programs addressing reproductive health and family planning. The LHWs in the provinces work to provide reproductive health services to all women, particularly in rural areas.

63. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics regularly publishes Contraceptive Performance Report based on Family Planning Service Statistics. The annual estimate of the modern Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (mCPR) for 2020-21 was 46.4%, 44.1% during 2019-2020 and 42.8% during 2018-19. The Government also actively conducts family planning campaigns to raise awareness and promote family planning.

Family Planning Initiatives

64. The government has significantly expanded access to contraceptive services through its family planning programs. These services are widely available at over 3,000 service delivery points operated by Population Welfare Departments and more than 7,000 facilities managed by Health Departments.

Maternal Health and Reduction of Unsafe Abortions

65. Several initiatives aim to improve maternal health and reduce unsafe abortions. Misoprostol, a medication for managing postpartum hemorrhage and early pregnancy bleeding, is widely registered, and training is provided to healthcare providers on safe abortion procedures like Manual Vacuum Aspiration (MVA). In addition to this, modern contraceptive methods are a central focus of the government to prevent unintended pregnancies and unsafe abortions. Key statistics include:

- Maternal Deaths Averted: Increased from 5,200 in 2019 to 6,600 in 2023 due to modern contraceptive use;
- Unintended Pregnancies Averted: Increased from 3.66 million in 2019 to 4.57 million in 2023;
- Unsafe Abortions Averted: Increased from 1.92 million in 2019 to 2.4 million in 2023.

Family Planning Indicators 2019 – 2023

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Users of Modern Contraceptives (mn)</i>	<i>Modern Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (%)</i>	<i>Unintended Pregnancies Averted (mn)</i>	<i>Unsafe Abortions Averted (mn)</i>
2019	9.97	18.3	3.66	1.92
2020	10.53	18.9	3.86	2.03
2021	11.18	19.5	4.1	2.15
2022	11.77	20	4.32	2.27

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Users of Modern Contraceptives (mn)</i>	<i>Modern Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (%)</i>	<i>Unintended Pregnancies Averted (mn)</i>	<i>Unsafe Abortions Averted (mn)</i>
2023	12.46	20.7	4.57	2.4

Awareness and Capacity Building

66. Recognizing the cultural and religious sensitivities surrounding abortion, the Government is conducting carefully designed awareness campaigns for both service providers and the general community. These campaigns focus on overcoming the stigma associated with abortion and informing stakeholders about its legal status.

Reply to paragraph 9

67. The Government reinforced its commitment to sustainable development through the National Adaptation Plan 2023. This plan covers a broad spectrum of initiatives, such as promoting climate-smart practices, updating irrigation methods, formulating a growth strategy, and tackling water and rainfall fluctuations. Steps to address environmental degradation include the creation of the Pakistan Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Strategic Planning and Coordination Cell, which aims to facilitate the achievement of SDG 6.1 and 6.2. Moreover, establishing the Climate Resilient Urban Human Settlement Unit emphasizes building climate-resilient and sustainable cities. The Government of Sindh took various initiative to implement projects focused on canal lining, urban efficiency, and the development of a zero-emissions bus rapid transit system. The Government of Punjab has successfully implemented clean energy projects, including converting ten thousand schools to solar energy. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also initiated projects focused on hydropower and tree plantation to address environmental degradation and promote alternative energy sources.

Preventing and Mitigating the Impact of Floods

68. The Government of Pakistan developed a Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Policy in response to the 2022 floods. This policy covers various measures, such as creating a comprehensive hydrological database, models for predicting floods, and a unified approach to managing flood control. The Government is also prioritizing investments in early warning systems, disaster risk governance, and infrastructure resilience to recover from floods and effectively ensure a more robust future.

69. In addition to this, the Government has established a Federal Flood Commission (FFC) under the Ministry of Water for mitigating the impacts of flooding in Pakistan.

Reply to paragraph 10 (a)

70. Pakistan has taken several steps to ensure universal, free and compulsory primary education and to guarantee access to free secondary education for all children. The National Education Policy Framework 2018 prioritizes out-of-school children (OOSC) and expanding secondary education, particularly for girls. It includes measures such as establishing new schools, upgrading existing ones and providing transport in remote areas. Additionally, non-formal and accelerated learning programs help reintegrate children into the education system. All provinces have Education Sector Plans that emphasize gender equality, removing gender stereotypes from curricula and promoting inclusive education.

71. The National Fund for Out-of-School Children (PKR 25 billion) was launched to support disadvantaged children, with both public and private institutions assisting in their identification and enrollment. In Punjab, the Zever-e-Taleem Programme provides stipends to female students in low-literacy districts, benefiting over 813,000 girls since 2017. The Punjab Education Sector Plan (PESP) 2019/20 – 2023/24 focuses on inclusion, governance, and equity in education, while initiatives like Taleem Ghar and Insaaf Afternoon School Program aim to address learning gaps.

Reply to paragraph 10 (b)

72. The Government of Pakistan, through the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MoFE&PT), is implementing initiatives to boost school enrollment and improve educational quality. Efforts include recruiting qualified teachers, deploying Teach for Pakistan fellows to rural areas, and launching financial aid programs like the Girls' Stipend and Conditional Cash Transfer initiatives, which have collectively resulted in a 24% increase in girls' enrollment.

Reply to paragraph 10 (c)

73. The federal and provincial governments of Pakistan are working to ensure inclusive education for children with disabilities by improving school facilities and accessibility. Under the ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2020, the Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE) has expanded special education centers, vocational training, and assistive aid programs. Provincial governments have established district-level special education centers and integrated inclusive education policies into mainstream schools.

Reply to paragraph 10 (d)

74. The federal and provincial governments of Pakistan have undertaken extensive measures to improve school infrastructure, particularly in areas affected by natural disasters and conflict. Following the 2022 floods, comprehensive assessments identified schools requiring urgent rehabilitation, and prefabricated structures were deployed in severely affected areas to ensure continuity of education while permanent reconstruction progressed.

75. In Punjab, PKR 654.8 million was utilized to rehabilitate 2,018 flood-affected schools in Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajanpur under the PHCIP and TALEEM projects. Under the ASPIRE project, PKR 1,538 million was allocated for constructing 227 classrooms and providing furniture for 1,033 classrooms in marginalized districts of South Punjab. Additionally, PKR 56 million was used to rehabilitate toilets in 1,887 girls' schools. PKR 1,335 million was allocated for the establishment of 112 new IT labs and the revamping of 388 existing IT labs across nine districts.

76. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), PDMA-PaRRSA successfully reconstructed 264 schools. These efforts restored education for approximately 140,000 students. The schools were designed with seismic-resistant structures and safety plans to ensure long-term sustainability.

77. In Balochistan, efforts focused on strengthening disaster-resilient school infrastructure, including earthquake- and flood-resistant buildings. The government installed water supply systems, boreholes, and RO plants in schools to provide clean drinking water. Over 1,000 sex-segregated toilets were constructed, and renewable energy sources such as solar panels were introduced for lighting and heating in schools. Temporary Learning Centers (TLCs) were set up in disaster-affected areas for uninterrupted access to education.

78. In Sindh, assessments identified severely damaged schools, and prefabricated structures were deployed to maintain learning continuity. Several projects facilitated the rapid establishment of TLCs and the reconstruction of affected schools.

Reply to paragraph 10 (e)

79. The Federal Directorate of Education, in collaboration with NAVTTC and other organizations, is actively enhancing the quality of education by providing targeted training and incentives for teachers, particularly in rural areas. Female teachers receive specialized training in modern technology, scientific knowledge, mathematical applications, and vocational skills. Furthermore, 2,500 Madaris students are currently undergoing vocational training in technical institutes across the country through a DGRE-NAVTTC initiative. The government also ensures regular monitoring of school curricula and teaching methods,

including in Madaris, to maintain educational standards and improve learning outcomes nationwide.

Reply to paragraph 11

80. Although Pakistan is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, it adheres to international standards of refugee protection under customary international law. The UNHCR conducts refugee status determinations on behalf of the Government of Pakistan, and Pakistan generally accepts UNHCR's decisions, allowing asylum-seekers and refugees to remain in the country pending a durable solution.

81. The government's Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan (IFRP), approved in 2023, addresses the presence of unregistered foreigners, including Afghan nationals. The phased plan, which began in November 2023, focuses on deporting illegal foreigners, including those with overstayed visas or fraudulent documents. The plan emphasizes humane implementation and ensures adherence to international humanitarian standards. Key to the IFRP is the provision of Humanitarian Safe Passage exit permits for Afghan nationals wishing to relocate to third countries, ensuring they are not forcibly returned to unsafe regions.

82. More than 600,000 refugees have voluntarily returned to Afghanistan, with only 30,000 deported. Registered refugees with valid documents in Pakistan have access to basic services, including education and healthcare. Refugee children can attend Pakistani schools, and refugees can access both public and private healthcare. As per the tripartite agreement with Afghanistan and UNHCR, repatriation of Afghan refugees holding valid PoR cards is voluntary and dignified.

Reply to paragraph 12 (a)

83. The Government of Pakistan has implemented various measures to improve minorities' access to employment, healthcare, education, and basic services. A 5% job quota for minorities (BPS-01 to BPS-22), introduced in 2009, is enforced nationwide to enhance representation in public service, law enforcement, and academia. Discriminatory recruitment practices, such as "Christian only" conditions for sanitation workers, have been prohibited. The Ministry of Religious Affairs allocated Rs. 105 million for the Minorities Welfare Fund in FY 2023-24. The Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) provides Rs. 3,500 monthly to disadvantaged families, with substantial disbursements to minority communities, such as Rs. 1.266 billion in District Badin alone. Provincially, Sindh allocated Rs. 1.557 billion for minority welfare in FY 2024-25. Punjab designated Rs. 2.5 billion for minority development, Rs. 60 million for financial assistance, and Rs. 50 million for scholarships. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa approved Rs. 513 million for the construction and renovation of 109 worship places, launched skill development schemes, and provided scholarships to minority students. Balochistan allocated Rs. 50 million for an endowment fund, Rs. 89 million for financial assistance, and Rs. 240 million for renovating 213 worship places. Additionally, Rs. 105 million was spent on medical assistance for minorities suffering from chronic illnesses.

Reply to paragraph 12 (b)

84. Pakistan has undertaken significant efforts to combat child labor through legislative measures and rigorous inspection systems across its provinces. In Punjab, the Labour Department conducted 51,678 inspections from January 2019 to April 2020, addressing 3,600 child labor incidents. Targeted campaigns in August 2020 identified 896 additional cases through nearly 4,000 inspections. Sindh's Child Protection Authority, active since 2018, has combined enforcement with awareness programs to address child labor. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the KP Prohibition of Employment of Children Act resulted in 56,949 inspections from 2018 to 2024, leading to 1,371 prosecutions. Balochistan enforced the Balochistan Employment of Children (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, identifying 221 violations since 2018 and imposing fines.

Reply to paragraph 12 (c)

85. The Government of Pakistan, in collaboration with all provincial governments, has adopted comprehensive and effective strategies to address the needs of street children. Through initiatives such as Open Reception Centers (ORCs), children at risk are identified and registered, ensuring they receive basic education, counseling, and essential services. These centers, both permanent and mobile, are strategically located to minimize the time children spend on the streets, reducing their exposure to harm and associated risks.

Reply to paragraph 12 (d)

86. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) plays a crucial role in addressing external trafficking, including cases involving children trafficked across international borders, while internal trafficking remains under the jurisdiction of local police and provincial authorities. To combat external child trafficking, the FIA has implemented the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Act, 2018, which prescribes strict punishments for traffickers, with enhanced penalties for offenses involving children. Pakistan also acceded to the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons in 2022.

87. The FIA, in collaboration with UNODC, developed a five-year National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling, focusing on capacity building, awareness, coordination, and victim protection mechanisms. SOPs are in place to identify child victims and refer them to appropriate support services.

Reply to paragraph 12 (e)

88. Draft legislation to criminalize enforced is under preparation for presentation in Parliament.

Reply to paragraph 13 (a)

89. The provisions of the Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018, are being implemented to ensure fair treatment and protection of juveniles in conflict with the law. Sections 5, 7, and 13 of the Act specifically address:

- Arrest of Juveniles: Juveniles who are arrested must be kept in observation homes. Authorities are required to promptly inform their guardians and notify the concerned probation officer to assist the Juvenile Court with relevant information. Juveniles cannot be arrested under preventive detention laws or specific provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure;
- Investigation Procedures: Juvenile cases must be investigated by officers of appropriate rank, with the involvement of probation or social welfare officers who prepare social investigation reports to support the inquiry process;
- Disclosure of Identity: To protect the privacy and dignity of juveniles, the publication or disclosure of their identity is strictly prohibited with violations punishable by imprisonment and fines.

Reply to paragraph 13 (b)

90. Pakistan has replaced the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance 2000 with the Juvenile Justice System Act 2018, a comprehensive legal framework aligned with international obligations. The Act prohibits the imposition of capital punishment for individuals who were under 18 years of age at the time of the offense and ensures the protection of juveniles' rights. It guarantees the right to free legal assistance for every juvenile or child victim of an offense, with juveniles being informed of this right within 24 hours of being taken into custody. The Act also introduces a diversion mechanism as an alternative to formal judicial proceedings,

allowing complaints against juveniles to be resolved based on their social, cultural, economic, psychological, and educational circumstances.

Reply to paragraph 13 (c)

91. In January 2019, in the landmark case of NCSW vs. The Government of Pakistan, the Supreme Court of Pakistan addressed the role of informal forums such as jirgas and panchayats. The Court declared these forums illegal under the Constitution and Pakistan's international human rights obligations, emphasizing that any decisions or orders issued by such bodies lack legal standing. However, the judgment permitted these forums to function as platforms for arbitration, mediation, or negotiation, provided they do not encroach upon the jurisdiction of ordinary courts. Furthermore, the ruling ensured that women and girls subjected to discrimination or injustice by these informal systems have access to legal remedies.

Reply to paragraph 13 (d)

92. Please see paragraphs 13 (a) and (b).

Reply to paragraph 13 (e)

93. The government of Pakistan is actively enforcing measures to prevent the recruitment and use of children by non-state armed including through awareness raising seminars at universities and colleges.

94. Please see 3(d).

95. Stringent security protocols have also been adopted, including two-tier searches at entry and exit points, security rehearsals, and the installation of security desks and facilitation centers. Vantage points are established for better monitoring, and police patrolling is conducted regularly, especially near girls' schools, to prevent attacks and illegal activities. Control rooms are operational, panic buttons are activated, and security audits of educational institutions are carried out monthly.

Part two

Reply to paragraph 14

96. Brief is enclosed as Annex II.

Part three

Data, Statistics and other information

Reply to paragraph 15

97. Response is enclosed as Annex III.

Reply to paragraph 16

98. Response is enclosed as Annex IV.

Reply to paragraph 17

99. Response is enclosed as Annex V.

Reply to paragraph 18

100. Response is enclosed as Annex VI.

Reply to paragraph 19

101. Response is enclosed as Annex VII.

Reply to paragraph 20

102. As per UNHCR Pakistan hosts approximately 1.9 million refugees, primarily from Afghanistan. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), about 52% of these refugees are children, which equates to over 1 million refugee children residing in Pakistan. The government of Pakistan, with UNHCR support, has completed the verification of some 1.3 million registered Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan. The refugee children with valid documents are given access to all education, health and social services by the government.

Reply to paragraph 21

103. Pakistan's commitment to achieving the SDGs ensures that national policies, legislation, and programs are consistent with obligations under the CRC. The government has taken several measures to integrate child rights into development frameworks, focusing on key areas such as education, health, poverty reduction, and child protection.

Reply to paragraph 22

104. Updated data has been incorporated in the Report.
