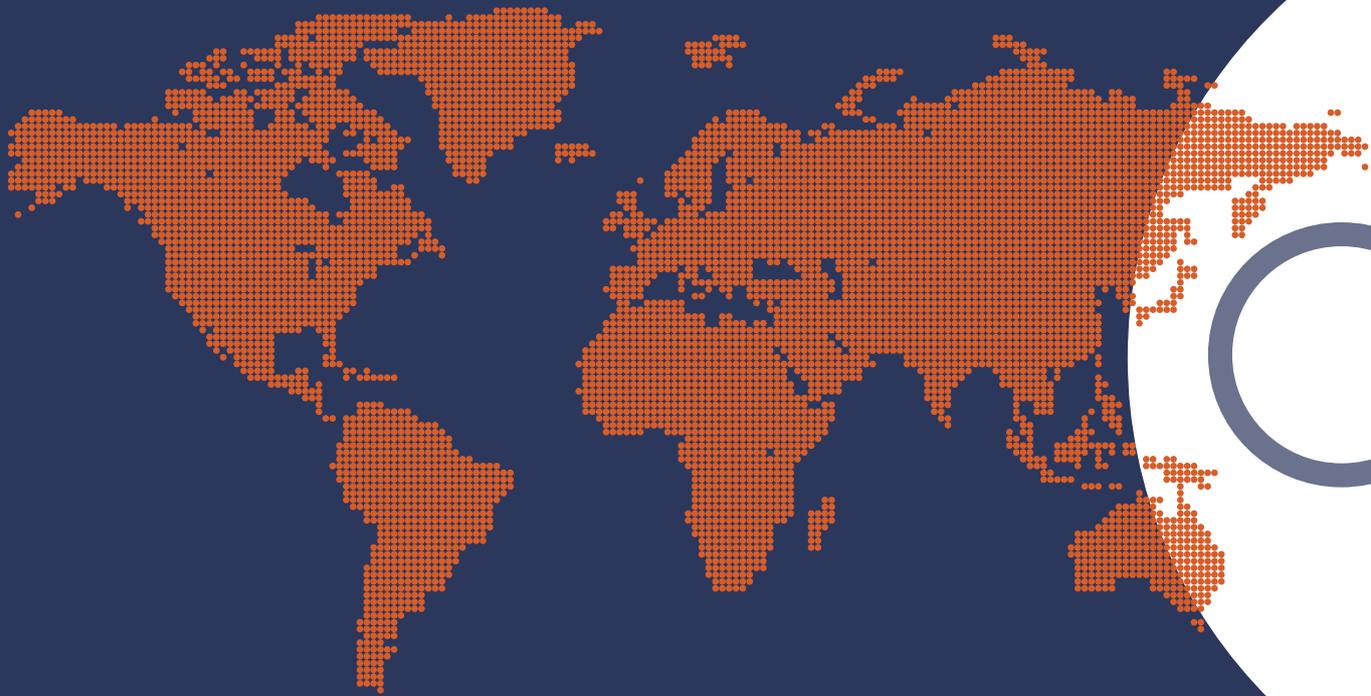


COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

U.S. Department of State's Country Reports
on Human Rights Practices (2016–2019)

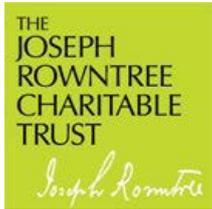


PAKISTAN

OCTOBER 2020

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Summary of Findings

This comparative analysis of the U.S. Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* chapters on Pakistan compared the full content of the 2016 edition to the subsequent annual editions covering events in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Each section of the Pakistan chapter was analysed against the following set of criteria:

- Structure of the report: Were sections omitted, renamed, condensed, or new sections proposed;
- Language used: Whether any changes in terminology or semantics were observed when describing human rights issues, including changes in specificity, description of general patterns or number of incidents documented
- Improvements: What improvements in the human rights situations were observed compared to the previous report that were not corroborated by country information available from illustrative sources at the time of publication of the annual reports;
- Omissions: Which human rights issues were omitted compared to the previous report that continued to be documented by other illustrative sources at the time of publication of the annual reports.

A. Structure of the report

Length

The 2016 Pakistan report was 59 pages long. This was reduced to 54 pages in the 2017 and 2018 editions and to 52 pages in 2019. The section most notably reduced in 2017 which continued in subsequent editions was *6. Women*. In 2018 and 2019 the sections on *1. a. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and other Unlawful Politically Motivated Killings* and *1.g. Abuses in Internal Conflict* were condensed, in particular omitting incidents of sectarian violence. In 2019 the section *Role of the Police and Security Apparatus* previously found within section *1.d Arbitrary Arrest or Detention* was removed along with much of its content. Some of the related content is presented as omissions that were not commensurate with the situation as reported by other sources. For further details see [Table 1](#) and section [D. Omissions](#) below.

Section headings

All the changes in section headings are presented in detail in [Table 1](#) below.

Numerous changes were made to section headings, with the majority being made from 2016 to 2017 and then replicated in the 2018 and 2019 editions. The most significant changes were:

- Replacing the whole subsection on *Reproductive Rights* in the 2016 report with a new subsection on *Coercion in Population Control* in the 2017 and subsequent editions, dramatically changing the range of issues addressed in the respective reports (see [D. Omissions](#) below for further details).
- Omitting the following subsections and related content from the 2017 and subsequent reports on:

- *Public Access to Information*: This had the effect that information on regulations concerning access to public records and NGO's criticism thereof were omitted. (See [D. Omissions](#) below for further details)
- *Libel/Slander Laws*: However the omitted text "Ministers and members of the National Assembly used libel and slander laws in the past to counter public discussion of their actions" was not documented by the sources consulted and is therefore not addressed further

Two further notable omissions were observed in the 2018 report's structure, both of which were repeated in the 2019 edition. This was the removal of the subsections:

- *Abductions*: Thereby omitting the text "There were reports militant groups kidnapped or took civilians hostage in FATA, KP, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan" (See [D. Omissions](#) below for further details)
- *Refoulement*: Thereby omitting information on the forcible return of Afghan 'Proof of Registration' cardholders (See [D. Omissions](#) below for further details)

A notable omission observed in the 2019 report's structure was the removal of the subsection:

- *Role of the Police and Security Apparatus* previously found within section 1.d *Arbitrary Arrest or Detention*. Some of the related content was moved to the 2019 report's *Executive Summary*. However, other information was omitted, despite publicly available information continuing to document its existence (See [D. Omissions](#) below for further details)

A new subsection was introduced to section 1.c *Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment/ Prison and Detention Conditions* of the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports entitled *Improvements*. (see [C. Improvements](#) below for further details)

In one section a heading title was condensed, potentially altering its perceived meaning. The 2016 edition contained the section 2. d. *Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons*. In the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports this was revised to *Freedom of Movement*. Given that this section continued to document access to legal protections and services for refugees, it is considered that the heading no longer fully encompasses all the issues addressed.

B. Language used

It was observed that on occasion the 2017 report and subsequent editions tended to describe less general patterns than the 2016 edition and instead only presented individual incidents (which may be read to imply that the incidents were isolated), as well as providing less examples or reduced specificity on particular issues. In other instances, less illustrative incidents were provided.

Section 1 *Respect for the Integrity of the Person* was by far the section with the highest number of language observations throughout the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports, followed by section 6. *Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking*.

The most notable changes to language observed when comparing the 2016 edition to the 2017 and which were repeated in subsequent years included:

- Two incidences of source attribution being introduced in the 2017 which was repeated in the subsequent editions which may be read to imply reduced veracity of the issues in that only isolated sources reported on their occurrence [bold indicates added text]:
 - *The law provides for an independent judiciary, but **according to NGOs and legal experts**, the judiciary often was subject to external influences*
 - ***According to a wide range of LGBT NGOs and activists**, society generally shunned transgender women, eunuchs, and intersex persons, collectively referred to as 'hijras'.*
- It was observed that the 2017 report introduced language which could be read to undermine the veracity of the issue which was repeated in the 2018 and 2019 editions:
 - *Security forces **allegedly** abducted journalists.*
- The 2017 and subsequent editions removed “torture” from the forms of domestic violence experienced by women.
- Less illustrative examples were presented in the 2017 report on the targets of politically motivated attacks compared to 2016 and no illustrative incidents of violence and discrimination against LGBTI persons were provided in the 2017, 2018 and 2019 editions, although the general pattern was described.

The 2018 report introduced further source attribution for a number of issues, which were repeated in 2019:

- ***NGOs reported that rape** was a severely underreported crime*
- *With regards to sexual harassment: **the problem was reportedly** widespread.*

The 2018 report also downplayed the nature of abuse resulting in death or serious injury from *torture to police excesses*. Whilst this terminology mirrors that of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, cited on this issue, inverted commas should have been used to more clearly indicate this:

- *Multiple sources reported that **police excesses** sometimes resulted in death or serious injury and was often underreported (in 2016 and 2017 “Multiple sources reported that **torture** occasionally resulted in death or serious injury and was often underreported)*

The 2018 and 2019 reports underplayed the coercive element of child soldier recruitment compared to the 2016 and 2017 editions:

- *Nonstate militant groups **recruited children** as young as 12 to spy, fight, or die as suicide bombers (in 2016 and 2017: Nonstate militant groups **kidnapped boys and girls and used fraudulent promises to coerce parents** into giving away children as young as 12 to spy, fight, or die as suicide bombers).*

The 2019 edition also introduced some additional distancing language:

- ***Media and civil society organizations** reported cases of individuals dying in police custody **allegedly** due to torture in Punjab Province.*
- ***Civil society groups stated** courts often failed to protect the rights of religious minorities.*

The 2019 report no longer described the general pattern that “The terrorist groups TTP, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and related factions bombed government buildings and attacked and killed female teachers”, but instead provided examples, thereby potentially suggesting that the incidents documented were isolated examples rather than a more general pattern/widespread practice.

Less specificity was also observed with regards to numbers/statistics, for example with regards to the percentage of Dawoodi Bohra Muslims practising FGM, the numbers of government-funded Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Centers for Women (in the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports) and the size of the Rohingya population (in the 2019 report).

In addition, less contextual information was found on certain topics including the forms of torture perpetrated and the practice of honour killings (2017, 2018 and 2019 reports), as well as the buying and selling of brides and marriage to the Quran (2018 and 2019 reports).

For additional examples on the above findings see the respective *Use of language* sections presented below under the sections of the U.S. Department of State’s report.

Language changes in the *Executive Summary*

The 2016 *Executive Summary* included three categories of issues. First, it listed seven of what it termed the “most serious human rights problems”, followed by a list of six “other human rights problems”, a list of seven “serious societal problems” as well as numerous other issues that were described but not categorised, for example: “Gender inequality continued”.

By comparison, the 2017 edition included two categories, the first of which slightly amended the language used in the 2016 edition to the “most significant human rights issues”, under which only 5 points were included. This was followed by a reduced list of four “additional problems” and a longer list of other issues that, as with the 2016 edition, were described but not categorised. It is observed that re-categorising “human rights problems” to “additional problems” may be read to imply less severity.

The 2018 report provided just one category, “human rights issues included credible reports of” and the 2019 edition kept this one list but amended it slightly to “significant human rights issues included”. It is notable that the language used in the 2018 report no longer presents issues as occurring, but now introduces the concept of credibility to reports of issues, potentially undermining their perceived veracity.

This is discussed below in section [8. Executive Summary](#).

C. Improvements

Three reported improvements in the situation in 2017 were observed when comparing the situation in 2016 which were not found to be commensurate with the situation as reported by other publicly available sources. Two such improvements were located in section 1. *Respect for the Integrity of the Person* and one in section 6. *Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and trafficking in Persons*. All of these improvements were repeated in 2018 and continued to be inconsistent with the situation as documented by other sources:

- *Juveniles and adults were in close proximity when waiting for transport but were kept under careful supervision at this time* (In 2016: “officials often mixed children with the general prison population at some point during their imprisonment”). See [1.2.1](#).
- The 2017 edition contained a new subsection under *Prison and Detention Center Conditions* entitled *Improvements*, which included the statement “Infrastructure improvements and new policies in existing prisons, along with the construction of new facilities, increased the frequency with which pretrial detainees and convicted prisoners were separated”. See [1.2.1](#).
- *“Women also faced discrimination in employment”* [In 2016: *Women faced significant discrimination in employment and frequently were paid less than men for similar work*. See [6.2.1](#).

Only the latter of these reported improvements was repeated in 2019, again found to be inconsistent with other available information.

Three further improvements were observed in the 2018 report which were broadly not found to be commensurate with the situation as reported by other publicly available sources. All of these reported improvements were repeated in the 2019 edition and continued to be inconsistent with the situation as documented by other sources, which included:

- *Outreach by NGOs in KP [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa], however, improved interactions between police and the transgender community there*. Whilst no information was found to confirm or deny whether interactions between the police and transgender community had improved in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, information was found for both years to indicate police involvement in abuses against the transgender community in KP, that most of the assaults, rape and murders of transgender people took place in KP and the police’s failure to hold perpetrators accountable. None of these issues were addressed the report, therefore indicating that the reported improvement was inconsistent with the situation on the ground as reported by other sources. See section [6.2.2](#).

No further improvements were observed in the 2019 report that were observed to be inconsistent with the situation as reported by other publicly available sources.

D. Omissions

The majority of omitted issues were observed comparing the 2017 report to the 2016 edition. Twenty six issues documented in the 2016 report were omitted from the 2017 edition despite publicly available information continuing to document their existence. All but one of these continued to be excluded from the 2018 and 2019 editions. An additional thirteen issues were omitted in the 2018 report and ten additional omissions were observed in the 2019 report. In all of these instances publicly available information continued to document the persistent existence of these issues.

The vast majority of the omissions observed across the three reports were found in section 6. *Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons*, in particular the subsection on *Women*, and in section 1. *Respect for the Integrity of the Person*.

In the 2017 report, two thirds of the omitted issues related to section 6. *Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons*. Most notably, the section *Women- Reproductive Rights* included in the 2016 report was amended to *Coercion in Population Control* in subsequent editions. This had

the effect of stripping out the following issues, which continued to be documented by other publicly available sources in the respective years:

- Couples and individuals have the right to decide the number, spacing, and timing of their children, but they often lacked the information and means to do so, with young girls and rural women particularly vulnerable to accessing sexual and reproductive health rights.
- Spousal opposition also contributed to the challenges women faced in obtaining contraception or delaying pregnancy
- Access to contraception, skilled health-care attendance during pregnancy and childbirth, prenatal care, essential obstetric and postpartum care.

Other omitted information from the subsection on *Women* in the 2017 report, all of which were also omitted from subsequent reports, related to:

- Challenges in changing the cultural assumptions of male police and in training female police;
- Lack of knowledge and restrictions on women's mobility affecting their utilisation of women's police centre;
- Communities practising the sequestering (confinement) of women;
- Women's lack of awareness of legal protections and inability to access legal representation;
- Situation of divorced women, including lacking means of support due to being ostracised by their family;
- Motivations for honour crimes including adultery or marrying without consent.

All of these omissions are addressed in section [6.3.1](#) below.

Additional information from the subsection on *Women* in the 2018 report, which continued to be omitted from the 2019 edition included:

- NGOs reported that police were at times implicated in rape cases;
- Estimates on maternal mortality and contraceptive prevalence.

These omissions are addressed in section [6.3.2](#) below

Further issues omitted from the subsection on *Women* in the 2019 report included:

- In-laws frequently abused and harassed the wives of their sons;
- The National Commission on the Status of Women lacked resources.

These omissions are addressed in section [6.3.3](#) below

With regards to *Children*, the 2017 and subsequent reports neglected to mention that:

- Birth registration figures believed to be lower than government figures of 75%;
- Girls' school attendance rates being lower than boys' and the most significant barrier to girls' education being lack of access, lack of institutions and cultural beliefs;
- Estimation of the number of street children (1.5 million according to SPARC cited in 2016);
- Children, including trafficking victims forced to beg and experiencing sexual and physical abuse;
- Conditions in IDP camps causing medical issues for children.

With regards to *Persons With Disabilities*, the 2017 report and subsequent editions neglected to mention that families cared for most individuals with physical and mental disabilities .

All of these omissions are addressed in section [6.3.1](#) below.

An additional issue observed in 2017 that wasn't repeated in subsequent years was that insufficient data existed for accurate reporting of discrimination against LGBTI persons due in part to severe social stigma and fear of recrimination on the part of those that came forward (The 2018 and 2019 editions added that "The crimes often go unreported").

Issues omitted from other sections of the 2017 and subsequent reports included:

- District-level and provincial politicians from Awami National Party, Pakistan People's Party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf, and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) were shot and killed in targeted attacks throughout Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA;
- The 2014 end of the moratorium on capital punishment, concerns with observance of due process and the execution of individuals who were under age 18 when they allegedly committed the crime;
- The forcible return of Afghani 'Proof of Registration' cardholders;
- Security threats being a problem for NGO workers;
- The number of child labourers (3.4 million according to the ILO in the 2016 report).

The majority of additional issues omitted from the 2018 report related to *Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person*, most of which were also omitted from the 2019 report:

- Continued allegations of politically motivated killings in Balochistan and Sindh, including by political factions or unknown assailants in Sindh;
- Provincial governments and political parties in Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remained targets of attack by militant and other nonstate actors;
- Journalists, teachers, students, and human rights defenders targeted by state and nonstate actors in Balochistan;
- The Karachi-based political party Muttahida Qaumi Movement alleged that the paramilitary Sindh Rangers kidnapped and killed some of its members;
- Individuals accused of blasphemy from both majority and minority communities were killed during the year;
- There were reports militant groups kidnapped or took civilians hostage in FATA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan;
- Multiple (as opposed to isolated) Ahmadiyya community members died in what appeared to be targeted killings;

Other noteworthy issues omitted from the 2019 report included:

- Authorities may still apply collective punishment without regard to individual rights;
- Police resources and effectiveness varied by district, ranging from well-funded and effective to poorly resourced and ineffective;
- Police often failed to protect members of religious minorities--including Ahmadiyya Muslims, Christians, Shia Muslims, and Hindus--from attacks;
- Sectarian violence decreased significantly across the country, although some attacks continued.

In all the instances highlighted above, the information was omitted despite publicly available sources documenting their continued existence.

These omissions are all detailed by section below.

Notable omissions from the *Executive Summary*

Most of the omissions to the *Executive Summary* were observed when comparing the 2017 *Executive Summary* to the 2016 edition, the majority of which were found to be internally inconsistent with the respective sections of the U.S. State Department report.

Eleven such omissions were observed in 2017, all of which continued to be omitted in 2018 and ten of which in 2019. Many of these related to issues perpetrated by societal actors. The majority of these were found to be internally inconsistent with the respective sections of the U.S. State Department reports:

- Gender inequality;
- Domestic violence;
- Discrimination against women and girls;
- Child abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children;
- Societal discrimination against national, ethnic, and racial minorities [this was reinserted in the 2019 *Executive Summary* as follows: “crimes involving violence targeting members of racial and ethnic minorities”];
- Discrimination based on caste;
- Discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity;
- Discrimination based on HIV status;
- Poor prison condition;
- A weak criminal justice system;
- Minimal respect for worker rights;

An additional four issues were omitted from the 2018 *Executive Summary*, all of which continued to be omitted from the 2019 edition, first three of which are considered to be internally inconsistent with the respective sections of the U.S. Department of State reports:

- Lack of rule of law, including lack of due process; poor implementation and enforcement of laws;
- Frequent mob violence and vigilante justice with limited accountability;
- Lack of judicial independence in the lower courts;
- Sectarian violence.

Seven further issues were omitted from the 2019 *Executive Summary*, all of which are considered to be internally inconsistent with the respective sections of the U.S. Department of State reports:

- Discrimination against members of religious minority groups;
- Lack of criminal investigations or accountability for cases related to rape;
- Sexual harassment;
- Violence based on gender, gender identity;
- So-called honor crimes;
- Female genital mutilation/cutting;
- Lengthy pretrial detention.

[Table 2](#) in the Appendix presents the changes in how the Executive Summary categorises human rights issues in Pakistan in the 2016 report compared to the 2017 and 2018 editions.

Findings by section of the report

1. Section 1. *Respect for the Integrity of the Person*

1.1. Use of language

1.1.1. Observations in 2017, repeated in 2018, some of which repeated in 2019

1. a. *Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and other Unlawful Politically Motivated Killings*

Less illustrative examples were presented in the 2017 report on the targets of politically motivated attacks compared to 2016. This trend continued in the 2018 and 2019 editions.

The 2017 report noted the pattern of politically motivated killings in Balochistan and Sindh more broadly than the 2016 report had done (as affecting Baloch nationalists). However, in 2018 and 2019 this general pattern was omitted completely and even less information was included on the targets of attacks. This omission is considered to be inconsistent with other sources which continued to document these practices in 2018 and 2019. For a discussion of this see section [1.3.2](#):

2016 report [emphasis added]	2017 and 2018 reports [emphasis added]	2018 and 2019 reports
There were continued allegations of politically motivated killings of Baloch nationalists in Balochistan and Sindh	There were continued allegations of politically motivated killings in Balochistan and Sindh	[Removed]

1.c. *Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*

Whilst all four reports under review detail that the security forces tortured individuals, only the 2016 edition listed forms of torture perpetrated in Pakistan as follows: “Acts described by Society for Human Rights and Prisoners’ Aid (SHARP) and other human rights organizations included beating with batons and whips, burning with cigarettes, whipping the soles of feet, prolonged isolation, electric shock, denying food or sleep, hanging upside down, and forced spreading the legs with bar fetters”. Whilst subsequent SHARP reports were not available, this source could still have been included given the utility of such contextual information.

The following language change was observed in the 2017 and 2018 reports, potentially signifying a reported improvement in the situation. However, both reports continued to document that inadequate food “continued to cause chronic health problems and malnutrition” and therefore hasn’t been classified as an improvement. Moreover the 2018 report added that “inadequate food” was one of the causes of “harsh and life threatening” detention conditions. Interestingly this improvement was removed from the 2019 edition:

2016 report [emphasis added]	2017 and 2018 reports [emphasis added]	2019 report [emphasis added]
Inadequate food and medical care in prisons led to chronic health problems and malnutrition among inmates unable to supplement their	Although quality and quantity of prison food improved , inadequate food and medical care in prisons continued to cause chronic health	Inadequate food and medical care in prisons continued to cause chronic health problems.

diets with help from family or friends.	problems and malnutrition among inmates unable to supplement their diets with help from family or friends.	Malnutrition remained a problem, especially for inmates unable to supplement their diets with help from family or friends.
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1. d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention/ Arrest Procedures and Treatment of Detainees

The 2016 edition stated that “judges set bail based on the particular circumstances of a case instead of following established procedures. Judges sometimes denied bail at the request of police or the community and victims”. This issue was described with less detail in the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports, having been changed to “judges sometimes denied bail upon payment of bribes”.

1.e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

It was observed that the 2017 report introduced a source attribution for the following issue, potentially undermining its perceived veracity which was repeated in the 2018 and 2019 editions:

2016 report	2017, 2018 and 2019 reports [emphasis added]
The law provides for an independent judiciary, but the judiciary often was subjected to external influences.	The law provides for an independent judiciary, but according to NGOs and legal experts , the judiciary often was subject to external influences

1.1.2. Observations in 2018, some of which repeated in 2019

1.b. Disappearance

The 2017 and 2018 reports mentioned that kidnappings and forced disappearances these affected people of “various backgrounds in nearly all areas of the country”. In 2018 and 2019 that the practices affected “persons from various backgrounds” was omitted, which could be read to imply that they were less widespread:

2016 and 2017 report [emphasis added]	2018 and 2019 reports [emphasis added]
There were kidnappings and forced disappearances of persons from various backgrounds in nearly all areas of the country	There were kidnappings and forced disappearances of persons in nearly all areas of the country.

All of the reports described the general pattern that “Nationalist parties in Sindh also alleged that law enforcement agencies kidnapped and killed Sindhi political activists”. The 2016 and 2017 reports also specify that members of the Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM) claim to be affected by such practices. However the 2018 and 2019 reports only detailed the general pattern and neglect to mention any reports from the JSMM about abduction and killings of their members. This is despite available information on this point as is discussed in [section 1.3.2](#). As users of the report may not be familiar with nationalists parties in Sindh, by omitting examples of profiles of persons affected by such abductions, their treatment may be overlooked.

The 2017 report introduced figures from The Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances with regards the number of missing persons cases received and by region, and the numbers of cases closed and remaining open. However the 2018 and 2019 reports provided less detail than previously as no longer detailed the number of cases by region, despite this information continuing to be provided by the Commission.

1.c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The following example demonstrates a subtle improvement; a shift from ‘instances’ of protection to it being implied to be more generally available from ‘some local authorities’. The lack of specificity here means it is unclear as to the number or location of such authorities:

2016 and 2017 reports [emphasis added]	2018 report [emphasis added]
There were improvements in police professionalism and instances of local authorities protecting minorities from discrimination and communal violence	Some local authorities demonstrated the ability and willingness to protect minorities from discrimination and mob lynching, at great risk to their personal safety

This point was not included in the 2019 edition.

With regards to the regularity with which torture led to death or serious injury, the 2016 and 2017 reports observed that this was “occasionally”. The 2018 report amended this to “sometimes” and in 2019 this was amended further to “cases”. The 2018 report downplayed the nature of abuse from “torture” to “police excesses”. Whilst this mirrors the original language from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, an organisation cited on this point, it is unclear that the “multiple sources” documenting such practices would describe torture in this way. Moreover, when the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan’s language is cited, it is done so in inverted commas, presumably to indicate the organisation’s use of language. It is considered that the 2018 edition should have described the practice using the correct terminology i.e. *torture*, given the specific legal connotation. Moreover, any use of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan’s language of “police excesses” should have been kept in inverted commas to indicate it as such. This was not consistently done in the 2019 edition either. However that prisoners died from torture is mentioned (see [1.1.3](#) below for further discussion of the 2019 changes):

2016 and 2017 reports [emphasis added]	2018 report [emphasis added]	2019 report [emphasis added]
There were reports police personnel employed cruel and degrading treatment and punishment. [...] Multiple sources reported that torture occasionally resulted in death or serious injury and was often underreported	There were reports police personnel employed cruel and degrading treatment and punishment. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported that police committed “excesses” in at least 52 cases as of May 6, compared with 127 total cases in 2017. Multiple sources reported that police excesses sometimes resulted in death or serious injury and was often underreported	There were reports police personnel employed cruel and degrading treatment and punishment. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported that police committed “excesses” in at least 82 cases as of September 2, killing 29 persons and injuring 38. Multiple sources reported that police excesses were often underreported. Media and civil society

		organizations reported cases of individuals dying in police custody allegedly due to torture in Punjab Province in August and September .
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1.c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment/Prison and Detention Center Conditions/Physical Conditions

With regards to prison conditions, the addition of the following descriptors could be read to imply that fewer types of detention facilities were beset by harsh and life threatening conditions (although note that the 2018 and 2019 reports add inadequate food and unsanitary conditions to the reasons for these conditions):

2016 and 2017 reports	2018 and 2019 reports [emphasis added]
Conditions in some prisons and detention centers were harsh and life threatening. Problems such as overcrowding and inadequate medical care were widespread.	Conditions in some civilian prisons and military detention centers were harsh and life threatening due to overcrowding, inadequate food and medical care, and unsanitary conditions.

1.g Abuses in Internal Conflict

The 2016 and 2017 reports included the general statement that “Multiple Ahmadiyya community members died in what appeared to be targeted killings”. Instead, the 2018 edition listed one incident, which may be read to imply that this was the only one. In 2019 no such incident nor the general pattern was described. This has been classified as an omission in both years and discussed further below in [section 1.3.2](#).

In the following example the forcible and coercive element of child soldier recruitment was underplayed in the 2018 and 2019 reports:

2016 and 2017 reports [emphasis added]	2018 and 2019 reports [emphasis added]
Child Soldiers: Nonstate militant groups kidnapped boys and girls and used fraudulent promises to coerce parents into giving away children as young as 12 to spy, fight, or die as suicide bombers.	Child Soldiers: Nonstate militant groups recruited children as young as 12 to spy, fight, or die as suicide bombers.

The following contextual information was also removed from the 2018 and 2019 editions:

2016 report	2017 report	2018 and 2019 reports
Since 2005 natural disasters elsewhere in the country resulted in a large influx of citizens from different ethnic groups to Karachi, including ethnic Sindhi, Baloch, and Pashtun migrants, shifting the	Natural disasters and instability caused by terrorist activity and military operations elsewhere in the country motivated ongoing relocation of citizens from different ethnic groups--including	[Removed]

balance among political parties and the ethnic and sectarian groups they represented. Political parties and their affiliated gangs continued to vie for political and economic control, engaging in a turf war over “bhatta” (extortion) collection privileges and “ownership” over “katchi abadis” (illegal/makeshift settlements).	Sindhi, Baloch, and Pashtun migrants--to Karachi. This trend continued to shift the balance among political parties and the ethnic and sectarian groups they represented. Political parties and their affiliated gangs continued to vie for political and economic control, engaging in a turf war over bhatta (extortion) collection privileges and “ownership” over katchi abadis (illegal/makeshift settlements).	
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1.1.3. Observations in 2019

1.c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment/Prison and Detention Center Conditions/Physical Conditions

The 2019 no longer mentioned the regularity of the practice leading to serious injury or death, but did change the language back from “police excesses” to “torture”. However, the 2019 edition adds some distancing language, adding that individuals “allegedly” died due to torture, thereby casting doubt on the practice, which had been documented more affirmatively as occurring in the 2016, 2017 and 2018 editions. The 2019 report also attributed this point to “media and civil society organizations”, and not “multiple sources” as had been observed in the 2016, 2017 and 2018 reports, which may be read to imply fewer types of sources and potentially reduced veracity of information. Moreover, the general pattern of deaths in detention due to torture was no longer mentioned, but reduced in reach to only Punjab Province:

2016 and 2017 reports [emphasis added]	2018 report [emphasis added]	2019 report [emphasis added]
There were reports police personnel employed cruel and degrading treatment and punishment. [...] Multiple sources reported that torture occasionally resulted in death or serious injury and was often underreported	There were reports police personnel employed cruel and degrading treatment and punishment. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported that police committed “excesses” in at least 52 cases as of May 6, compared with 127 total cases in 2017. Multiple sources reported that police excesses sometimes resulted in death or serious injury and was often underreported	There were reports police personnel employed cruel and degrading treatment and punishment. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported that police committed “excesses” in at least 82 cases as of September 2, killing 29 persons and injuring 38. Multiple sources reported that police excesses were often underreported. Media and civil society organizations reported cases of individuals dying in police custody allegedly due to torture in Punjab Province in August and September.

Note that elsewhere in section 1.a. *Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and other Unlawful Politically Motivated Killings* of all reports continue to document “Physical abuse while in official custody allegedly caused the death of some criminal suspects”.

1.d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention - Role of the Police and Security Apparatus

As mentioned above in [A. Structure of the report](#), the subsection *Role of the Police and Security Apparatus* was removed from the 2019 edition. Whilst some of the issues addressed in the 2016, 2017 and 2018 editions continued to be mentioned in section 1.d. and others addressed in different sections, the following contextual information as had been included in the 2018 edition (and in some form in the 2016 and 2017 reports) was omitted:

2018 report	2019 report
<p>Following its merger in KP province, police began to operate alongside paramilitary forces in the former FATA. Paramilitary forces present in the former FATA included the Frontier Corps, the Frontier Constabulary, “Khasadars” (hereditary tribal police), and the FATA Levies Force, which reported to deputy commissioners (the appointed administrative heads of each tribal agency). Tribal leaders convened “lashkars” (tribal militias) to deal with temporary law and order disturbances, but these operated as private militias and not as formal law enforcement entities.</p>	<p>[Removed]</p>
<p>The inspectors general, district police, district nazims (chief elected officials of local governments), provincial interior or chief ministers, federal interior minister, prime minister, or courts can order internal investigations into abuses and order administrative sanctions. Executive branch and police officials have authority to recommend, and the courts may order, criminal prosecution.</p> <p>The court system remained the only means available to investigate abuses by security forces. The National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), established in 2015, may not inquire into any complaints against intelligence agencies and must refer such complaints to the concerned competent authority. The NCHR may seek a report from the national government on any complaint made against the armed forces, and after receipt of a report, can either end the process or forward recommendations for further action to the national government.</p>	<p>[Removed]</p>
<p>During the year the federal government continued to use military and paramilitary organizations to augment domestic security. Paramilitary forces, including Rangers and the Frontier Constabulary, provided security to some areas of Islamabad and continued active operations in Karachi. The military-led Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad employed civilian and paramilitary cooperation against militants throughout the country.</p>	<p>[Removed]</p>
<p>In January 2015, in response to the December 2014 attack on the Peshawar Army Public School,</p>	<p>[Removed]</p>

Parliament approved a constitutional amendment allowing military courts to try civilians on terrorism, militancy, sectarian violence, and other charges. The military courts' mandate to try civilians was set to expire in January 2017, but Parliament extended it until January 2019. Civil society members expressed concerns about the use of military courts for trying civilian suspects, citing lack of transparency and redundancy with the civilian judicial system.	
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Less contextual information was also found in the 2019 report on indefinite detention in the former FATA:

2018 report	2019 report
Under the FIGR in the former FATA, the deputy commissioner has legal authority to preventively detain individuals on a variety of grounds and may require bonds to prevent undesired activities. Indefinite detention is not allowed, and detained persons may appeal to a tribunal. Prisoners have the right to compensation for wrongful punishment. Cases must be decided within a specified period, and authorities may release arrested persons on bail. Regulations require prisoners to be brought before FIGR authorities within 24 hours of detention, which curtails the ability of deputy commissioners to arbitrarily arrest and hold persons for up to three years. The accused have the right of appeal under a two-tiered system: the first appeal is to a commissioner or additional commissioner, and the second is referred to the Peshawar High Court, which is the highest appellate forum under the FIGR.	[Removed]

1.e. Denial of Fair Public Trial/Trial procedures

The 2019 edition introduced a source attribution for the following point, which potentially could be read to undermine its veracity:

2016, 2017 and 2018 reports [emphasis added]	2019 report [emphasis added]
Courts routinely failed to protect the rights of religious minorities.	Civil society groups stated courts often failed to protect the rights of religious minorities against Muslim accusers.

The 2019 report also amended the following point, recognising that religious minorities were disproportionately detained for blasphemy allegations, but neglecting to mention that it was the courts that used laws prohibiting blasphemy discriminatorily:

2016, 2017 and 2018 reports [emphasis added]	2019 report [emphasis added]
Courts discriminatorily used laws prohibiting blasphemy against Shia, Christians, Ahmadis, and members of other religious minority groups.	While the numerical majority of those imprisoned for blasphemy were Muslim, religious minorities were disproportionately affected, relative to their small percentage of the population.

1.g Abuses in Internal Conflict

The 2016, 2017 and 2018 reports all mentioned that “The terrorist groups TTP, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and related factions bombed government buildings and attacked and killed female teachers” and detailed illustrative examples. However, rather than describe this general pattern the 2019 edition only provided examples, thereby potentially suggesting that the incidents documented were isolated examples rather than a more general pattern/widespread practice.

The general pattern that “There were reports that government security forces caused civilian casualties and engaged in extrajudicial killings during operations against militants” so described in 2016, 2017 and 2018 reports was amended in 2019 to: “There were reports government security forces engaged in extrajudicial killings during operations against suspected militants throughout the country”. One illustrative example of civilian casualties was however detailed “On January 19, the Punjab Police Counterterrorism Department (CTD) reportedly shot and killed a couple and their teenage daughter in what the CTD labeled an “intelligence-based operation”.

1.2. Improvements

1.2.1. Improvements in 2017 (compared to 2016), repeated in 2018, some of which in 2019

Two improvements in the situation in 2017 compared to 2016 in *Section 1* were observed, both within the subsection on *Prison and Detention Center Conditions* which were not reflective of the situation on the ground as reported by other sources. Both improvements continued to be mentioned in 2018, but interestingly not in the 2019 edition. Green text indicates the issue was reinserted. Illustrative information is presented on each of these issues, available at the time of publication of the respective USDOS report, in the Appendix of this report unless otherwise stated.

1.c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment/ Prison and Detention Center Conditions

1. “Juveniles and adults were in close proximity when waiting for transport but were kept under careful supervision at this time”. [In 2016: “officials often mixed children with the general prison population at some point during their imprisonment”. However 2017 and 2018 reports acknowledge that “According to the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child, prisoners and prison staff subjected children to abuse, rape, and other forms of violence”. The 2019 report now mentions that “According to an NGO, juveniles are at risk for sexual and physical assault by police, adults, and other juveniles as soon as they enter the judicial system, including transportation to detention. Juveniles do not have separate facilities from adult detainees.”]

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

2. The 2017 edition contained a new subsection under *Prison and Detention Center Conditions* entitled *Improvements*, which included the statement “Infrastructure improvements and new policies in existing prisons, along with the construction of new facilities, increased the frequency with which pretrial detainees and convicted prisoners were separated”. [The 2019 edition mentions infrastructure improvements but not that they increased the frequency with which pretrial detainees and convicted prisoners were separated]

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

[Information was found in 2017 and 2018 to indicate that those awaiting trial were mixed with convicted prisoners and the ongoing overcrowding and high proportion of detainees on remand but no information to confirm or deny that policies/construction led to reduced mixing of pretrial and convicted prisoners]

1.2.2. Improvements in 2018 (compared to 2017)

There were no additional notable improvements in the situation in Pakistan observed in *section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person* in the 2018 report that were found to be inconsistent the situation on the ground as reported by other publicly available sources.

1.2.3. Improvements in 2019 (compared to 2018 and 2017)

There were no additional notable improvements in the situation in Pakistan observed in *section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person* in the 2019 report that were found to be inconsistent the situation on the ground as reported by other publicly available sources.

1.3. Omissions

1.3.1. Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016) which continued to be omitted in 2018 and 2019

Two issues documented in the 2016 report were omitted from the 2017 and subsequent editions, despite publicly available information continuing to document their existence:

1. a. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and other Unlawful Politically Motivated Killings

1. “District-level and provincial politicians from Awami National Party, Pakistan People’s Party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI), and JUI-F were shot and killed in targeted attacks throughout KP and FATA”.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

[Fatalities of politicians in KP and FATA were documented in 2017 and 2018 but sources did not always detail the specific political party affiliation. Fatalities were not documented in FATA in 2019 given that the region was merged with KP in 2018]

2. “The government ended its moratorium on capital punishment in 2014, following the attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar. Human rights organizations reported concerns with observance of due process and the execution of individuals under age 18 when they allegedly committed the crime”.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

1.3.2. Omissions in 2018 (compared to 2017 and 2016) some of which continue to be omitted in 2019

Nine issues documented in the 2017 report (eight of which also in the 2016 edition) were omitted from *section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person* of the 2018 report, despite publicly available information continuing to document their existence. Eight of the issues continued to be omitted from the 2019 edition, for which information was found continuing to document their existence. Green text indicates the issue was reinserted. Illustrative information is presented on each of these issues, available at the time of publication of the respective USDOS report, in the Appendix of this report unless otherwise stated.

1. a. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and other Unlawful Politically Motivated Killings

1. “Continued allegations of politically motivated killings in Balochistan and Sindh”. [One incident detailed in Sindh in the 2018 report but none in 2019. One incident documented in Balochistan in the 2019 report but not mentioned in 2018]

[2018](#) [2019](#)

2. “Reports of politically motivated killings by political factions or unknown assailants in Sindh”.

[2018](#) [2019](#)

3. “The provincial governments and political parties in Sindh, Balochistan, KP [...] remained targets of attack by militant and other nonstate actors”.

[2018](#) [2019](#)

[Information found on all issues for all years and also sought for the Punjab in 2018 and 2019 but not found]

4. “The SATP reported that journalists, teachers, students, and human rights defenders also were targeted by state and nonstate actors in Balochistan”. [This was reintroduced in section 1.g of the 2019 edition: “Security forces in Balochistan continued to disappear pretrial terror suspects--along with human rights activists, politicians, and teachers”.]

[2018](#) [2019](#)

[N.B. information not located from SATP but from other sources]

1. b Disappearances

5. “The Karachi-based political party Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) alleged that the paramilitary Sindh Rangers kidnapped, tortured, and killed some of its members in security operations in Karachi.”

[2018](#) [2019](#)

[Information was found of abductions and killings of MQM members for both years but not corroborating information of torture]

6. “Leading members of Jiye Sindh Qaumi Mahaz and Jiye Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM), prominent nationalist parties, reportedly were missing.” [in 2016: “Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM), a banned Sindhi nationalist party, claimed that during 2016, 11 of their party members had been abducted by security agencies across Sindh”]

[2018](#) [2019](#)

1.d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention

7. “individuals accused of blasphemy from both majority and minority communities were killed during the year” [N.B this point was not included in the 2016 edition]

[2018](#) [2019](#)

1.g Abuses in Internal Conflict

8. Sub section on *Abductions*: [In 2016 and 2017: “There were reports militant groups kidnapped or took civilians hostage in FATA, KP, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan” [This was followed in the 2016 and 2017 reports with illustrative incidents.]

[2018](#) [2019](#)

9. “Multiple Ahmadiyya community members died in what appeared to be targeted killings”. [In 2018 only incident is mentioned “Unknown gunmen killed an Ahmadi man in his home on June 25, in what appeared to be a targeted killing due to his faith.” In 2019, no mention of targeted killings of Ahmadis in this section. Note that section 6 of all reports states “There were occasionally reports of mob violence against religious minorities, including Christians, Ahmadi Muslims, and Hindus” but this is a different point]

[2018](#) [2019](#)

1.3.3. Omissions in 2019 (compared to 2018, 2017 and 2016)

Six issues documented in the 2018 report (all of which were also included in the 2016 and 2017 editions) were omitted from *section 1* of the 2019 report, despite publicly available information continuing to document their existence. Illustrative information is presented on each of these issues, available at the time of publication of the respective USDOS report, in the Appendix of this report unless otherwise stated.

1. a. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and other Unlawful Politically Motivated Killings

1. Mention of security forces orchestrating police encounters: “On January 13, police in Karachi (Sindh) shot and killed a Pashtun man, Naqeebullah Mehsud, in what Karachi police authorities initially claimed was a counterterror operation. According to Mehsud’s family, he had been detained 10 days earlier. Pakistan’s National Commission for Human Rights--an independent government body charged with investigating alleged human rights abuses--concluded police staged a fake raid in order to carry out Mehsud’s extrajudicial killing. Furthermore, the report linked then-Senior Superintendent of Police for Karachi’s Malir District, Rao Anwar, to the deaths of at least 444 individuals in similar staged police encounters.” [In 2016 and 2017: “Some observers believed security forces orchestrated at least some of these killings [police encounters]”

[2019](#)

[N.B. that encounters may be staged is alluded to in the 2018 and 2019 reports which note that: “There were numerous media reports of police and security forces killing terrorist suspects in “police encounters”.” However, this is not made explicit in the 2018 and 2019 editions and thus may be overlooked]

1.c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

2. “authorities may still apply collective punishment without regard to individual rights. [...] Human rights NGOs expressed concern about the concept of collective responsibility, as authorities used it to detain members of fugitives’ tribes, demolish their homes, confiscate or destroy their property, or lay siege to their villages pending surrender or punishment of the fugitives by their own tribes in accordance with local tradition”.

[2019](#)

1.d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention/ Role of the Police and Security Apparatus

3. “Police resources and effectiveness varied by district, ranging from well-funded and effective to poorly resourced and ineffective.”

[2019](#)

[Sources describe police failings and the need for reform. Some describe different regions, but none specifically note that effectiveness vary by district, even if it can be inferred].

4. “Police often failed to protect members of religious minorities—including Ahmadiyya Muslims, Christians, Shia Muslims, and Hindus—from attacks. Activists from Christian, Sikh, Parsi, and Hindu communities reported widespread distrust of law enforcement within their communities. They explained that community members frequently refrained from reporting crimes, because they believed the police would not act.”

[2019](#)

1.d. Arrest Procedures and Treatment of Detainees

5. “The 2011 Actions in Aid of Civil Power Regulation (retroactive to 2008) provides the military legal authority to detain suspected terrorists in the former FATA and PATA when called upon by the civilian government. Critics stated the regulation violates the constitution because of its broad provisions expanding military authority and circumventing legal due process. Under the regulation, detainee transfers to internment centers continued on a regular basis.”

[2019](#)

1.g. Abuses in Internal Conflict

6. “Sectarian violence decreased significantly across the country, although some attacks continued” [Note that this omitted general pattern from 2018 was a reported improvement on the documented situation in 2016 and 2017 “Sectarian violence also continued throughout the country”. However this improvement was found to be consistent with the situation as reported by other available sources and is therefore not addressed further in this report. The 2019 edition did mention in other sections of the report that “Political, sectarian, criminal, and ethnic violence in Karachi continued” and “Sectarian militants continue to target members of the Shia Hazara minority in Quetta, Baluchistan” but the more general pattern was not observed].

[2019](#)

[Sectarian violence as a general pattern was omitted from the 2019 edition, despite one source documenting nine incidents killing 38 persons and injuring 66 others and another source documenting 14 incidents, reportedly a 17 per cent increase on 2018, which claimed 24 lives and injured 123 others].

2. Section 2. *Respect for Civil Liberties*

2.1. Use of language

2.1.1 2017 observations

2.a. Freedom of Speech and Press/ Nongovernmental Impact

It was observed that the 2017 report introduced language which could be read to undermine the veracity of the issue. This was repeated in the 2018 and 2019 editions:

2016 report	2017 and 2018 and 2019 reports [emphasis added]
Security forces abducted journalists	Security forces allegedly abducted journalists

2.1.2 2018 observations

No further notable language changes were observed in the 2018 edition.

2.1.3 2019 observations

2.a. Freedom of Speech and Press

Less background information was included in the 2019 edition on the following points (also included in slightly amended form in the 2016 and 2017 editions):

2018 report	2019 report
There were more than 400 independent English, Urdu, and regional-language daily and weekly newspapers and magazines. To publish within AK, media owners had to obtain permission from the Kashmir Council and the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting controlled and managed the country's primary wire service, the Associated Press of Pakistan, the official carrier of government and international news to the local media. The military had its own media and public relations office, Inter-Services Public Relations. The government-owned Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation and Pakistan Television Corporation broadcast television programs nationwide and operated radio stations throughout the country. In the former FATA and PATA, authorities allowed	[Removed]

<p>independent radio stations to broadcast with the FATA Secretariat’s permission. The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) licensed 89 private domestic and 22 foreign television channels. There were 143 commercial FM radio stations, but their licenses prohibited news programming. Some channels evaded this restriction by discussing news in talk-show formats.</p>	
<p>International media broadcasts were normally available. There were limitations on transmission of Indian media content, however. In 2016 PEMRA imposed a blanket ban on transmission of Indian media content. The Lahore High Court officially ended the ban in February 2017, but blockage of Indian television dramas continued until the Lahore High Court again ruled against the policy in July 2017. PEMRA again imposed a temporary ban on the screening of Indian films during the Eid holidays to encourage viewing of local films, and in October the Supreme Court overturned the Lahore High Court’s earlier decisions, reinstating a blanket ban. The Supreme Court chief justice implied the media blockage was a justifiable response to India damming rivers that flow into Pakistan.</p>	[Removed]

2.d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons/ Stateless Persons

The 2019 report provided less specificity with regards to UNHCR’s estimations of minority communities in Pakistan. The language was also changed to offer less certainty as to whether “a large proportion” were considered as stateless, shifting from “believed to be” to “were likely”:

<p>2017 and 2018 reports [emphasis added]</p>	<p>2019 report [emphasis added]</p>
<p>In addition, UNHCR estimated there were 300,000 Rohingya living in the country, a large percentage of whom were believed to be stateless.</p>	<p>In addition, UNHCR estimated there were sizable populations of Rohingya, Bihari, and Bengali living in the country, a large percentage of whom were likely stateless.</p>

2.2 Improvements

2.2.1 Improvements in 2017 (compared to 2016)

No improvements were observed in section 2 *Respect for Civil Liberties* of the 2017 report that were observed to be inconsistent with other publicly available sources.

2.2.2 Improvements in 2018 (compared to 2017 and 2016), repeated in 2019

No improvements were observed in section 2 *Respect for Civil Liberties* of the 2018 report that were observed to be inconsistent with other publicly available sources.

2.2.3 Improvements in 2019 (compared to 2018)

No improvements were observed in the 2019 report that were observed to be inconsistent with other publicly available sources.

2.3 Omissions

2.3.1 Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016), repeated in 2018 and 2019

Three issues documented in the 2016 report were omitted from *section 2* of the 2017 report, despite publicly available information continuing to document their existence. All of the issues continued to be omitted from the 2018 and 2019 editions, for which information was also found continuing to document their existence. Illustrative information is presented on each of these issues, available at the time of publication of the respective USDOS report, in the Appendix of this report unless otherwise stated.

2.a. Freedom of Speech and Press - Nongovernmental Impact

1. “At some universities, however, members of student organizations, often with ties to political parties, fostered an atmosphere of intolerance or undue influence that limited the academic freedom of fellow students.”

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

[N.B. only one source found on 2017]

2. “In addition to public schools, there was a large network of madrassahs (private schools run by Muslim clerics) under the supervision of five major governing bodies. These schools varied in their curriculum, with a focus on Islamic texts.”

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

[N.B. the related point included in the 2016 edition “Parents of lower economic means sometimes chose to send children to madrassahs, where they received free room and board, or to NGO-operated schools” was also omitted from the 2017, 2018, 2019 reports. See [section 6.3.1.](#)]

2. d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons Protection of Refugees - Refoulement

3. Refoulement: “In general the government did not forcibly return PoR [Proof of Registration] cardholders [...] . In August, five PoR cardholders were deported to Afghanistan but were

able to return to Pakistan the following day.” [In 2017: “There were no reported cases matching the legal definition of refoulement”. In 2018 and 2019 this subsection was removed and no information included at all.] The reports also omitted contextual information on Proof of Registration cardholders.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

2.3.2 Omissions in 2018 (compared to 2017 and 2016), repeated in 2019

One issue documented in the 2017 report (also included in the 2016 edition) was omitted from *section 2* of the 2018 report, despite publicly available information continuing to document its existence. It continued to be omitted from 2019 edition, for which information was found continuing to document its existence. Illustrative information is presented on this issue, available at the time of publication of the respective USDOS report, in the Appendix of this report unless otherwise stated.

1. “NGO and internet-freedom observers reported that the government intensified its surveillance of activists and journalists online, resulting in disappearances of numerous social media activists” [in 2016: “NGO and internet-freedom observers continued to report that government surveillance online was a concern and that there were indications of the use of surveillance software”]

[2018](#) [2019](#)

[N.B. information found for both years on surveillance and of enforced disappearances but not of a causal link between the two]

2.3.3 Omissions in 2019 (compared to 2018)

Two issues documented in the 2018 report (also included in the 2016 and 2017 editions) were omitted from *section 2* of the 2019 report, despite publicly available information continuing to document their existence. Illustrative information is presented on each of these issues, available at the time of publication of the respective USDOS report, in the Appendix of this report unless otherwise stated.

2.b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

1. “The government generally prevented political and civil society groups of any affiliation from holding demonstrations in Islamabad’s red zone--a restricted area that includes a diplomatic enclave and federal government buildings--citing security restrictions that limit all public rallies and gatherings in the area.”

[2019](#)

2.d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons

2. “Any undocumented Afghans encountered in the country after the registration period were vulnerable to detention and deportation under the Foreigners Act”. [as well as further contextual information on the documentation of Afghans]

[2019](#)

3. Section 3 *Freedom to Participate in the Political Process*

3.1 Use of language

There were no notable language changes observed in section 3 *Freedom to Participate in the Political Process* across the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports.

However, it was observed that the 2019 edition included less contextual information with regards to the documentation of unregistered Afghans.

d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons – Durable solutions

2017 and 2018 report	2019 report
<p>The Ministry of States and Frontier Regions and Ministry of the Interior’s National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) signed a memorandum of understanding in May 2017 to document unregistered Afghans in the country. The memorandum established 21 documentation centers in areas with high concentrations of unregistered Afghans. Under it, NADRA agreed to issue new identity cards, called Afghan citizen cards, over a period of six months. The Afghan citizen cards provided undocumented Afghans legal protection from arbitrary arrests, detention, or deportation under the Foreigners Act and allowed cardholders to stay in Pakistan for the duration of the cards’ validity. If cardholders leave the country, they relinquish their status. The period for Afghans to apply for Afghan citizen cards concluded at the end of January, after which only new births to existing holders of Afghan citizen cards were recorded. Any undocumented Afghans encountered in the country after the registration period were vulnerable to detention and deportation under the Foreigners Act.</p>	<p>[Removed]</p>

3.2 Improvements

3.2.1 Improvements in 2017 (compared to 2016)

There were no improvements observed in section 3 *Freedom to Participate in the Political Process* in the 2017 report that were inconsistent with the situation on the ground as reported by other publicly available sources.

3.2.2 Improvements in 2018 (compared to 2017 and 2016), repeated in 2019

One improvement noted in the 2018 report, which was repeated in 2019, was observed not to be consistent with the situation as reported by other publicly available sources:

1. “There were no reports of restrictions on political parties participating in elections, with the exception of those prohibited due to terrorist affiliations.” [2016 and 2017: “There were few restrictions on political parties. In most areas there was no interference with the rights to organize, run for election, seek votes, or publicize views.”]

[2018](#) [2019](#)

[N.B. only one source found on this for 2019]

3.2.3 Improvements in 2019

There were no additional improvements observed in section 3 *Freedom to Participate in the Political Process* in the 2019 report that were inconsistent with the situation on the ground as reported by other publicly available sources.

3.3 Omissions

There were no omissions observed in section 3 *Freedom to Participate in the Political Process* across the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports that were inconsistent with the situation on the ground as reported by other publicly available sources.

4. Section 4. *Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government*

4.1 Language changes

There were no notable language changes observed in section 4. *Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government* across the 2017 2018 or 2019 reports.

However, it was observed that the 2019 edition included less contextual information as had also been included in slightly amended form in the 2016 and 2017 editions:

2018 report	2019 report
<p>Residents of the former FATA do not have a voice in federal decisions regarding the tribal areas; that authority resides with the KP governor, who is appointed by the president. Tribal residents did not have the right to choose their local government because unelected civilian bureaucrats managed the tribal districts under the FIGR and the FCR that preceded it. By year’s end, no local government elections have been held in the former FATA, although the government allowed political parties to operate freely in FATA under the 2011 Extension of the Political Parties Order 2002. Political observers credited this order with laying the foundation for a more mature political system in the tribal agencies, culminating in the former FATA’s legal merger with KP province under the 25th Amendment.</p> <p>AK has an interim constitution, an elected unicameral assembly, a prime minister, and a president elected by the assembly. In 2016 the AK held legislative assembly elections that resulted in a PML-N-majority government. Media reported that local observers concluded the elections were largely peaceful and free of allegations of vote rigging; the AK election commission deployed an additional 32,000 law enforcement officers to maintain law and order. Some AK political leaders reported an increased military presence on election day. The federal government, including the military, controlled and influenced the structures of the AK government and its electoral politics. Authorities barred those who did not support the AK’s accession to Pakistan from the political process, government employment, and educational institutions.</p>	<p>[Removed]</p>
<p>The constitution reserves four seats in the Senate, one for each of the four provinces, for religious minorities, defined by the government as “non-Muslim.” These seats are filled through indirect elections held in the provincial assemblies. Ten National Assembly seats are reserved for members of religious minority communities. The authorities apportioned these seats to parties based on the percentage of seats each won in the assembly. Minorities held 22 reserved seats in the provincial</p>	<p>[Removed]</p>

assemblies: eight in Punjab, nine in Sindh, two in KP, and three in Balochistan. Some members of religious minority communities criticized the system of minority representation, whereby minority representatives at the provincial and federal levels are appointed by their political parties to reserved seats; they stated this system resulted in minority representatives serving the interests of their political parties rather than of minority communities.	
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4.2 Improvements

There were no notable improvements observed in 4. *Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government* across the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports that were inconsistent with the situation as reported by other sources.

4.3 Omissions

4.3.1 Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016) all of which continued to be omitted in 2018 and 2019

The following subsection included in the 2016 edition, together with its content, was removed from the subsequent reports. The 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports therefore neglected to include the following information:

Public Access to Information

1. “The law allows any citizen access to public records held by a public body of the federal government, including ministries, departments, boards, councils, courts, and tribunals. It does not apply to government-owned corporations or provincial governments. Bodies subject to the law must respond to requests for access within 21 days. Regulations restrict certain records from public access, including classified documents, those deemed harmful to a law enforcement case or an individual, or those that would cause grave and significant damage to the economy or the interests of the nation. NGOs criticized the law for having too many exempt categories and for not encouraging proactive disclosure. KP and Punjab provincial governments enacted provincial Right To Information laws.”

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

[Information sought and found on difficulties in accessing information and on the Right to Information laws]

4.3.2 Omissions in 2018 (compared to 2017)

There were no additional omissions observed in section 4. *Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government* in the 2018 report that were inconsistent with the situation on the ground as reported by other publicly available sources.

4.3.3 Omissions in 2019 (compared to 2018, 2017 and 2016)

There were no additional omissions observed in section 4. *Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government* in the 2019 report that were inconsistent with the situation on the ground as reported by other publicly available sources.

5. Section 5. *Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights*

5.1 Use of language

There were no notable language changes observed in section 5. *Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights* across the 2017, 2018 or 2019 reports.

5.2 Improvements

There were no notable improvements observed in section 5. *Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights* of the 2017, 2018 or 2019 reports that were found to be inconsistent with the situation as reported by other sources.

5.3 Omissions

5.3.1 Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016) all of which continued to be omitted in 2018 and 2019

Two issues documented in the 2016 report were omitted from *section 2* of the 2017 report, despite publicly available information continuing to document their existence. Both of the issues continued to be omitted from the 2018 and 2019 editions, for which information was also found continuing to document their existence. Illustrative information is presented on each of these issues, available at the time of publication of the respective USDOS report, in the Appendix of this report unless otherwise stated.

1. “Security threats were a problem for NGO workers”

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

2. “The committees [Senate and National Assembly Standing Committees on Law, Justice, Minorities, and Human Rights] did little beyond broad oversight.”

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

5.3.2 Omissions in 2018 (compared to 2017)

There were no additional omissions observed in section 5. *Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights* in the 2018 report that were inconsistent with the situation on the ground as reported by other publicly available sources.

5.3.3 Omissions in 2019 (compared to 2018, 2017 and 2016)

There were no additional omissions observed in section 5. *Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights* in the 2019 report that were inconsistent with the situation on the ground as reported by other publicly available sources.

6. Section 6. *Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons*

6.1 Use of language

6.1.1 Observations in 2017, repeated in 2018 and 2019

Women – Rape and Domestic Violence

The 2016 edition listed “torture” among the forms of domestic violence experienced by women, but this was omitted from the 2017 and subsequent editions:

2016 report [emphasis added]	2017 2018 and 2019 reports
No specific federal law prohibits domestic violence, which was widespread. Husbands reportedly beat and occasionally killed their wives. Other forms of domestic violence included torture , physical disfigurement, and shaving the eyebrows and hair off women’s heads.	No specific federal law prohibits domestic violence, which was widespread. Forms of domestic violence reportedly included beating, physical disfigurement, shaving of women’s eyebrows and hair, and--in the most extreme cases--homicide.

The 2016 report detailed the number of existing government Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Centers for women. However in the 2017, 2018 and 2019 editions this was changed to ‘numerous’. Arguably, in a country the size of Pakistan, a reader of the report might understand this term to be a greater number than 26:

2016 report [emphasis added]	2017 2018 and 2019 reports [emphasis added]
Twenty-six government-funded Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Centers for Women across the country provided legal aid, medical treatment, and psychosocial counseling.	Numerous government-funded Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Centers for Women across the country provided legal aid, medical treatment, and psychosocial counseling.

Women - Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)

Similarly, the prevalence of FGM among Dawoodi Bohra Muslims was quantified in the 2016 report but described simply as “many” in 2017, 2018 and 2019, which could be read to imply a lower number than between 70 and 90 percent:

2016 report [emphasis added]	2017 2018 and 2019 reports [emphasis added]
According to human rights groups and media reports, between 70 and 90 percent of Dawoodi Bohra Muslims practiced various forms of FGM/C, often in private homes and without medical supervision.	According to human rights groups and media reports, many Dawoodi Bohra Muslims practiced various forms of FGM/C.

Acts of Violence, Discrimination, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

It was observed that the 2017 report introduced a source attribution for the following issue, which was repeated in the 2018 and 2019 reports potentially undermining its perceived veracity (emphasis added):

2016 report [emphasis added]	2017 2018 and 2019 reports [emphasis added]
Society generally shunned transgender persons, eunuchs, and intersex persons, collectively referred to as ‘hijras’	According to a wide range of LGBT NGOs and activists , society generally shunned transgender women, eunuchs, and intersex persons, collectively referred to as ‘hijras’

Whilst all the four reports noted that “Violence and discrimination continued against LGBTI persons”, only the 2016 edition described an incident of such violence.

Whilst acknowledging the existence of the practice honour killings and the buying and selling brides, additional background details cited in the 2016 edition were omitted from the 2017 and subsequent editions. Similarly, whilst the practice of marriage to the Quran was acknowledged in the 2018 report, additional details on the nature of the practice were omitted, including the point that such women were prohibited from contact with any man older than 14 and that these women were expected to stay in the home and not contact anyone outside of their families:

2016 report	2017, 2018 and 2019 editions
Police in Sindh established karo-kari cells with a free telephone number in the districts of Sukkur, Ghotki, Khairpur, and Nausharo Feroze for persons to report karo-kari incidents.	[Removed]
In July social media celebrity Qandeel Baloch was killed by her brother at their family home in southern Punjab. The brother said his sister had shamed the family with her “liberal” lifestyle and for posing in photographs with a famous mullah. The government charged Baloch’s brother and accomplices with her murder and invoked Section 311 of the penal code, which made the state a party against the brother.	[Removed]

This effectively barred the family from “forgiving” the brother and setting him free, a common outcome in these types of murders.	
Despite prohibitions on handing over women as compensation for crimes or as a resolution of a dispute (also known as “vani” or “swara”), the practice continued in Punjab and KP. In rural Sindh landowning families continued the practice of “marriage to the Quran,” forcing a female family member to stay unmarried to avoid division of property. Property of women “married to the Quran” remained under the legal control of their fathers or eldest brothers, and such women were prohibited from contact with any man older than age 14. Families expected these women to stay in the home and not contact anyone outside their families.	[Removed]
The 2011 Prevention of Anti-Women Practices Act makes it illegal to deny women inheritance of property by deceitful means.	[Removed]

6.1.2 Observations in 2018 (compared to the 2016 and 2017 reports), repeated in 2019

Women – Rape and Domestic Violence

It was observed that the 2018 report introduced a source attribution when describing rape, potentially undermining its perceived veracity (emphasis added):

2016 and 2017 reports	2018 report [emphasis added]	2019 report [emphasis added]
Rape was a severely underreported crime	NGOs reported that rape was a severely underreported crime	NGOs continued to report that rape was a severely underreported crime.

Similarly, some distancing language was used with respect to sexual harassment, potentially undermining its veracity:

2016 and 2017 reports	2018 and 2019 reports [emphasis added]
Although [several laws] criminalize sexual harassment in the workplace and public sphere, the problem was widespread.	Although several laws criminalize sexual harassment in the workplace and public sphere, the problem was reportedly widespread.

The following additional language changes was noted which also could be read to imply an improvement in the situation. “Few shelters offered as described in the 2017 edition means “few” as in “little’ which is changed to “some shelters did not offer” in the 2018 and 2019 report, suggesting that the number that did not offer access to basic needs had reduced:

2016 and 2017 reports [emphasis added]	2018 and 2019 reports [emphasis added]
Few shelters offered access to basic needs such as showers, laundry supplies, or feminine hygiene products.	Some shelters did not offer access to basic needs such as showers, laundry supplies, or feminine hygiene products.

6.1.3 Observations in 2019

Women – Rape and Domestic Violence

The following statistic was removed from the 2019 edition: “According to a 2017 nationally representative Gallup survey, 24.7 percent of women were married before the age of 18.” A more recent survey was not found to have been undertaken in Pakistan since the 2017/2018 Demographic and Health Survey.¹ This has therefore not been classified as an omission but as a language point as the level of specificity was reduced in the 2019 report.

The removal of the following contextual information in relation to persons with disabilities was also observed in the 2019 edition:

Persons with Disabilities

2016 reports	2017, 2018 and 2019 reports
At the higher-education level, Allama Iqbal Open University, the University of the Punjab, and Karachi University had programs to train students as educators for individuals with disabilities.	[Removed]
The government’s 2003 National Disability Policy designated the federal capital and provincial capitals as disability-friendly cities and granted permission to persons with disabilities to take central superior service exams to compete for entry to the civil service. The policy also provided for 127 special education centers in main cities	[Removed]
In Lahore, beginning in 2014 and continuing sporadically thereafter, persons with vision disabilities held protests against the lack of jobs, which were in short supply despite the legal quota.	[Removed]

6.2 Improvements

6.2.1 Improvements in 2017 (compared to 2016), repeated in 2018 and 2019

The following reported improvement in the situation in 2017 compared to 2016 was observed which was repeated in 2018 and 2019 that was found not be commensurate with the situation as reported by other publicly available sources:

¹ UNICEF, [Data Warehouse, Indicator: Percentage of women \(aged 20-24 years\) married or in union before age 18](#), undated (accessed September 2020)

Women- Discrimination

1. “Women also faced discrimination in employment” [In 2016: “Women faced significant discrimination in employment and frequently were paid less than men for similar work”.]

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

6.2.2 Improvements in 2018 (compared to 2017), repeated in 2019

Women – Rape and Domestic Violence

1. [Prosecutions of reported rapes were rare] “Although there were reports that rates increased in response to capacity building programs and campaigns to combat the lack of awareness about rape and gender-based violence among the general public and police”.

[2018](#) [2019](#)

[N.B. Information was not found to confirm or deny that reports of rapes had increased. However sources were found illustrating that reported cases of rape and gang rape represent a small percentage of actual incidents and that convictions of rape cases remained very low- “next to zero in most districts” in 2018 and “hardly 2%” in 2019]

Acts of Violence, Discrimination, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

2. The 2018 and 2019 editions also noted that when police do receive reports they take “little action”, compared to 2016 and 2017 which noted that they “generally refused to take action”. Note that in addition, the 2018 and 2019 reports omitted the point “In Karachi, Sindh police were slow or reluctant to pursue crimes committed against transgender women”.] This might be read to imply an improvement in the situation and at least implies that some cases are brought to the attention of the police and that there is some action on some of them.

[2018](#) [2019](#)

[Information was found on the police’s refusal to register and investigate cases of violence against LGBTI persons as well as police ill-treatment of the trans community]

3. “Outreach by NGOs in KP, however, improved interactions between police and the transgender community there”

[2018](#) [2019](#)

[N.B. no information found to confirm or deny whether interactions between the police and transgender community had improved in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, information was

found for both years to indicate police involvement in abuses against the transgender community in KP, that most of the assaults, rape and murders of transgender people took place in KP and the police's failure to hold perpetrators accountable, which was omitted from the report, therefore indicating that the reported improvement above is inconsistent with the situation on the ground as reported by other sources]

6.2.3 Improvements in 2019 (compared to 2018)

There were no additional improvements observed in *section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons* in the 2019 report that were inconsistent with the situation on the ground as reported by other publicly available sources.

6.3 Omissions

6.3.1 Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016) the majority of which continued to be omitted in 2018 and 2019

Seventeen issues documented in the 2016 report were omitted from *Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons* of the 2017 report, despite publicly available information continuing to document their existence. Sixteen of the issues continued to be omitted from the 2018 and 2019 editions, for which information was found on all issues continuing to document their existence. Green text indicates the issue was reinserted. Illustrative information is presented on each of these issues, available at the time of publication of the respective USDOS report, in the Appendix of this report unless otherwise stated.

Women – Rape and domestic violence

1. "Training female police and changing the cultural assumptions of male police also remained challenges".

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

2. Due to restrictions on women's mobility and social pressures related to women's appearance in public, utilization of women's police centers was limited, but NGOs and officials reported that use was growing and more centers were needed. Many women remained unaware of the centers".

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

3. "Many tribes, communities, or families practiced sequestering women from all contact with men other than their relatives"

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

Women - Reproductive rights

The whole section on 'reproductive rights' has been removed and replaced with 'coercion in population control'. This omits information on the following issues:

4. "Couples and individuals have the right to decide the number, spacing, and timing of children, but they often lacked the information and means to do so. Young girls and women were especially vulnerable to problems related to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. They often lacked information and means to access care. According to a survey by the Women's Empowerment Group released in 2013, only 25 percent of adolescents were aware of their sexual and reproductive rights. Spousal opposition also contributed to the challenges women faced in obtaining contraception or delaying pregnancy. According to UN Population Division estimates in 2016, 29 percent of women of reproductive age used a modern method of contraception. Access by women, particularly in rural areas, to health and reproductive rights education remained difficult due to social constraints. For these same reasons, data collection was also difficult." [N.B. in 2017 "Estimates on maternal mortality and contraceptive prevalence are available at: www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2015/en/." This was omitted in 2018 and 2018 and thus is addressed as an omission below in section 7.3.2.]

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

5. "According to the National Institute of Population Studies' 2012-13 Demographic and Health Survey, 27 percent of women received no prenatal care; however, the report showed a substantial improvement in the proportion of mothers receiving antenatal care over the prior 13 years, increasing from 43 percent in 2001 to 73 percent in 2013.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

6. "The survey [2012-13 Demographic and Health Survey] also revealed that skilled health-care providers delivered 52 percent of births and that 48 percent of births took place in a medical facility". According to the most recent UN research, the maternal mortality ratio was 178 deaths per 100,000 live births, a rate attributed to lack of health information and services. Few women in rural areas had access to skilled attendants during childbirth, including essential obstetric and postpartum care". [N.B. in 2017 "Estimates on maternal mortality and contraceptive prevalence are available at: www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2015/en/." This was omitted in 2018 and 2018 and thus is addressed as an omission below in section 7.3.2.]

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

Women- Discrimination

7. "Many women were unaware of these legal protections [Family law] or unable to obtain legal counsel to enforce them".

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

8. “Divorced women often were left with no means of support, as their families ostracized them”.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

9. Women are legally free to marry without family consent, but society frequently ostracized women who did so, or they risked becoming victims of honor crimes” and “The practice of “karo-kari” or “siyah kari”--a premeditated honor killing that occurs if a family, community, tribal court, or jirga determines that adultery or some other “crime of honor” occurred--continued across the country” [N.B. all reports did mention existence of the practice but not reasons for its occurrence: “Women were victims of various types of societal violence and abuse, including so-called honor killings”].

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

Children – Birth Registration

10. “Reporting of births is voluntary, and records are not kept uniformly, particularly in rural areas. While the government reported that it registered more than 75 percent of the population, observers believed actual figures were lower”.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

Children – Education

11. “Parents of lower economic means sometimes chose to send children to madrassahs, where they received free room and board, or to NGO-operated schools”.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

12. “The most significant barrier to girls’ education was the lack of access. Public schools, particularly beyond the primary grades, were not available in many rural areas, and those that existed were often too far for a girl to travel unaccompanied. Despite cultural beliefs that boys and girls should be educated separately after primary school, the government often failed to take measures to provide separate restroom facilities or separate classrooms, and there were more government schools for boys than for girls. The attendance rates for girls in primary, secondary, and postsecondary schools were lower than for boys. Additionally, certain tribal and cultural beliefs often prevented girls from attending schools”.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

Children- Child Abuse

13. “While there was no official count of street children, SPARC estimated they numbered 1.5 million”. [Note that all reports do mention general pattern that “Child abuse was widespread”.]

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

14. “Many children, including trafficking victims forced to beg at bus terminals and on the side of the road, experienced sexual and physical abuse”.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

Children- Displaced Children

15. “Doctors working in IDP camps reported difficulty in treating the large influx of patients, including children and elderly persons, because they were especially sensitive to disease, malnutrition, and other unhealthy conditions. Poor hygiene and crowded conditions found in the IDP communities caused some children to contract skin rashes, gastroenteritis, and respiratory infections”.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

[Information found for 2018 pertains to unsanitary conditions for IDPs and their lack of access to medical facilities]

Disabilities

16. “Families cared for most individuals with physical and mental disabilities”.

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

Acts of Violence, Discrimination, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

17. “Discrimination against LGBTI persons was widely acknowledged privately, but insufficient data existed for accurate reporting, due in part to severe societal stigma and fear of recrimination on the part of any who came forward”. [The 2018 and 2019 editions added that “The crimes often go unreported”].

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

6.3.2 Omissions in 2018 (compared to 2017 and 2016) and in 2019

Two issues documented in the 2017 report (all issues were also included in the 2016 edition) were omitted from *section 6* of the 2018 report, despite publicly available information continuing to document their existence. Both of the issues continued to be omitted from 2019 editions, for which information was found continuing to document their existence. Illustrative information is presented on each of these issues, available at the time of publication of the respective USDOS report, in the Appendix of this report unless otherwise stated.

Women- Rape and Domestic Violence

1. “NGOs reported police were at times implicated in rape cases”

[2018](#) [2019](#)

Women- Coercion in Population Control:

2. “Estimates on maternal mortality and contraceptive prevalence are available at: www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2015/en/.” [in 2016: “. According to UN Population Division estimates in 2016, 29 percent of women of reproductive age used a modern method of contraception. [...] According to the most recent UN research, the maternal mortality ratio was 178 deaths per 100,000 live births, a rate attributed to lack of health information and services.”]

[2018](#) [2019](#)

6.3.3 Omissions in 2019 (compared to 2018)

Two issues documented in the 2018 report (both also included in the 2016 and 2017 editions) were omitted from *section 6* of the 2019 report, despite publicly available information continuing to document their existence. Illustrative information is presented on each of these issues, available at the time of publication of the respective USDOS report, in the Appendix of this report unless otherwise stated.

Women- Rape and Domestic Violence

1. “In-laws frequently abused and harassed the wives of their sons”

[2019](#)

Women - Other Harmful Traditional Practices:

2. “According to women’s rights activists, however, the commission [National Commission on the Status of Women] lacked resources.”

[2019](#)

7. Section 7. Worker Rights

7.1 Use of language

7.1.1 Observations in 2017 (compared to 2016)

There were no notable language changes observed in section 7. *Worker Rights* in the 2017 report.

7.1.2 Observations in 2018 (compared to 2017)

7. a. Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining

In the following example, the 2018 and 2019 reports no longer describe the pattern of violence and other freedom of association problems, but instead gives one example of police using force against protestors. The nature of the abuse hasn't therefore been omitted as such, but by providing one incident rather than describing a pattern, could be read to imply that the incident is isolated:

2016 and 2017 reports [emphasis added]	2018 and 2019 report [emphasis added]
Marches and protests also occurred regularly, although police often arrested union leaders and occasionally charged them under antiterrorism and antistate laws. Violence and other problems involving freedom of association persisted throughout the year.	In January, during a protest by teachers seeking back wages, the police used force and detained 60 protestors. Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah described the police action as unacceptable. Marches and protests also occurred regularly, although police sometimes arrested union leaders.

The following contextual information was omitted from the 2018 and 2019 editions, despite no new federal laws having been documented to have been enacted in 2018, "Most of the labor force was not covered by federal labor regulations of any kind."

7. d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

With regards to regulations prohibiting discrimination, the following interpretation of the efficacy of legislation was omitted from the 2018 and 2019 editions, despite no additional laws having been documented:

2016 and 2017 reports [emphasis added]	2018 and 2019 report [emphasis added]
While regulations prohibit discrimination in employment and occupation regarding race, sex, gender, disability, language, and gender identity, HIV-positive status or other communicable diseases, or social status, the government did not effectively enforce those laws and regulations. Discrimination with respect to employment and occupation based on these factors persisted. The nature of penalties for violations was insufficient to deter violations.	While regulations prohibit discrimination in employment and occupation regarding race, sex, gender, disability, language, gender identity, HIV-positive status or other communicable diseases, or social status, the government did not effectively enforce those laws and regulations. Discrimination with respect to employment and occupation based on these factors persisted.

7.1.3 Observations in 2019 (compared to 2018)

No additional notable language observations were observed in *section 7. Worker Rights* of the 2019 report.

7.2 Improvements

There were no notable improvements observed in *section 7. Worker Rights* across the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports that were inconsistent with the situation as reported by other sources.

7.3 Omissions

7.3.1 Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016), repeated in 2018 and 2019

The following point included in the 2016 edition, was omitted from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 despite other sources documenting figures of child labourers in 2017, 2018 and 2019:

1. “According to the ILO, there were 3.4 million child laborers”

[2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#)

7.3.2 Omissions in 2018 (compared to 2017 and 2016), repeated in 2019

The following point included in the 2017 and 2018 editions, was omitted from the 2018 and 2019 reports despite other sources documenting the forms of child labour 2018 and 2019:

1. “Employers and families forced children to work in brick kilns and in the glass-bangle and carpet-weaving industries as well as in agriculture as part of fulfilling their families’ debt obligation to landowners or brick kiln owners. In 2012 researchers estimated there were two million bonded laborers, many of whom included entire families with children. Children also reportedly worked in the production of incense, cotton, wheat, textiles, tobacco, sugarcane, and gemstones and in stone crushing”

[2018](#) [2019](#)

[information found on forms of child labour]

7.3.3 Omissions in 2019 (compared to 2018, 2017 and 2016)

No additional omissions were observed in 2019 that were inconsistent with the situation as reported by other sources.

8. Executive Summary

[Table 2](#) in the Appendix presents the changes in how the Executive Summary categorises human rights issues in Pakistan in the 2016 report compared to the 2017 and 2018 editions.

As [Table 2](#) illustrates, several language changes were observed in how human rights issues were described in the respective reports' *Executive Summary*. The most notable of these are described below. It was also noted that some human rights issues were omitted from certain *Executive Summaries*. On occasion, this was despite some of these omitted human rights issues continuing to be documented in the body text of the respective U.S. State Department report. In other instances, human rights issues have been removed from both the *Executive Summary* and the relevant section of the U.S. State Department report. Attention has been drawn to instances where such human rights issues continued to be documented by other publicly available sources.

Notable language changes

The 2016 *Executive Summary* included three categories of issues. First, it listed seven of what it termed the “most serious human rights problems”, followed by a list of six “other human rights problems”, and a list of seven “serious societal problems”. It also listed numerous other issues that were described but not categorised, for example: “Gender inequality continued”.

By comparison, the 2017 edition included two categories, the first of which slightly amended the language used in the 2016 edition to the “most significant human rights issues”, under which only 5 points were included. This was followed by a reduced list of four “additional problems” and a longer list of other issues that, as with the 2016 edition, were described but not categorised. It is observed that re-categorising “human rights problems” to “additional problems” may be read to imply less severity.

The 2018 report provided just one category, “human rights issues included credible reports of” and the 2019 edition kept this one list but amended it slightly to “significant human rights issues included”. It is notable that the language used in the 2018 report no longer presents issues as occurring, but now introduces the concept of credibility to reports of issues, potentially undermining their perceived veracity.

The three issues in effect downgraded in the 2017 *Executive Summary* and subsequent editions were:

- “Gender inequality”: In fact, this issue is not mentioned at all in the 2017, 2018 and 2019 *Executive Summary* (see below with regards to *Omissions*).
- “Violence against gender and sexual minorities”: This was revised to “violence based on gender, gender identity”, classified as having “remained problems” in the 2017 report. This is despite the 2017 report continuing to document the same situation as in 2016 in section 6 that “Violence and discrimination continued against LGBTI persons”. In the 2018 edition it was included among the one list of “Human rights issues” but it was omitted from the 2019 *Executive Summary* completely (see below with regards to *Omissions*)
- “Sectarian violence”: This is downgraded to an “additional problem” in 2017, despite section 1.g. *Abuses in Internal Conflict* continuing to state that “Sectarian violence also continued throughout the country” as the 2016 report did. It was removed as an issue from the 2018 and 2019 reports' *Executive Summary*. This is commensurate with changes to section 1.g of the 2018 report which noted that “Sectarian violence decreased significantly across the country, although some attacks continued”. It was also internally consistent with

the body text of the 2019 which removed this point and only included one incident of sectarian violence in section 1.g. (see *Omissions* section below).

The two issues classified in the 2016 *Executive Summary* as “other human rights problems”, which were then omitted from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports were: “poor prison conditions and “a weak criminal justice system” (see *Omissions* section below).

The list of seven issues described as “serious societal problems” in the 2016 report were reframed in the 2017 edition as having “remained problems”. Again this may be read to imply a reduction in severity of the issues, or implying less significance to “societal” issues i.e. non-state perpetrated issues. In the 2018 and 2019 editions some of these issues were included, listed as “human rights issues” or “significant human rights issues” respectively.

Two of the seven issues classified in the 2016 edition as “serious societal problems” were removed entirely from the 2017 and 2018 *Executive Summary*: “domestic violence” and “discrimination against women and girls”. Furthermore, in the 2019 report, all but one of the seven issues classified in the 2016 edition as “serious societal problems” were removed from the *Executive Summary* – all of which pertained to women, whilst “acts of corruption within the bureaucracy” continued to be mentioned:

- “Corruption within the government and police”: the same point was included in 2017, amended to only “corruption with the government” in 2018. In 2019 it was further amended to “acts of corruption within the bureaucracy” i.e. omitting police corruption. (see *Omissions* section below).
- “Rape”: was reframed as a “lack of criminal investigations or accountability for cases related to rape” in the 2017 and 2018 reports, i.e. presenting the issue as a state failure to protect, not the practice itself that is the problem. The 2019 report removed any mention of rape entirely (see *Omissions* section below).
- “domestic violence”: This is not listed in the 2017, 2018 or 2019 *Executive summary* at all (see *Omissions* section below).
- “sexual harassment”: This was included in the 2017 and 2018 editions but removed from the 2019 *Executive summary* (see *Omissions* section below).
- “honor crimes”. This was amended in the 2017 and 2018 reports to “so-called honor crimes”. However it was omitted entirely from the 2019 *Executive Summary*. (see *Omissions* section below).
- “Other harmful traditional practice”. This was amended to “female genital mutilation/cutting” in the 2017 and 2018 editions. It was however removed from the 2019 *Executive Summary*. (see *Omissions* section below).
- “discrimination against women and girls” This was omitted from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 *Executive summary*. (see *Omissions* section below).

Some deteriorations or expansions in issues were also observed. To illustrate, the 2016 *Executive Summary* described “Government practices and certain laws limited freedom of religion, particularly for religious minorities. This was amended to “freedom of religion” in 2017, to “restrictions on religious freedom” which was reported to have deteriorated to “severe restrictions of religious freedom” in 2019. Interestingly whilst this issue was reported to deteriorate, the 2019 *Executive Summary* omitted the point “discrimination against members of religious minority groups” (see *Omissions* below).

Furthermore, “harassment of journalists, and high-profile attacks against” so described in the 2016 and 2017 editions was expanded in the 2018 edition to “censorship, site-blocking, and arbitrary

restrictions on journalists' freedom of movement; severe harassment and intimidation of and high-profile attacks against journalists and media organizations", that is a worsening situation. Again this was modified in the 2019 report, also suggesting a deterioration "the worst forms of restrictions on free expression, the press, and the internet, including violence against journalists, censorship, and site blocking".

The 2019 *Executive Summary* also portrayed a worsening situation with regards to freedom of peaceful assembly compared to the 2016, 2017 and 2018 editions, adding that the government interference was "substantial" as well as adding "significant" to restrictions on freedom of movement. The 2018 *Executive Summary* also added "overly restrictive nongovernmental organizations (NGO) laws" which was repeated in the 2019 edition.

The 2016 edition mentioned that [emphasis added] "Continuing terrorist violence and human rights abuses by nonstate actors contributed **significantly** to human rights challenges in the country". This was amended in 2017 and 2018 to "Terrorist violence and human rights abuses by nonstate actors contributed to human rights problems in the country". In 2019 this was downgraded to [emphasis added] "Terrorist violence and human rights abuses by nonstate actors contributed to human rights problems, **although to a lesser extent than in previous years, consistent with an overall decline in terrorist activity**". The changes are commensurate with those observed in section 1.g. *Abuses in Internal Conflict* of the respective reports, which were not found to be inconsistent with other publicly available sources.

Interestingly, the following issue was added to the 2018 *Executive Summary* which did not appear in the 2016 or 2017 *Executive Summary* sections "recruitment and use of child soldiers by nonstate militant groups" which was amended in the 2019 edition to "Unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers by nonstate militant groups".

Omissions

It is noteworthy that almost all of the observed changes to the *Executive Summary* were not consistent with the situation as reported in the body of the report and that the vast majority relate to the downgrading of human rights issues perpetrated by societal actors i.e. non-state agents of persecution in the language of refugee status determination.

11 omissions were observed comparing the 2017 *Executive Summary* to the 2016 edition², all which continued to be omitted in 2018 and ten of which in 2019.

and 2018 and nine of the ten in 2019. One issue is considered to be internally consistent across all the reports.

An additional four human rights issues were omitted from the 2018 *Executive Summary*, all of which continued to be omitted from the 2019 edition. Three of these are considered to be internally inconsistent with the respective sections of the 2018 U.S. State Department report, and two with the 2019 report. One is considered to be internally consistent with the respective section of the 2018 U.S. State Department report and consistent with the situation as reported by other sources. All of these related to *Section 1* issues.

² N.B. "Gender inequality" was mentioned twice in the 2016 *Executive Summary* and omitted from subsequent reports but has been only counted as one omission.

An additional seven human rights issues were omitted from the 2019 *Executive Summary*. Five of these omissions related to *Section 6. Issues* (i.e. societal violence), one to *Section 1* issues and one *Section 2* issues. All seven were found to be internally inconsistent with the respective sections of the U.S. State Department reports .

Omitted human rights issues relevant to Section 1 of the reports

As noted above, the 2016 *Executive Summary* identified “Sectarian violence” as one of the seven “most serious human rights problems” in Pakistan. This was downgraded to an “additional problem” in 2017, despite section 1.g. *Abuses in Internal Conflict* continuing to state that “Sectarian violence also continued throughout the country” as the 2016 report did. It was removed as an issue from the 2018 and 2019 reports’ *Executive Summary*, commensurate with changes to section 1.g of the respective reports. The 2018 report noted an improved situation reporting that “Sectarian violence decreased significantly across the country, although some attacks continued” which was consistent with other publicly available information. However, this point was omitted from section 1.g of the 2019 report, despite information continuing to document incidents of sectarian violence in 2019. This is addressed as an omission in section [2.3.3](#).

The following issue which had been described in 2016 as among the “most serious human rights problems” and in 2017 as among the “most significant human rights issues” was not mentioned at all in the 2018 or 2019 *Executive Summary*: “lack of rule of law, including lack of due process; poor implementation and enforcement of laws”. It is not clear upon what basis this was no longer categorised as a serious or significant issue as limited changes were observed in sections 1.d. *Arbitrary Arrest or Detention* and 1.e. *Denial of Fair Public Trial* in the 2018 and 2019 reports compared to the 2017 and 2016 editions. For example the 2018 and 2018 reports continue to document that “judges sometimes denied bail until payment of bribes”, that “the judiciary often was subject to external influences” and “at times individuals remained in pretrial detention for periods longer than the maximum sentence for the crime with which they were charged. Authorities seldom informed detainees promptly of charges against them”.

“Corruption within the government and police” was listed in the 2016 *Executive Summary* as among the “serious societal problems” and was included in the 2017 *Executive Summary* as having “remained problems”. In 2018 it was amended to only “corruption with the government”. In 2019 it was further amended to “acts of corruption within the bureaucracy”. This is despite information included in section 1.d. *Arbitrary Arrest or Detention* of the 2018 and 2019 reports continuing to note the police’s involvement in corruption: “According to civil society sources, police and prison officials frequently used the threat of abuse to extort money from prisoners and their families”.

As mentioned above, the 2016 *Executive Summary* lists a number of “other human rights problems” which are categorised in the 2017 edition simply as “additional problems”, thereby potentially undermining their severity. With regards to this specific list, the following issues that were listed in 2016 but did not continue to be recognised as such in the *Executive Summary* of the 2017, 2018 or 2019 reports were:

- “poor prison conditions”: This is not mentioned at all in the *Executive Summary* of the 2017, 2018 or 2019 reports despite section 6 of the respective reports all describing that some detention conditions “were harsh and life threatening” and that “prison conditions were often extremely poor” as the 2016 report did:
- “a weak criminal justice system” This is not mentioned at all in the 2017, 2018 or 2019 *Executive Summary* despite no notable changes being observed to sections 1.d. *Arbitrary*

Arrest or Detention and *1.e. Denial of Fair Public Trial* in the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports compared to the 2016 edition.

The 2016 and 2017 reports' *Executive Summary* included "a lack of judicial independence in the lower courts". This was removed from the 2018 and 2019 editions. This is despite section *1.e. Denial of Fair Public Trial* of the 2018 and 2019 reports continuing to report that "Many lower courts remained corrupt, inefficient, and subject to pressure from wealthy persons and influential religious or political figures" as the 2016 and 2017 editions did.

The 2016, 2017 and 2018 *Executive Summary* all mentioned "lengthy pretrial detention" as among the other human rights issues. This was removed from the 2019 edition despite section *1.d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention* continuing to note, as the previous reports did, that "individuals remained in pretrial detention for periods longer than the maximum sentence for the crime with which they were charged".

Omitted human rights issues relevant to Section 2 of the reports

The 2016, 2017 and 2018 *Executive Summary* all mentioned "Discrimination against religious minorities". However this was omitted from the 2019 edition. This is inconsistent with section 6. *Other Societal Violence or Discrimination* which continued to make the point that "Societal violence due to religious intolerance remained a serious problem. There were occasionally reports of mob violence against religious minorities, including Christians, Ahmadiyya Muslims, Hindus, and Shia Muslims" that was included in the 2016, 2017, and 2019 editions. That being said, it is observed that the 2019 *Executive Summary* reported a deterioration with regard to religious freedom, noting "severe restrictions of religious freedom" compared to "restrictions on religious freedom" in 2017 and 2018.

Omitted human rights issues relevant to Section 6 of the reports

The following issue which had been described in 2016 as among the "most serious human rights problems" and in 2017 as among the "most significant human rights issues" was not mentioned at all in the 2018 or 2019 *Executive Summary*: "frequent mob violence and vigilante justice with limited accountability". This is despite the 2018 and 2019 reports noting in 6. *Other Societal Violence or Discrimination* that "There were occasionally reports of mob violence against religious minorities, including Christians, Ahmadiyya Muslims, Hindus, and Shia Muslims" as the previous 2017 and 2016 editions did.

As noted above, the 2016 *Executive Summary* identified "Gender inequality" as one of the seven "most serious human rights problems" in Pakistan. In the 2017, 2018 and 2019 editions however, this issue was removed entirely. In addition, the 2016 *Executive Summary* identified "discrimination against women and girls" as remaining one of the "serious societal problems" in Pakistan. This point was removed from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 editions as was this categorisation from all of the reports' *Executive Summary*. This is despite section 6. *Women* of the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports continuing to include a subsection on *Discrimination* that stated that "Women also faced discrimination in employment, family law, property law, and the judicial system" as the 2016 report did. However, the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports neglected to mention a number of issues affecting women that had been documented in the 2016 edition, including: cultural assumptions of male police, restrictions on women's mobility and social pressures affecting utilisation of women's police centres; women's knowledge of legal protections or ability to obtain legal counsel to enforce them; situation for divorced women; situation for women who marry without family consent and women's

“significant discrimination in employment”, as well as barriers to girls’ education. For evidence that these issues persisted in 2017, as documented by other sources, see the discussion below in section [7.3.1](#).

As noted above, the 2016 *Executive Summary* identified “Violence against gender and sexual minorities” as one of the seven “most serious human rights problems” in Pakistan. This was in effect downgraded in the 2017 edition as having “remained problems”. In the 2018 edition it was included among the one list of “Human rights issues” but it was omitted from the 2019 *Executive Summary* completely. These changes are despite all of the 2017, 2017 and 2019 reports continuing to document the same situation as in 2016 in section 6. *Acts of Violence, Discrimination, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity* that “Violence and discrimination continued against LGBTI persons”.

In addition, the 2016 *Executive Summary* included “discrimination based on [...] sexual orientation, gender identity”. This was omitted from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports’ *Executive Summary*. However, the 2017 and 2018 editions’ *Executive Summary* did document “violence based on gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation; legal prohibitions of consensual same-sex sexual conduct” as mentioned above. Again this was despite all the reports continuing to document the same situation as in 2016 in section 6 that “discrimination continued against LGBTI persons”.

The 2019 *Executive Summary* no longer included rape/“lack of criminal investigations or accountability for cases related to rape” as the 2016 /2017 and 2018 reports respectively had done. This is despite section 6. *Women* of the 2019 report continuing to document that “Although rape was frequent, prosecutions are rare” as the 2016, 2017 and 2018 reports did.

Whilst the 2016 *Executive Summary* included “domestic violence” amongst the “serious societal problems”, this issue was omitted entirely from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports’ *Executive Summary*. This is despite the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports continuing to document, as the 2016 edition did, that “No specific federal law prohibits domestic violence, which was widespread. Forms of domestic violence reportedly included beating, physical disfigurement, shaving of women’s eyebrows and hair, and—in the most extreme cases—homicide”.

“Sexual harassment” was included in the 2016, 2017 and 2018 reports’ *Executive Summary*. However, this was removed from the 2019 *Executive summary* despite section 6. *Women* of the 2019 report continuing to document that “Although several laws criminalize sexual harassment in the workplace and public sphere, the problem was reportedly widespread” as the previous reports all did.

The issue of “Honor crimes” was included in the 2016 *Executive Summary* and amended to “so-called honor crimes” in the 2017 and 2018 editions. It was however removed from the 2019 *Executive summary* despite section 6. *Women* of the 2019 report continuing to document that “Women were victims of various types of societal violence and abuse, including so-called honor killings” as the previous three reports all did.

“Other harmful traditional practice” was included in the 2016 *Executive Summary* and amended to “female genital mutilation/cutting” in the 2017 and 2018 editions. It was however removed from the 2019 *Executive Summary*. This is despite section 6. *Women - Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)* continuing to document that “According to human rights groups and media reports, many Dawoodi Bohra Muslims practiced various forms of FGM/C. Some Dawoodi Bohras spoke publicly and signed online petitions against the practice. Some other isolated tribes and communities in rural Sindh and Balochistan also reportedly practiced FGM/C” as the 2016, 2017 and 2018 reports all did.

The 2016 *Executive Summary* included “Child abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children persisted”. This was omitted from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports’ *Executive summary*. This is despite subsection 6. *Children - Child Abuse* of the 2017 report continuing to document that “Child abuse was widespread. Employers, who in some cases were relatives, abused young girls and boys working as domestic servants by beating them and forcing them to work long hours. Many such children were trafficking victims” as the 2016 report did.

The 2016 *Executive Summary* included “Societal discrimination against national, ethnic, and racial minorities persisted”. This was not mentioned in the 2017 or 2018 *Executive summary* at all. This is despite section 6 of the 2017 and 2018 reports continuing to document that “Societal violence due to religious intolerance remained a serious problem” as the 2016 report did. In the 2019 *Executive Summary* this issue was reinserted, amended to “crimes involving violence targeting members of racial and ethnic minorities”.

The 2016 *Executive Summary* included “discrimination based on caste”. This was no longer mentioned in the 2017, 2018 or 2018 reports’ *Executive Summary*. This is not considered to be internally inconsistent as none of the reports specifically mentioned caste discrimination.

The 2016 *Executive Summary* included “[discrimination based] on HIV status”. This is not mentioned at all in the 2017, 2018 or 2019 reports’ *Executive Summary*. This is despite subsection 6. *HIV and AIDS Social Stigma* of the 2017, 2018 and 2019 report continuing to state that “stigma and discrimination by the general population and by health-care providers in particular remained a significant barrier to treatment access” [In 2016: “Societal attitudes toward HIV-positive individuals were changing, but discrimination persisted”].

Omitted human rights issues relevant to Section 7 of the reports

The 2016 *Executive Summary* included “Respect for worker rights was minimal”. This is not mentioned at all in the 2017, 2018 or 2019 reports’ *Executive Summary*. This is despite limited changes *Section 7. Worker Rights* being observed in the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports which continued to state that “Enforcement of labor laws remained weak, in large part due to lack of resources and political will” as the 2016 report did.

Appendices

A. Sources and databases consulted

Databases

[Asylos's Research Notes](#)
[EASO COI Portal](#)
[European Country of Origin Information Network \(ECOI\)](#)
[Relief Web](#)
[UNHCR Refworld](#)

Organisations

[Amnesty International \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[Armed Conflict Location & Event Date Project \(ACLED\)](#)
[Article 19 \[Freedom of expression and information\]](#)
[Asia Foundation](#)
[Asia Society](#)
[Asian Human Rights Commission \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[Asian Legal Resource Centre](#)
[Assessment Capacities Project \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[Association for the Prevention of Torture](#)
[Atlas of Torture](#)
[Aurat Foundation](#)
[Baloch Human Rights Organisation](#)
[Basic Needs](#)
[BJPsych International](#)
[Brookings Institution Afghanistan Index \(includes selected data on Pakistan\)](#)
[Centre for Global Mental Health](#)
[Center for Research & Security Studies \(CRSS\) – Pakistan Conflict Tracker](#)
[Centre for Strategic and International Studies](#)
[Child Protection Hub](#)
[Child Rights International Network](#)
[Christian Solidarity Worldwide](#)
[CHR Michelsen Institute](#)
[Combatting Terrorism Center](#)
[Committee to Protect Journalists \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[Conciliation Resources](#)
[Council on Foreign Relations – Global Conflict Tracker](#)
[Countering Violent Extremism Monitor \(Pakistan\)](#)
[Death Penalty Worldwide \(Cornell Law School\)](#)
[Defence for Children](#)
[Edge Media Network](#)
[Education International](#)
[Equal Rights Trust](#)
[FATA Research Centre](#)
[Foreign Affairs \(published by Council on Foreign Relations\)](#)
[Freedom House](#)
[Fund for Peace – Fragile States Index 2017](#)
[Gay Star News](#)
[Global Gayz](#)
[Global Initiative on Psychiatry](#)

[Hands off Cain \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research](#)
[Hudson Institute](#)
[Human Rights Commission of Pakistan](#)
[Human Rights Watch \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada](#)
[Institute for Economics & Peace – Global Peace Index](#)
[Institute for the Study of War](#)
[Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies](#)
[International Bar Association](#)
[International Center for Not-for-Profit Law](#)
[International Centre for Prison Studies](#)
[International Commission of Jurists](#)
[International Committee of the Red Cross \(ICRC\) \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[International Crisis Group \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[International Disability Alliance](#)
[International Federation for Human Rights \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[International Federation of Journalists](#)
[International Freedom of Expression Exchange](#)
[International Institute for Strategic Studies](#)
[International NGO Safety Organisation](#)
[International Organization for Migration](#)
[International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims](#)
[IPI Global Observatory](#)
[The Jamestown Foundation \[South Asia pages\]](#)
[Justice Project Pakistan](#)
[Kaleidoscope Trust](#)
[Long War Journal](#)
[Medecins Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[Mental Disability Advocacy Center](#)
[Minority Rights Group International](#)
[Movement for Solidarity & Peace](#)
[National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism \(START\) – Global Terrorism Database \(GTD\)](#)
[National Counter Terrorism Authority Pakistan](#)
[OECD’s Social Institutions & Gender Index](#)
[Open Society Foundations](#)
[Orchid Project \[FGM\]](#)
[Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Peace Studies](#)
[Pakistan Institute for Legislative Development and Transparency](#)
[PAK Institute for Peace Studies \(PIPS\)](#)
[Pakistan Press Foundation](#)
[Pakistan Red Crescent Society](#)
[Peace Women](#)
[Penal Reform International](#)
[Physicians for Human Rights](#)
[Population Council](#)
[Prison Insider](#)
[Reporters Without Borders \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[Right to Education](#)
[Saferworld](#)

[Sahil](#)
[Save the Children \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre](#)
[Small Arms Survey](#)
[Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child](#)
[Society for Human Rights and Prisoners' Aid \(SHARP\)](#)
[South Asia Terrorism Portal \(SATP\)](#)
[Their World](#)
[United Nations Children's Fund \(UNICEF\) \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[United Nations Committee Against Torture](#)
[United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#)
[United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women](#)
[United Nations Committee on Enforced Disappearances](#)
[United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child](#)
[United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees \(UNHCR\)](#)
[United Nations Human Rights Council](#)
[United Nations News Centre](#)
[United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs \(UNOCHA\)](#)
[United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime \(UNODC\)](#)
[United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights \(OHCHR\)](#)
[United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict](#)
[United Nations Population Fund \(UNPFPA\)](#)
[United Nations Secretary General](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to education](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children](#)
[United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences](#)
[United Nations Women](#)
[United States Congressional Research Service](#)
[United States Institute of Peace](#)
[Uppsala Universitet – UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia](#)
[WHO \[Pakistan Library\]](#)
[World Organisation Against Torture \(OMCT\)](#)
[World Psychiatric Association](#)
[World Psychiatry Journal](#)
[World Prison Brief](#)
[Women Living Under Muslim Laws](#)

[Women News Network \(WNN\)](#)
[Women's Refugee Commission](#)
[Women Under Siege Project](#)
[World Economic Forum](#)
[World Health Organisation](#)
[28 too Many \[FGM\]](#)
[76 Crimes](#)

Media

[Al Jazeera](#)
[Dawn](#) [Karachi-based, largest-circulation English-language daily]
[Express Tribune](#)
[Institute for War and Peace Reporting](#)
[Inter Press Service](#)
[The Nation](#) [Lahore-based, English-language daily]
[The New Humanitarian \(formerly IRIN\) \[Pakistan pages\]](#)
[The News](#) [English-language daily, published by Jang group]
[Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty \[Pakistan pages\]](#)

B. List of issues where no or little information was found amongst the sources consulted

The following three improvements were observed where no or limited information was found amongst the sources consulted to refute the improvement

Improvements

1.c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

1. “In most cases, authorities allowed prisoners to observe their religious traditions” in 2018 and 2019

1.d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention

2. “Police agencies continued to professionalize and modernize through training, including on human rights. Some local authorities demonstrated the ability and willingness to protect minorities from discrimination and mob lynching, at great risk to their personal safety” in 2018 [In 2016 and 2017: “There were improvements in police professionalism and instances of local authorities protecting minorities from discrimination and communal violence”. This point is not mentioned in 2019 at all]
3. “Police agencies continued to professionalize and modernize through training, including on human rights. Some local authorities demonstrated the ability and willingness to protect minorities from discrimination and mob lynching, at great risk to their personal safety.’ In 2018. This point is not mentioned in 2019 at all.

Omissions

The following twenty-one omissions were observed where no or limited information was found amongst the sources consulted documenting that the issue occurred:

1. a. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and other Unlawful Politically Motivated Killings

1. “The provincial governments and political parties in [...] Punjab remained targets of attack by militant and other nonstate actors”. In 2018 and 2019

1.b Disappearance

2. “There were reports of disappearances in connection with continuing conflicts between militant groups and government forces in Punjab and FATA.” In 2017, 2018 and 2019
3. “Prisoners who were members of religious minorities generally received poorer treatment [in detention] than Muslims” in 2018

1.c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

4. In 2016 it was reported that “SPARC described conditions for juvenile prisoners as among the worst in the country”. This was omitted from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 editions but no SHARP publication published in these years documenting the juvenile prison conditions in Pakistan was found.

5. "According to SHARP, there was adequate manual recordkeeping on prisoners, but there was a need for computerized records." In 2018 and 2019
6. "The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported 20 deaths due to violence in prisons as of May 20. According to an April report on Dunya News TV, in 2017 at least 145 prisoners died in Punjab province prisons of natural causes, including diseases such as AIDS and hepatitis. One former prisoner who spent 15 years in a Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province jail petitioned the Peshawar High Court to direct medical testing of the province's inmate population, claiming 12 inmates at the jail in which he was incarcerated were HIV positive, and approximately 50 had hepatitis. The former prisoner also petitioned for disclosure of the province's prison capacity and actual population, claiming the institution in which he was incarcerated had a capacity of 125 and a population of 640." [in 2017 and 2016: "Prison security remained a concern"] in 2018 and 2019
7. "Provincial governments in Sindh, Gilgit-Baltistan, and the AJK permitted some international organizations to monitor civil prisons, but leaders of monitoring organizations noted their operations were becoming more restricted each year." In 2018 and 2019
8. "As of November 30, the country had 5,339 troops and police performing peacekeeping duties around the world. During the year, the United Nations reported one possible new case of sexual exploitation and abuse implicating a Pakistani peacekeeper. The case involved allegations of transactional sex that occurred in 2017. An investigation into an alleged exploitative sexual relationship that began in June 2011 and continued until an unspecified date in 2012 was pending additional information as of December 28. Investigations into three reports were closed due to lack of evidence: one involved a 2016 report that a Pakistani deployed in Cote d'Ivoire raped a minor in 2014; one was related to a 2017 report of attempted sexual assault that allegedly occurred in September 2016; and the third involved allegations that Pakistani peacekeepers engaged in transactional sex from August 2015 to March 2016." In 2019 [Issue sought but not found was their involvement in sexual exploitation and abuse in 2019]

1.d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention/ Arrest Procedures and Treatment of Detainees

9. "In some cases trials did not start until six months after a FIR" [First Information Report] in 2019

1.e. Denial of Fair Public Trial/Trial procedures

10. "NGOs expressed concerns regarding the security of jail trials" in 2018 and 2019
11. "Lack of privacy for defendants to consult with their lawyers during jail trials" in 2019

2.a. Freedom of Speech and Press

12. "Militant and local tribal groups killed, detained, threatened, expelled, or otherwise obstructed a number of reporters who covered the conflict in FATA, KP, and Balochistan." In 2017, 2018 and 2019

13. The subsection 'Refoulement' found in the 2016 and 2017 reports was removed from the 2018 and 2019 editions. Whilst no evidence was found on refoulement in 2018 and 2019 it is considered that at least absence of cases should have been mentioned.

14. "Libel/Slander Laws: Ministers and members of the National Assembly used libel and slander laws in the past to counter public discussion of their actions" in 2017, 2018 and 2019

2.d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons

15. "In general the government did not forcibly return [...] refugees, or asylum seekers to countries where their lives or freedom may be threatened" in 2017, 2018 or 2019

Section 5. Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

16. "Women's rights organisations faced particular challenges" in 2017, 2018 and 2019

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

17. Prevalence of FGM/C amongst Dawoodi Bohra Muslims in 2017, 2018 and 2019

18. "The penalty for gang rape is death or life imprisonment, but sentences, when convictions occurred, were often less severe". In 2017, 2018 and 2019

19. "Press reports indicated harassment was especially high among domestic workers and nurses" in 2017, 2018 and 2019

20. "Many overcrowded dar-ul-amans did not meet international standards" in 2019 [compared to "Many daru-ul-amans were severely overcrowded, with conditions that did not meet international standards" in 2016/2017/2018.

21. "Some shelters did not offer access to basic needs such as showers, laundry supplies, or feminine hygiene products" in 2018 and 2019 [in 2016 and 2017: "Few shelters offered access to basic needs such as showers, laundry supplies, or feminine hygiene products"]

C. Table 1 Comparative analysis of structure of the Pakistan reports

✓ = indicates that the section heading has been retained compared to the previous year

X = indicates that the section has been omitted from the respective annual report

2016	2017	2018	2019	Observations
Executive Summary	✓	✓	✓	
Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:	✓	✓	✓	
a. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and other Unlawful or Politically Motivated Killings	✓	✓	✓	
b. Disappearance	✓	✓	✓	
c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	✓	✓	✓	
Prison and Detention Center Conditions	✓	✓	✓	
Physical Conditions	✓	✓	✓	
Administration	✓	✓	✓	
Independent Monitoring	✓	✓	✓	
		Improvements	✓	New section added in 2018, repeated in 2019. Improvements not found to be inconsistent with other sources- not addressed in report.
d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention	✓	✓	✓	
Role of the Police and Security Apparatus	✓	✓	X	Some of this information now added to the <i>Executive Summary</i> . Other issues as omissions and addressed in section 1.3.3
Arrest Procedures and Treatment of Detainees	✓	✓	✓	
Arbitrary Arrest	✓	✓	✓	
Pretrial Detention	✓	✓	✓	
Detainee's Ability to Challenge Lawfulness of Detention before a Court	✓	✓	✓	
e. Denial of Fair Public Trial	✓	✓	✓	
Trial Procedures	✓	✓	✓	
Political Prisoners and Detainees	✓	✓	✓	

Civil Judicial Procedures and Remedies	✓	✓	✓	
f. Arbitrary or Unlawful Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence	✓	✓	✓	
g. Abuses in Internal Conflict	✓	✓	✓	
Killings	✓	✓	✓	
Abductions	✓	X	X	Subsection on Abductions omitted from the 2018 and 2019 reports. This is addressed in section 1.3.2
Physical Abuse, Punishment, and Torture	✓	✓	✓	
Child Soldiers	✓	✓	✓	
Other Conflict-related Abuse	✓	✓	✓	
Section 2. Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:	✓	✓	✓	
a. Freedom of Speech and Press	Changed to <i>Freedom of Expression, Including for the Press</i>	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	Minor language change in title in 2017 report, repeated in 2018 and 2019 editions
Freedom of Speech and Expression	Changed to <i>Freedom of Expression</i>	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	✓	Minor change in title in 2017 report, repeated in 2018 and 2019 editions
Press and Media Freedoms	Changed to <i>Press and Media Freedom</i>	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	Changed to <i>Press and Media, Including Online Media</i>	Minor subsection heading changed in 2017, repeated in 2018, further amended in 2019 -now includes <i>Online media</i>
Violence and Harassment	✓	✓	✓	
Censorship or Content Restrictions	✓	✓	✓	
Libel/Slander Laws	X	X	X	Subsection omitted from all subsequent reports. Not found to be inconsistent with the situation as reported by other sources. See Appendix B .
National Security	✓	✓	✓	
Internet Freedom	✓	✓	✓	
Academic Freedom and Cultural Events	✓	✓	✓	
b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association	Changed to <i>Freedoms of Peaceful Assembly and Association</i>	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	Minor language change in title in 2017 report, repeated in 2018 and 2019 edition
Freedom of Assembly	Changed to <i>Freedom of Peaceful Assembly</i>	✓ [same as 2017]	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	Minor language change in title in 2017 report, repeated in 2018 and 2019 edition

		edition]		
Freedom of Association	✓	✓	✓	
c. Freedom of Religion	✓	✓	✓	
d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons	Changed to Freedom of Movement	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	Change in title in 2017 report, repeated in 2018 and 2019 editions
Abuse of Migrants, Refugees, and Stateless Persons	✓	✓	✓	2019 edition move this to section 1.f on Refugees
In-country Movement	✓	✓	✓	
Foreign Travel	✓	✓	✓	
Emigration and Repatriation	Changed to Exile	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	Subsection omitted in 2017, continued to be omitted in 2018 and 2019.
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	✓	✓	✓	2019 edition creates new numericised subheading 1.e. Internally Displaced Persons
Protection of Refugees	✓	✓	✓	2019 edition creates new subheading 1.f. Refugees
Access to Asylum	✓	✓	✓	
Refoulement	✓	X	X	Subsection omitted from the 2018 and 2019 editions. Content reduced in 2017 so addressed as omission for all years. See section 2.3.1
Employment	✓	✓	✓	
Access to Basic Services	✓		✓	
Durable Solutions	✓	✓	✓	
Stateless Persons	✓	✓		2019 edition creates new numericised subheading 1.g. Stateless Persons
Section 3. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process	✓	✓	✓	
Elections and Political Participation	✓	✓		
Recent Elections	✓	✓	✓	
Political Parties and Political Participation	✓	✓	✓	
Participation of Women and Minorities	✓	✓	✓	
Section 4. Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government	✓	✓	✓	
Corruption	✓	✓	✓	
Financial Disclosure	✓	✓	✓	

Public Access to Information	X	X	X	Omission of section in 2017 that continued to be omitted in 2018 and 2019. Addressed in section 4.3.1
Section 5. Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights	Minor changed to <i>Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Abuses of Human Rights</i>	✓ [same as 2017]	✓ [same as 2017]	Minor language change in 2017, that was repeated in 2018 and 2019
Government Human Rights Bodies	✓	✓	✓	
Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons	✓	✓	✓	
Women	✓	✓	✓	
Rape and Domestic Violence	✓	✓	✓	
Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)	✓	✓	✓	
Other Harmful Traditional Practices	✓	✓	✓	
Sexual Harassment	✓	✓	✓	
Reproductive Rights	X Renamed <i>Coercion in Population Control</i>	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	✓ [same as 2017 edition]	Renaming of section. Renaming of section in 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports and accordingly the detail and content of information has changed. For more discussion on this see section 6.3.1
Discrimination	✓	✓	✓	
Children	✓	✓	✓	
Birth Registration	✓	✓	✓	
Education	✓	✓	✓	
Medical care	✓	✓	✓	
Child Abuse	✓	✓	✓	
Early and Forced Marriage	✓	✓	✓	
Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting (FGM/C)	X	X	X	The 2016 edition included a link to the FGM/C subsection in 'Women'. This link was removed from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports
Sexual Exploitation of Children	✓	✓	✓	
Infanticide or Infanticide of Children with Disabilities	✓	✓	✓	

Displaced Children	✓	✓	✓	
International Child Abductions	✓	✓	✓	
Anti-Semitism	✓	✓	✓	
Trafficking in Persons	✓	✓	✓	
Persons with Disabilities	✓	✓	✓	
	–	–	National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities	This subsection was added to the 2019 report.
Acts of Violence, Discrimination, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity	✓	✓	✓	
Other Societal Violence or Discrimination	✓	✓	✓	
HIV and AIDS Social Stigma	✓	✓	✓	
Section 7. Worker Rights	✓	✓	✓	
a. Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining	✓	✓	✓	
b. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor	✓	✓	✓	
c. Prohibition of Child Labor and Minimum Age for Employment	✓	✓	✓	
d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation	✓	✓	✓	
e. Acceptable Conditions of Work	✓	✓	✓	

D: Table 2 Comparative analysis of how the Pakistan Executive Summary categorises human rights issues				
2016	2017	2018	2019	Observations
The most serious human rights problems were:	The most significant human rights issues included	Human rights issues included credible reports of	Significant human rights issues included:	Categorisation changed each year. Both 2016 and 2017 had two 'tiers'.
extrajudicial and targeted killings;	extrajudicial and targeted killings;	extrajudicial and targeted killings;	unlawful or arbitrary killings by the government or its agents, including extrajudicial killings	
disappearances;	disappearances;	forced disappearances;	forced disappearance;	
torture;	torture;	torture;	torture;	
lack of rule of law (including lack of due process, poor implementation and enforcement of laws,	lack of rule of law, including lack of due process; poor implementation and enforcement of laws;	X	X	Limited changes to section 1d and 1e were observed in the 2018 and 2019 reports compared to the 2017 and 2016 editions e.g. they continue to document that "judges sometimes denied bail until payment of bribes", "the judiciary often was subject to external influences" and "at times individuals remained in pretrial detention for periods longer than the maximum sentence for the crime with which they were charged. Authorities seldom informed detainees promptly of charges against them".
and frequent mob violence and vigilante justice);	and frequent mob violence and vigilante justice with limited accountability.	X	X	The 2018 edition does mention mob violence or vigilante violence against minorities in sections 1d, 1e 2a, 2b, 6 and both reports continues to state in section 6 "There were occasionally reports of mob violence against religious minorities, including Christians, Ahmadiyya Muslims, Hindus, and Shia Muslims" as the 2017 report did.
gender inequality;	X	X	X	Section 6 of 2017, 2018 and reports continued to include a subsection on <i>Discrimination</i> that stated "Women also faced discrimination in employment, family law, property law, and the judicial system", as the 2016 edition did. However the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports neglect to mention a number of issues documented in the 2016 edition: women's knowledge of legal protections or ability to obtain legal counsel to enforce them; situation for divorced women; situation for women who marry without family consent and women's significant discrimination in employment. For evidence that these issues persisted in 2017, 2018 and 2019 as documented by other sources, see the discussion on Omissions from section 6 of the report in section 6.3.1
violence against gender and				Section 6 of 2017 and 2018 <i>Executive Summary</i>

sexual minorities;	-	-	-	continued to mention “Violence and discrimination continued against LGBTI persons” as the 2016 edition did. 2019 <i>Executive Summary</i> mentions . ‘crimes involving violence or threats of violence targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex persons by nonstate actors’ See below
and sectarian violence.	N.B. listed as an ‘additional problem’ below	-	-	See below
Other human rights problems included	Additional problems were	X		
poor prison conditions,	X	X	X	In Section 1c the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports still described that some detention conditions “were harsh and life threatening” and that “prison conditions were often extremely poor” as the 2016 report did.
arbitrary detention,	arbitrary detention;	arbitrary and	arbitrary detention;	
lengthy pretrial detention,	lengthy pretrial detention;	lengthy pretrial detention;	X	Section 1.d. of 2019 edition continued to note, as the previous reports did that “individuals remained in pretrial detention for periods longer than the maximum sentence for the crime with which they were charged”.
a weak criminal justice system	X	X	X	No notable changes to sections 1d and 1e observed in the 2016-2018 reports
lack of judicial independence in the lower courts,	lack of judicial independence in the lower courts;	X	X	Section 1e of the 2018 and 2019 reports continued to describe that “Many lower courts remained corrupt, inefficient, and subject to pressure from wealthy persons and influential religious or political figures” as the 2016 and 2017 reports did
governmental infringement on citizens’ privacy rights.	governmental infringement on citizens’ privacy rights;	arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy;	arbitrary or unlawful government interference with privacy;	
Harassment of journalists continued, with high-profile attacks against journalists and media organizations.	harassment of journalists, and high-profile attacks against journalists and media organizations	censorship, site-blocking, and arbitrary restrictions on journalists’ freedom of movement; severe harassment and intimidation of and high-profile attacks against journalists and media organizations;	the worst forms of restrictions on free expression, the press, and the internet, including violence against journalists, censorship, and site blocking;	

There were government restrictions on freedom of assembly and limits on freedom of movement.	Government restrictions on freedom of assembly, freedom of movement,	government restrictions on freedom of peaceful assembly and association, including overly restrictive nongovernmental organizations (NGO) laws; restrictions on freedom of movement;	substantial government interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, such as overly restrictive nongovernmental organization (NGO) laws; significant restrictions on freedom of movement;	
Government practices and certain laws limited freedom of religion , particularly for religious minorities.	and freedom of religion and	restrictions on religious freedom	severe restrictions of religious freedom;	
Discrimination against religious minorities,	discrimination against religious minorities,	and discrimination against members of religious minority groups;	X	Section 6 of the report continued to document that “Societal violence due to religious intolerance remained a serious problem. There were occasionally reports of mob violence against religious minorities, including Christians, Ahmadiyya Muslims, Hindus, and Shia Muslims.”
and sectarian violence continued.	and sectarian violence continued.	X	X	Section 1g of the 2018 report considered that “Sectarian violence decreased significantly across the country” [consistent with other sources] Section 1g of the 2019 report omitted this point about Sectarian violence despite incidents being documented by other sources. Addressed in section 1.3.3
Corruption within the government and police	Corruption within the government and police;	corruption within the government;	acts of corruption within the bureaucracy;	Section 1d of the 2018 and 2019 reports continued to document “According to civil society sources, police and prison officials frequently used the threat of abuse to extort money from prisoners and their families” as the 2016 and 2017 editions did.
		recruitment and use of child soldiers by nonstate militant groups;	Unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers by nonstate militant groups;	
as well as rape,	lack of criminal investigations or accountability for cases related to rape,	lack of criminal investigations or accountability for cases related to rape,	X	This is despite section 6. Women of the 2019 report continuing to document that “Although rape was frequent, prosecutions are rare” as the 2016, 2017 and 2018 reports did.

domestic violence,	X	X	X	Section 6 of the 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports continue to document that “No specific federal law prohibits domestic violence, which was widespread. Forms of domestic violence reportedly included beating, physical disfigurement, shaving of women’s eyebrows and hair, and—in the most extreme cases—homicide” as the 2016 edition did.
sexual harassment,	sexual harassment,	sexual harassment,	X	Section 6. continued to document that “Although several laws criminalize sexual harassment in the workplace and public sphere, the problem was reportedly widespread” as the previous reports all did.
	violence based on gender, gender identity	and violence based on gender, gender identity	X	See above. Section 6 of 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports all continued to mention “Violence and discrimination continued against LGBTI persons” as the 2016 edition did.
honor crimes,	so-called honor crimes,	so-called honor crimes,	X	Section 6. Women of the 2019 report continuing to document that “Women were victims of various types of societal violence and abuse, including so-called honor killings” as the previous reports all did.
other harmful traditional practices,	and female genital mutilation/cutting.	female genital mutilation/cutting,	X	6. Women/ Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) continuing to document that “According to human rights groups and media reports, many Dawoodi Bohra Muslims practiced various forms of FGM/C. Some Dawoodi Bohras spoke publicly and signed online petitions against the practice. Some other isolated tribes and communities in rural Sindh and Balochistan also reportedly practiced FGM/C” as the 2016, 2017 and 2018 reports all did.
and discrimination against women and girls	X	X	X	Section 6 of 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports continue to mention “Women also faced discrimination in employment, family law, property law, and the judicial system”. However the 2017 2018 and 2019 reports neglect to mention a number of issues documented in the 2016 edition: women’s knowledge of legal protections or ability to obtain legal counsel to enforce them; situation for divorced women; situation for women who marry without family consent and women’s significant discrimination in employment. For evidence that these issues persisted in 2017 2018 and 2019 as documented by other sources, see the discussion on

				Omissions from section 6 of the report in section 6.3.1
remained serious societal problems.	remained problems			
Gender inequality continued.	-	-	-	Issue repeated in the 2016 <i>Executive Summary</i> - see above
Child abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children persisted.	X	X	X	Section 6 of 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports continue to mention "Child abuse was widespread. Employers, who in some cases were relatives, abused young girls and boys working as domestic servants by beating them and forcing them to work long hours. Many such children were trafficking victims" as the 2016 report did.
Child labor remained pervasive.	Child labor [...] persisted.	forced and bonded labor	the use of forced or compulsory child labor.	
Widespread human trafficking, including forced and bonded labor, continued.	Child labor resulting in frequent exposure to violence and human trafficking--including forced and bonded labor--persisted.	and transnational trafficking in persons; and the worst forms of child labor.	trafficking in persons; and the use of forced or compulsory child labor.	
Societal discrimination against national, ethnic, and racial minorities persisted,	X	X	crimes involving violence targeting members of racial and ethnic minorities;	Section 6 of 2017 and 2018 reports continue to mention "Societal violence due to religious intolerance remained a serious problem" as the 2016 report did.
as did discrimination based on caste,	X	X	X	No specific mention of discrimination based on caste in any of the reports. Only that "A large proportion of bonded laborers were low-caste Hindus"
[discrimination based on] sexual orientation, gender identity,	X Now: violence based on gender, gender identity and sexual orientation [...] remained problems. Consensual same-sex sexual conduct is a criminal offense; however, the government rarely	X and violence based on gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation; legal prohibitions of consensual same-sex sexual conduct;	X crimes involving violence or threats of violence targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex persons by nonstate actors;	Section 6 of 2017, 2018 and 2019 reports continue to mention "Violence <i>and discrimination</i> continued against LGBTI persons" as the 2016 report did.

	prosecuted cases.			
[discrimination based on] HIV status.	X	X	X	Section 6 of the 2017 and 2018 reports stated “For all key populations, stigma and discrimination by the general population and by health-care providers in particular remained a significant barrier to treatment access”.
Respect for worker rights was minimal.	X	X	X	Limited changes to Section 7 were observed and the 2017 and 2018 reports continued to state “Enforcement of labor laws remained weak, in large part due to lack of resources and political will” as the 2016 report did.
Lack of government accountability remained a problem, and abuses often went unpunished, fostering a culture of impunity among the perpetrators whether official or unofficial. Authorities seldom punished government officials for human rights violations.	There was a lack of government accountability, and abuses often went unpunished, fostering a culture of impunity among the perpetrators, whether official or unofficial. Authorities seldom punished government officials for human rights abuses.	There was a lack of government accountability, and abuses often went unpunished, fostering a culture of impunity among the perpetrators, whether official or unofficial. Authorities seldom punished government officials for human rights abuses.	There was a lack of government accountability, and abuses often went unpunished, fostering a culture of impunity among perpetrators, whether official or unofficial. Authorities seldom punished government officials for human rights abuses.	
Continuing terrorist violence and human rights abuses by nonstate actors contributed significantly to human rights challenges in the country. The military continued significant campaigns against militant and terrorist groups.	Terrorist violence and human rights abuses by nonstate actors contributed to human rights problems in the country. The military sustained significant campaigns against militant and terrorist groups.	Terrorist violence and human rights abuses by nonstate actors contributed to human rights problems. Military, police, and law enforcement agencies continued to carry out significant campaigns against militant and terrorist groups.	Terrorist violence and human rights abuses by nonstate actors contributed to human rights problems, although to a lesser extent than in previous years, consistent with an overall decline in terrorist activity. Military, police, and law enforcement agencies continued to carry out significant campaigns against militant and terrorist groups.	The changes are commensurate with those observed in section 1.g. of the respective reports, which were not found to be inconsistent with other publicly available sources.
Nevertheless, violence, abuse, and social and religious intolerance by militant organizations and other nonstate	Nevertheless, violence, abuse, and social and religious intolerance by militant organizations and	Nevertheless, violence, abuse, and social and religious intolerance by militant organizations and other nonstate actors, both local and	Nevertheless, violence, abuse, and social and religious intolerance by militant organizations and other	

<p>actors located in the country and from neighboring countries contributed to a culture of lawlessness in some parts of the country, particularly in the provinces of Balochistan, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).</p>	<p>other nonstate actors, both local and foreign, contributed to a culture of lawlessness in some parts of the country, particularly in the provinces of Balochistan, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).</p>	<p>foreign, contributed to a culture of lawlessness.</p>	<p>nonstate actors, both local and foreign, contributed to a culture of lawlessness.</p>	
<p>According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), during the year there were 1,720 fatalities from terrorism, compared with 3,682 fatalities in 2015. Terror-related fatalities have been declining in the country since 2009, when fatalities totaled 11,704.</p>	<p>As of the end of October, terrorism fatalities stood at 1,084, in comparison with 1,803 fatalities in the full year 2016, according to the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), a database compiled by the public-interest advocacy organization Institute for Conflict Management that collects statistics on terrorism and low intensity warfare in South Asia.</p>	<p>As of December 23, terrorism fatalities stood at 686, in comparison with 1,260 total fatalities in 2017, according to the South Asia Terrorism Portal, a database compiled by the public-interest advocacy organization Institute for Conflict Management, which collects statistics on terrorism and low intensity warfare in South Asia.</p>	<p>As of September terrorism fatalities stood at 315, in comparison with 697 total fatalities in 2018, according to the South Asia Terrorism Portal, a database compiled by the public interest advocacy organization Institute for Conflict Management, which collects statistics on terrorism and low intensity warfare in South Asia.</p>	

E. Repository of COI on Pakistan

Non-exhaustive, illustrative country of origin information is presented on the following issues in chronological order.

1. Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person

1.2.1. Improvements in 2017 (compared to 2016)

Mixing of juveniles and adult prison population in 2017

❖ [Justice Project Pakistan, Death Row's Children: Pakistan's Unlawful Executions of Juvenile Offenders, 17 February 2017](#)

[...] A major problem in hampering the course of juvenile justice is the dismal lack of birth registrations in Pakistan. As a result, when juveniles are arrested they lack any documentation proving their age, thus children are kept in prison with adults until a plea of juvenility is raised at the trial stage. This issue is exacerbated by either the lack of awareness among the police about their duty under the JJSO [Juvenile Justice System Ordinance] to conduct age determination or the deliberate registration of juveniles as adults by the police in order to avoid the safeguards afforded to underage suspects in the JJSO. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan; World Organisation Against Torture; Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child \(Author\), published by UN Committee Against Torture, Shadow Report to the Committee against Torture on the Occasion of the Examination of the Initial Report of Pakistan at its 60th Session March 2017](#)

[...] 4. Prison Conditions and legal safeguards against ill-treatment of persons deprived of liberty

[...] a. Overcrowding

[...] Although Section 27 of the Prisons Act 1894 and Rule 231 of the Pakistan Prison Rules 1978 (PPR) requires mandatory separation of convicted prisoners, under-trial detainees, male and female prisoner, and juveniles and adults, this is rarely implemented. The HRCPT has noted that convicts are often imprisoned together with under-trial prisoners and adult female prisoners shared space with juvenile females. [...]

❖ [Dawn, Shackled children, 15 May 2017](#)

[...] Then there are thousands of children in adult prisons, many of them suffering from undiagnosed intellectual disabilities. The number of juvenile detention centres and borstals in the country is abysmally low compared to requirements. [...]

❖ [UN Committee Against Torture, Concluding Observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 1 June 2017](#)

[...] 28. [...] It is further concerned at reports that 70 per cent of the prison population consists of pretrial detainees and that juvenile prisoners are kept together with adults. [...]

Mixing of juveniles and adult prison population in 2018

❖ [CODE, NACTA, ICRC, Addressing Overcrowding in Prisons by Reducing Pre-Conviction Detention in Pakistan, May 2018](#)

[...] Executive Summary

[...] At 66 per cent, the rate of under-trial prisoners (UTPs) in Pakistan's prisons is much higher than the global median average rate of 27 percent. More so, while the overall ratio of women and juveniles in Pakistan's prisons at 1.8 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively, is demonstrably low, the proportion of UTPs among them is much higher at 68 per cent for women and 91 percent for juveniles. [...]

[...] 2. Prisons and Prison Population in Pakistan

2.3.7.2 Juvenile Prisoners in Punjab

In Punjab, 640 out of the total 50,405 prisoners, i.e. around 1.27 percent, were juveniles as of October 2017. All the juvenile prisoners in Punjab were male. Although there are two specialized detention facilities for juvenile prisoners in Punjab- one each in Bahawalpur and Faisalabad, called Borstal Institutions and Juvenile Jails- juvenile prisoners were accommodated in 30 general prisons in the province as well [...].

2.3.8.2 Juvenile Prisoners in Sindh

In Sindh, 228 out of the total 18,998 prisoners in Sindh i.e., around 1.2 percent, were juveniles as of October 1, 2017. All the juvenile prisoners in Sindh were male. Since Sindh has four operational juvenile detention facilities called Youthful Offenders Industrial Schools (Y.O.I.S.) in Hyderabad, Karachi, Larkana, and Sukkur, all juvenile prisoners of the province are accommodated in those specialized prisons for juveniles [...].

2.3.9.2 Juvenile Prisoners in KP

In KP, 267 out of the total 11,330 prisoners, i.e., around 2.36 percent, were juveniles as of October 1, 2017. KP also had one convicted female juvenile prisoners in Central Prison Haripur and three juvenile UTPs in C.P. Haripur. They were all confined in the general female quarters of the respective prisons. Since there are no specialized detention facilities for juvenile prisoners in KP, 16 of the 22 operational prisons of the province as of October 1, 2017, accommodated juvenile prisoners [...].

2.3.10.2 Juvenile Prisoners in Balochistan

In Balochistan, 47 out of the total 2,427 prisoners, i.e. around 1.94 percent, were juveniles as of October 1, 2017. All the juvenile prisoners in Balochistan were male. Since there are no specialised detention facilities for juvenile prisoners in Balochistan, 6 of the 11 general prisons of the province, as of October 1, 2017, accommodated juvenile prisoners [...].

2.3.11.2 Juvenile Prisoners in the Administrative Territory of AJK

There were no juvenile prisoners in any prison in AJK as of October 1, 2017. [...]

2.3.12.2 Juvenile Prisoners in the Administrative Territory of GB

In the administrative territory of GB, 12 out of the total 374 prisoners, i.e. around 3.21 percent, were juveniles as of October 1, 2017. All the juvenile prisoners in GB were male. Since there are no specialized detention facilities for juvenile prisoners in GB, 3 of the 6 general prisons accommodated juvenile prisoners, as of October 1, 2017 [...].

[...] 3.2 Difficulty in Implementing Prisoner Classification and Separation

[...] 3.2.2 Situation in Prisons of Pakistan

[...] 3.2.2.2 Separation according to age

Juveniles are housed with adult prisoners in some jails but in separate barracks, especially in Balochistan and KP, where there are no Borstal Institutions for them.²⁵⁰ This leads to abuse of children by other prisoners and prison staff.²⁵¹ Such conditions have also resulted in sexual abuse of juveniles in prisons, which are often not even properly investigated and the perpetrators go unpunished.²⁵² [...]

In KP, there are no separate prisons for juvenile prisoners but segregated areas within some of the existing prison premises have been assigned for them.²⁵⁴ A borstal institute has been constructed at Bannu (KP) but it is still not operational due to technical reasons and the lengthy rule-making process.²⁵⁵

Specific areas are usually sealed for the security of the juveniles. In the area section off for juvenile offenders, elderly staff is hired to oversee them while regular prison staff is not allowed entry there.²⁵⁶

KP had 16 general prisons accommodating juveniles as of October 1, 2017. In Balochistan, six out of its 11 general prisons were housing juveniles, while there were three out of six in GB. Although there were two specialized detention facilities for juvenile prisoners in Punjab, juveniles were accommodated in 30 other general prisons in the province. In Sindh, juveniles were only kept in juvenile detention centers, and there were no juvenile prisoners in AJK.

In addition to keeping the juvenile detainees in a separate section of the prison in Sindh, there is also a separate entry gate so that they do not have to take even a step through the rest of the prison.²⁵⁷ Four out of the total of 25 prisons in Sindh had been assigned as juvenile detention centres under the name of Youthful Offenders Industrial Schools.²⁵⁸ According to officials, the Youthful Offenders Industrial Schools provide a dorm-like environment to ensure that juvenile offenders feel more like being in a learning facility rather than a prisons. Every young detainees is provided with a bed and every barracks is equipped with a television and a ceiling fan. The juvenile detainees in those facilities also have access to cold water, medical facilities, educational courses, crafts training, as well as vocational training.²⁵⁹ [...]

250 As also noted by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in their report of 2016; See UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Fifth Periodic Report of Pakistan*, 11 July 2016. A similar comment was made by Representative of DIG Prisons Rawalpindi Mr. Amer Fayyaz during Consultations with Criminal Justice Officials regarding Overcrowding in Pakistan's Prisons at NACTA in Islamabad on July 27-28, 2017; As per Rule 4 of Juveniles Justices Systems Rules 2002, there should be Borstal Institutions for Juveniles in every District See also 'No borstal institute for juvenile offenders in Balochistan' *The nation*, November 20, 2016.

251 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Fifth Periodic Report of Pakistan*, 11 July 2016

252 UN Committee against Torture, *Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan*, May 2017 [...]

254 'Lack of Borstals and plight of juvenile offenders' *Dawn* October 16, 2011.

255 'Juvenile Justice Centres' *The Express Tribune*, October 19, 2015.

256 Interview with Special Secretary with Additional Charge of Secretary to Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Mr. Siraj Ahmad in Peshawar on May 22, 2017.

257 Interview with Home Secretary of the Government of Sindh Mr Qazi Shahid Pervez in Karachi on June 6, 2017.

258 Interview with Inspector General (IG) Prisons of the Government of Sindh Mr Nusrat Hussain Mangan in Karachi on June 6, 2017; 2 of these prisons are mentioned in 'Industrial schools established for young offenders', *Dawn*, March 1, 2013.

259 Interview with Inspector General (IG) Prisons of the Government of Sindh Mr Nusrat Hussain Mangan in Karachi on June 6, 2017

❖ [Pakistan Tribune, Jails overcapacity by 22, 000 prisoners, SC told, 31 May 2018](#)

[...] Nearly 80, 000 prisoners are languishing in almost a hundred jails across the country, having a capacity to accommodate only 56,353 inmates, says a report submitted by the Federal Ombudsman before the Supreme Court in a suo motu case regarding the miserable condition of female prisoners. [...] The report also pointed out the absence of separate barracks for hardened criminals, first offenders, juveniles and women; unnecessary detention in petty crimes; lack of free legal aid for prisoners and educational and skills training facilities. It also mentioned that lack of independent jail for every district causes overcrowding and problems related to prisoner's transportation. [...]

❖ [SPARC, 'State of Pakistan's children 2017', undated \(according to press reports, published in July 2018\)](#)

[...] Juvenile Justice

[...] Police treatment

[...] The juveniles are often recorded as "Nojawan-ul-Omar" in the FIR, which indicates that the offender is a young man as opposed to a child. ... Arrested children are kept in lockups with adult prisoners which further exposes the children to violence and abuse from these hardened criminals.

[...] Borstal Institutions

[...] The dearth of separate facilities for children subjects the majority to incarceration with adults usually in separate barracks/cells or rooms from adult prisoners. This provision still renders them vulnerable to exploit and abuse. [...]

❖ [Dawn, Prison Reform, 21 August 2018](#)

[...] There is no segregation between the convicted and undertrials, minor offenders and those with heinous crime records. Shortage of borstals means that juveniles are detained in adult prisons. [...]

❖ [Express Tribune, Juvenile justice challenges, 4 November 2018](#)

[...] Juvenile offenders are maltreated and sexually abused in prisons, because of no proper monitoring of juvenile cells and not establishing separate jails for juveniles. The JJS Act of 2018 says that the government shall establish and maintain observation homes and juvenile rehabilitation centres for reception of juveniles, including separate centres for female juveniles. Not a single observation home and juvenile rehabilitation centre has been established or certified so far. [...]

❖ [The News, Juveniles in jail, 30 December 2018](#)

[...] It is also true that, while the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance of 2002 made it mandatory for juveniles to be held apart from adult criminals and provided opportunity for education and reform, there has been a failure to achieve this. Many young prisoners continue to be held in adult facilities, often

coming into contact with hardened criminals which can only add to the risk that they will fall into a life of crime. [...]

- ❖ [National Commission for Human Rights, Baluchistan Prisons: An Exposé, January 2019](#)
[...] JUVENILE WARDS
[...] It is important to mention that there is no specialized mechanism for monitoring of juvenile cells. Although the juvenile cells are segregated, it still does not fully ensure the safety of juvenile prisoners. Of the jails visited, there was no juvenile prisoners in the Mach jail while the Sibbi jail was housing only two juvenile prisoners at the time of the visit. However, there were a few prisoners who had started their sentence as a juvenile. It is pertinent to mention that there is no Borstal institution in the entire province of Baluchistan. [...]
- ❖ [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 20 February 2019](#)
[...] Children
[...] 3.239 Nevertheless, justice system facilities available to support the Act are limited. According to child rights advocacy groups, Pakistan has no juvenile courts and only two juvenile prison facilities, located in Faisalabad and Bahawalpur. Juvenile prisons are generally not as overcrowded as adult prisons (see Detention and Prison). Children not in the two juvenile prisons are detained within adult prison facilities, and treated as adults (see Detention and Prison). The maximum legal penalty a child can receive is a life sentence; only military courts can sentence a person under 18 years to the death. However, as many as 10 per cent of prisoners on death row are children under the age of 18. [...]
[...] 5.28 [...] Pakistan has limited facilities for juvenile offenders, many of whom are incarcerated with adults (see Children). Sources report sexual violence, especially towards juvenile males, is common in the prison system, and HIV afflicts many prisoners (see Health) [...]
- ❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)
[...] Children
[...] A study conducted by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter of the National Commission on Human Rights found that a number of children under 18 years of age were being excluded from the Juvenile Justice System in the province. The report was based on the findings of visits to courts, prisons, Departments of Prosecution and Probation/Parole, police academies, police stations, bar councils, committees working under the Police Order 2002, child and women shelter homes, and Dispute Resolution Councils.
It recommended that necessary steps must be taken to bring the juvenile justice system in conformity with international and national standards and if a person is not 18 years of age at the time of the commission of the crime, he or she must be treated as a juvenile. [...]

Infrastructure improvements and new policies in existing prisons, along with the construction of new facilities, increased the frequency with which pretrial detainees and convicted prisoners were separated in 2017

- ❖ [Amnesty International: Pakistan: Widespread human rights violations continue: Amnesty International Submission for the UN Universal Periodic Review, 28th Session of the UPR Working Group, November 2017 \[ASA 33/6513/2017\], 10 July 2017](#)
[...] Arbitrary arrest and detention
[...] With those awaiting trial mixed with convicted prisoners, many of the country's jails are overcrowded.
[...]
- ❖ [UN Human Rights Committee, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 23 August 2017](#)
[...] Deprivation of liberty
27. The Committee is concerned by the high level of overcrowding and reportedly inadequate conditions of detention in prison and at the high proportion of persons held on remand, some of whom reportedly

were in pretrial detention for periods longer than the maximum sentence for the crime (arts. 6, 7, 9, 10). [...]

Infrastructure improvements and new policies in existing prisons, along with the construction of new facilities, increased the frequency with which pretrial detainees and convicted prisoners were separated in 2018

❖ [CODE, NACTA, ICRC, Addressing Overcrowding in Prisons by Reducing Pre-Conviction Detention in Pakistan, May 2018](#)

[...] Executive Summary

[...] At 66 per cent, the rate of under-trial prisoners (UTPs) in Pakistan's prisons is much higher than the global median average rate of 27 percent. More so, while the overall ratio of women and juveniles in Pakistan's prisons at 1.8 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively, is demonstrably low, the proportion of UTPs among them is much higher at 68 per cent for women and 91 percent for juveniles. [...]

A major cause of high UTP rate, or pre-conviction detention, is the overuse of arrest and detention in criminal justice policies. The police in Pakistan have a tendency to over-arrest for a variety of reasons ranging from over-implication by the aggrieved parties in the First Information Reports (FIRs) to meeting performance evaluation targets and frivolous litigation. Not only are the police quick to arrest, they are also generally reluctant to use the available legal instruments like bail and release under Section 169 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) in cases of insufficient evidence. The police also contribute to prolonged detention in prisons because of resource constraints that inhibit their ability to produce prisoners and witnesses in courts. These resource shortcomings also affect the timely conclusion of investigation, the submission of final reports (challans) and often lead to procedural issues such as the non-appearance of police witnesses in courts due to quick transfers from one district to another. At times, involuntary irregularities by the police due to lack of sufficient education and training also contributes to undue delays in the process.

The Prosecution Department, which is, inter alia, required to assist the police in timely submission of *challans*, is also grossly under-resourced. As of October 1, 2017, there were 740 vacant positions of prosecutors in the four provinces of Pakistan and the federal capital, against the total 2,254 sanctioned positions amounting to a vacancy rate of 34 percent. Moreover, with the exception of the KP province, the Prosecution Department does not get involved in preparation of a challan with the police immediately after the submission of an FIR. This results in an uncalled-for process of back-and-forth between the police and the prosecution leading to an extension in detention of prisoners. Although section 494 of the CrPC empowers prosecutors to withdraw from prosecution with the consent of the court if the case so warrants, the prosecutor rarely exercises this power.

Limited accessibility to legal counsel is another symptom of resource constraints that often results in UTPs unfairly languishing in prisons. Although the government has established District Legal Empowerment Committees (DLECs) in every district across the country, lack of awareness about them among the general public and procedural hurdles are causing their under-utilization.

There are provisions in Pakistani laws for alternatives to detention in the pre-conviction stage in the form of bail for offenses classified as bailable under the CrPC. In practice, however, bail is granted inconsistently and not as a general rule. Moreover, for the underprivileged detainees, it is difficult to arrange lawyers and, otherwise, to furnish bail bonds even after the grant of bail.

Judicial delays caused by recurrent postponement of trials is another significant cause of prison overcrowding owing to high pre-conviction detention. Trials are frequently postponed because of requests for adjournments either by the prosecution or by the defense counsel, primarily attributed to non-production of witnesses, including police witnesses. Lawyers also resort to using judicial delay as a tactic to weaken the case of the prosecution. Moreover, repeated lawyers' strikes lead to delays in adjudication of cases. In addition to all these problems, the judiciary in Pakistan is also highly under-staffed, which markedly contributes to judicial delays in the criminal justice system. On October 1 2017, more than one in four sanctioned judges' positions were vacant. Overstretching of prison resources is in itself reinforcing prison overcrowding as prisons are increasingly unable to play their corrective and reformative role for the prisoners, if overcrowded.

In view of the problems related to high pre-conviction detention leading to overcrowding in prisons, there is an urgent need for an assessment of prison conditions and judicial visits for granting of bail and other

relief to deserving prisoners in the most overcrowded prisons. There is also a pressing need for introducing screening of every prisoner for the most prevalent communicable diseases at the time of admission through in-house pathology labs in all prisoners. Besides special measures for juvenile UTPs, there is also an urgent need for real-time monitoring of prison population across Pakistan through a web-based monitoring

application that would help in directing help to the most overcrowded prisons as urgently as possible. Children accompanying incarcerated mothers is one of the most neglected subjects of Pakistan's prison population and the government should take immediate measures to devise an institutional mechanism for their care, health, and education. [...]

Introduction

[...] While there are already efforts to complete or construct new prisons,¹⁷ it has been emphasized by many commentators that, "where there are prisons they will be filled" and in the long term a constant expansion of the prison estate may even lead to an increase in imprisonment rates,¹⁸ which in the case of Pakistan is one of the lowest in the world. Thus, in order to come up with a sustainable strategy to combat prison overcrowding, the focus should be shifted to addressing its main causes, a major one being the high preconviction detention. [...]

17 See Nasir Iqbal, "Three new prisons in Punjab being planned, SC Told", *Dawn*, September 2 2017; 'Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pervez Kattak has inaugurated the high security Central Jail at Mardan' *Information and Public Relations Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*, 'CM Sindh Reviews Progress on Construction of ATC at Central Jail Karachi' *Radio Pakistan* August 5, 2017.

18 Handbook on Strategies to Reduce Overcrowding In Prisons, op.cit., p162

[...] 3 Consequences of Overcrowding in Prison

[...] 3.2.2 Situation in Prisons of Pakistan

[...] 3.2.2.4 Separation of under trial and convicted prisoners

[...] the Legal Aid Office²⁷¹ observed that in seven prisons in Sindh, several remand prisoners and convicted prisoners were kept in the same barracks or had easy access to each other. In 10 prisons, "hardened/habitual remand prisoners" were not separated from "other casual remand offenders." The government of Sindh had plans to separate UTPs from convicts, but they are not yet in effect.²⁷²

272 Interview with Home Secretary of the Government of Sindh Mr Qazi Shahid Pervez in Karachi on June 6, 2017.

❖ [Dawn, Prison Reform, 21 August 2018](#)

[...] Two-thirds of those behind bars are undertrials. There are 1.8 million cases pending for want of hearing because of shortage of judges, non-availability of vans or policemen and postponement of cases on flimsy grounds. [...] There is no segregation between the convicted and undertrials, minor offenders and those with heinous crime records. [...]

❖ [National Commission for Human Rights, Baluchistan Prisons: An Exposé, January 2019](#)

[...] I. INTRODUCTION

[...] In prisons, hardened criminals including militants, are kept alongside under-trial prisoners, minors and first-time offenders and in many cases even juveniles.

[...] LIVING CONDITIONS

There were no separate barracks for convicted and under-trial prisoners in both the prisons. There were only 18 under-trial prisoners in Mach Jail out of 649 prisoners whereas Sibbi jail was housing mostly undertrial prisoners, 52 out of 69 prisoners are under-trial prisoners. [...]

1.3.1. Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016)

Politicians killed in attacks in KP and FATA in 2017

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2017, 6 January 2018](#)

[...] Chapter Two Security landscape of Pakistan in 2017

[...] 2.9.1 Terrorist attacks on political leaders

The Taliban militants, including the TTP, Jamaatul Ahrar, and local Taliban groups, as well as other similar groups such as Ansarul Shariah Pakistan and ISIS affiliates/supporters perpetrated 6 terrorist attacks against political leaders and workers. These attacks – reported from Bajaur Agency, Harnai and Mastung districts in Balochistan, Karachi and Lower Dir and Peshawar districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – killed 34 people and injured 45 others. The worst of these attacks was reported from Mastung and targeted the convoy of Senate Deputy Chairman Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, killing 26 people; Maulana Haideri survived the attack. [...]

Out of the total 13 attacks targeting political leaders, 9 took place in Balochistan alone. Two such attacks happened in KP and one attack each was also reported from FATA and Karachi. [...]

❖ [Center for Research and Security Studies, Annual Security Report 2017, February 2018](#)

[...] Fatalities of Political and Religious Party Activists

Province	Fatality	Injury
Sindh	12	3
KP	8	7
Balochistan	6	4
Punjab	4	1
Total	30	15

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians FATA: 2017, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	18-Aug-2017	F.R. D.I. Khan or Frontier Region Dera Ismail Khan/FATA	NS	1	1	0	0
Total				1	1	0	0

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: 2017, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)

Civilian Data : Attacks on Politicians

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:2017

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted

No data currently available

Politicians killed in attacks in KP and FATA in 2018

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, General election 2018: Trends of terrorist and political violence, 27 July 2018](#)

[...] 19 terrorist attacks took place from May 1st to July 25th (the polling day) 2018 –including 4 suicide blasts – which claimed 215 lives and injured 393 others. Seven of these attacks were carried out by Baloch and Sindhi nationalist insurgent group, which were low intensity and caused injuries to 26 people. Nonetheless, all 215 fatalities reported in such attacks resulted from 11 attacks perpetrated by the Pakistani Taliban such as the TTP and ISIS.

Two such attacks were reported from Peshawar including a major one. Reportedly, ANP leader and a candidate for a provincial assembly seat Haroon Bilour was among 21 killed in a suicide blast in a corner party meeting in Yakatoot area of Peshawar; 65 others were injured. Haroon's father Bashir Bilour, a prominent ANP leader, was also killed in a suicide blast in Peshawar in 2012.³ Similarly, in DI Khan district of KP, former provincial minister and PTI candidate for a provincial assembly seat Ikramullah Gandapur was killed along with his driver and a policeman in a suicide blast in Kulachi tehsil.⁴

In Bannu, JUI-F leader and MMA candidate from NA-35 Akram Khan Durrani survived two terror attacks. In one of these attacks, a remote controlled motor cycle-fitted IED blast targeted his convoy killing 5 people.⁵ [...]

3 Daily Jang (Urdu), July 11, 2018, <https://jang.com.pk/news/519095da>; Daily Jang (Urdu), July 12, 2018, <https://e.jang.com.pk/07-12-2018/pindi/pic.asp?picname=52.png>

4 Daily Jang (Urdu), July 23, 2018, <https://e.jang.com.pk/07-23-2018/pindi/pic.asp?picname=517.png>; Dunya (Urdu), July 23, 2018, http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2018-07-23&edition=ISL&id=4056397_93712003

5 Dawn, July 14, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1419972/128-perish-as-savage-attack-on-mastungrally-stuns-nation>; Daily Dunya (Urdu), July 14, 2018, http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2018-07-14&edition=ISL&id=4038734_73415703

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019](#)

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2018

[...] 2.1 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including erstwhile FATA)

Table 1a: Targets Hit by Militants in KP in 2018

<u>Targets</u>	<u>No. of attacks</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Injured</u>
Security forces/law enforcement	62	75	128
Educational institutions	3	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
Govt. officials	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	10
Tribal elders	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Civilians	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>77</u>
Shia community	<u>2</u>	36	41
Sunni community	1	2	0
Political leaders/workers	11	34	108
FC/army/police convoys	1	2	2
NGO/civil society members	1		
Sikh community	1	1	0
Rival sectarian group	1	3	0
Health/polio workers	1	2	0

Pro-govt. tribesmen/peace committee members	6	7	6
Former militants	2	2	0
Member of banned groups	1	1	1
Total	125	196	376

[...] 2.1.3 Attacks on Political Leaders and Workers

In 2018, as many as 11 terrorist attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa targeted political leaders and workers. In all, 34 people were killed and 108 others injured in these attacks that were reported from Peshawar (4 attacks), Bannu (3), and Bajaur, DI Khan, North Waziristan, and Tank districts (one attack each). The TTP was behind most of these attacks. Two of these attacks were suicide blasts.

Some major and high-profile attacks on political leaders in 2018 are listed below.

- July 10: Awami National Party (ANP) leader and a candidate for a provincial assembly seat Haroon Bilour was among 14 killed in a reported suicide blast in a corner party meeting in Yakatoot area of Peshawar; 65 others were injured. Daily Jang reported on July 12 that death toll had reached to 21 as 7 more injured died at hospital. Haroon's father Bashir Bilour, a prominent ANP leader, was also killed in a suicide blast in Peshawar in 2012.³¹
- July 13: A remote controlled motor cycle-fitted IED blast targeted the convoy of JUI-F leader and MMA candidate from NA-35 Akram Khan Durrani in Bannu. Though he survived the attack, 5 people were killed and 30 others injured.³²
- July 22: Former provincial minister and PTI candidate for a provincial assembly seat Ikramullah Gandapur was killed along with his driver in a suicide blast in Kulachi tehsil of DI Khan; One of the injured policemen later died in hospital. Reportedly a suicide bomber blew himself off as soon as Mr Gandapur came out of his house and sat in his car.³³ [...]

31 Daily Jang (Urdu), July 11, 2018, <https://jang.com.pk/news/519095da>; Daily Jang (Urdu), July 12, 2018, <https://e.jang.com.pk/07-12-2018/pindi/pic.asp?picname=52.png>

32 Dawn, July 14, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1419972/128-perish-as-savage-attack-on-mastung-rallystuns-nation>; Daily Dunya (Urdu), July 14, 2018, http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2018-07-14&edition=ISL&id=4038734_73415703

33 Daily Jang (Urdu), July 23, 2018, <https://e.jang.com.pk/07-23-2018/pindi/pic.asp?picname=517.png>; Dunya(Urdu), July 23, 2018, http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2018-07-23&edition=ISL&id=4056397_93712003

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2018

2.9 Violence against Political Leaders and Workers

Although attacks on political leaders and workers have become a regular feature of terrorist violence in Pakistan, frequency of such attacks usually increases before and during election times. That exactly happened during the election year of 2018.

Similarly, supporters and workers of different parties were also seen engaged in incidents of political violence in terms of armed clashes as well as attacks during election campaign and on the polling day. Compared to 13 such attacks in previous year, as many as 24 terrorist attacks in 2018 targeted political leaders and workers including some lethal ones. In all, these attacks claimed the lives of 218 people and injured 394 others. Eight of these attacks

were carried out by Baloch and Sindhi nationalist insurgent group, which were low-intensity attacks and caused injuries to 27 people. Nonetheless, all 218 fatalities reported in such attacks resulted from 16 attacks perpetrated by the Pakistani Taliban such as the TTP as well as Islamic State terrorist group also known as ISIS, or Daesh.

As cited earlier, this reported surge in casualties in attacks targeting political leaders coincided with the holding of general election in Pakistan in July 2018; 14 out of 24 reported attacks against political leaders/workers and election-related targets in 2018 happened in the month of July alone.

Similarly, incidents of political and election-related violence among activists and supporters of different parties also surged significantly, from 4 in 2017 to 22 in 2018. Thus, on the whole, 46 reported incidents of violence in 2018 – including terrorist attacks against political leaders/workers as

well as incidents of political violence cited earlier – claimed the lives of 229 people and injured 449 others.

2.9.1 Terrorist Attacks on Political Leaders

A higher number of casualties in the terrorist attacks targeting political leaders, as cited earlier, was caused by some lethal attacks in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. [...]

Out of the total 24 terrorist attacks targeting political leaders, 10 took place in Balochistan which claimed 184 lives. Eleven such attacks happened in KP and three in Sindh. [...]

2.9.2 Political Violence

Compared to 4 in 2017, as many as 22 incidents of political violence also took place, mostly between May and July 2018. These incidents claimed 11 lives and injured 55 others. [...]

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2018, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	08-Jun-2018	Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NA	1	0	0	0
2	03-Jul-2018	Razmak tehsil/North Waziristan/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NA	1	0	10	0
3	07-Jul-2018	Bannu/Bannu/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NA	1	0	1	0
4	10-Jul-2018	Yakatoot area/Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	TTP	1	1	0	0
5	13-Jul-2018	Nasir Bagh Road/Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	1	0	0
6	22-Jul-2018	Kulachi area/Dera Ismail Khan or D.I. Khan/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	TTP	1	1	0	0
7	25-Jul-2018	Swabi/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NA	1	1	2	0

8	05-Sep-2018	Subhanabad area/Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	1	0	0
Total				8	5	13	0

- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians FATA: 2018, undated \(23 September 2020\)](#)

**Civilian Data : Attacks on Politicians
FATA:2018**

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	17-Mar-2018	Aman Kot area of Khar Tehsil (revenue unit)/Bajaur or Bajur or Bajour/FATA	NS	1	0	0	0
2	03-Jun-2018	Wana Town/South Waziristan Agency/FATA	NA	1	2	0	0
Total				2	2	0	0

- ❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Law and Order

[...] Violence

[...] Violence spiked sharply during the time of the general elections. The PICSS said that 40 percent of the total deaths took place in July. Several candidates were targeted during public gatherings, including a sitting minister. Five separate attacks took place in July alone. On 7 July, an attack on the convoy of Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) candidate Shiren Malik in Bannu [KP province] resulted in injuries to him and six others.

A second fatal attack on 10 July in Peshawar claimed the life of Awami National Party (ANP) leader Haroon Bilour, along with 21 others. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazal (JUI-F) leader Akram Khan Durrani's survived an attack on his convoy on 13 July as it headed back from an election rally in Bannu [KP province], but four others were killed. Hours after, a suicide attack on a rally in Mastung targeted Balochistan Awami Party (BNP) provincial assembly candidate Nawabzada Siraj Raisani. At least 131 people lost their lives along with Raisani. [...]

Ikramullah Gandapur from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was also killed in Dera Ismail Khan [KP province]. [...]

Politicians killed in attacks in KP and FATA in 2019

- ❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020](#)

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2019

[...] 2.1 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa [...]

Meanwhile 25 attacks apparently targeted civilians, another 9 hit pro-government tribesmen or peace committee members, and 5 attacks each targeted political leaders and polio vaccination workers. [...]

2.1.4 Attacks on Political Leaders and Workers

Compared to 11 in 2018, as many as 5 terrorists attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa targeted political leaders and workers, which killed 3 people and injured 5 others. Hizbul Ahrar, Jamaatul Ahrar and TTP were involved in these attacks. In one of these attacks, Sartaj Khan, president of the Awami National Party Peshawar city chapter, was in his vehicle behind the Gulbahar police station, Peshawar, when attackers opened fire, killing him on the spot. He was also a member of the Peshawar District Council. The ANP leaders termed it a targeted killing.³¹

Separately in Bajaur, militants shot dead Mian Gul Jan, senior vice-president of Pakistan People Party (PPP), Bajaur chapter.³²

31Dawn, June 30, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1491154/anp-leader-gunned-down-in-peshawar>

32Dawn, October 18, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1511480/ppp-leader-shot-dead-in-bajaur>

- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

Civilian Data : Attacks on Politicians

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:2019

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	29-Jun-2019	Gulbahar area/Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	1	0	0
2	28-Oct-2019	Badan area of Mamond tehsil/Bajaur/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	0	1	0
3	11-Dec-2019	Kanju area of Mingora town/Swat/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	1	0	0
Total				3	2	1	0

Concerns with observance of due process in death penalty cases and execution of minors in 2017

- ❖ [Justice Project Pakistan, Counting Executions, 6 July 2017](#)

[...] In December 2014, Pakistan lifted a de facto moratorium on the death penalty. From then until May 2017, Pakistan has executed 465 people at an average of 3.5 executions per week. [...]

Increases in executions have occurred in the weeks following terrorist attacks in Punjab. [...]

The more overcrowding a jail experiences, the more frequent the executions. [...]

❖ [Death Penalty Worldwide \(Cornell Law School\), Death Penalty Database, undated \(accessed 2 August 2019\)](#)

[...] Executions in 2017

The government does not typically provide official figures. According to figures gathered by the organization Justice Project Pakistan, using a three-step process to verify the accuracy of its execution count, there were at least 65 executions in 2017. [8]

[8] Justice Project Pakistan, Email to DPW, Dec. 13, 2017.

❖ [Justice Project Pakistan, Death Penalty Database, undated \(accessed 2 August 2019\)](#)

[...] Number of death sentences 2017: 253

[...] Number of executions 2017: 66 [...]

❖ [Child Rights International Network \(CRIN\), Inhuman sentencing of children in Pakistan: Briefing for the 28th Session of the Universal Periodic Review in October 2017, March 2017](#)

[...] In Pakistan, people may lawfully be sentenced to corporal punishment, life imprisonment and the death penalty for offences committed while under the age of 18. Law reform has gone some way to eliminating corporal punishment, but since Pakistan lifted its unofficial moratorium in relation to terrorism cases in December 2014¹ and all capital cases in March 2015², it has resumed carrying out the death penalty for child offenders.

[...] The Juvenile Justice System Ordinance states that “[n]otwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in any law for the time being in force, no child shall be (a) awarded punishment of death...”⁷ The prohibition applies to persons under 18 at the time of commission of an offence.⁸ However, the provisions of the JJSO are “in addition to and not in derogation of, any other law for the time in force”,⁹ and children are liable to be sentenced to death under other legislation.

Child offenders may be tried under the Anti-Terrorism Act and the Control of Narcotic Substances Act, both of which provide for the death penalty.¹⁰ In August 2009, the Supreme Court reportedly suspended an order passed by the Lahore High Court under which death sentences would not be imposed on women and juveniles in narcotic cases, no further information on the case,¹¹ but we have no further information on the case.

Child offenders may be sentenced to death for *hadd* offences. The Offence of Zina (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance punishes *zina* (unlawful sexual intercourse) with stoning to death for males and females.¹² The provision which stated that the Ordinance overrides all other laws was repealed by the Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act 2006,¹³ but on 21 December 2010, the Federal Shariat Court declared this repeal unconstitutional.¹⁴ The Offences Against Property (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance 1979 was not amended in 2006, and explicitly overrides other laws.¹⁵ The Act provides for capital punishment for the offence of *haraabah* (threatening or hurting another person to obtain property), which results in murder.¹⁶ The Penal Code prohibits the sentence of death as *qisa* (retribution) for minors.¹⁷

The Frontier Crimes Regulation in force in FATA does not provide for capital punishment.

[...] Inhuman sentencing in practice

At least six people have been executed for offences committed while they were children since Pakistan lifted its official moratorium in December 2014.³⁰ [...] [pp. 1-3]

1 Al Jazeera, “Pakistan lifts death penalty moratorium”, 17 December 2014. Available at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/12/pakistan-lifts-death-penalty-moratorium-2014121710537499387.html>

2 Dawn, “Death penalty moratorium lifted completely in Pakistan: Officials” 10 March 2015. Available at: <http://www.dawn.com/news/1168652>.

[...] 7 Juvenile Justice System Ordinance, Section 12(a).

8 Juvenile Justice System Ordinance, Section 2(b).

9 Juvenile Justice System Ordinance, Section 14.

10 Anti Terrorism Act, Section 7(1)(a) and the Control of Narcotic Substances Act, 9(c).

11 Amnesty International, Amnesty International Report 2010: The state of the world’s human rights, 2010. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/world/amnesty-international-report-2010-state-worlds-human-rights>

12 The Offence of Zina (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance 1979, Section 5(2). Available at: http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/zia_po_1979/ord7_1979.html.

13 The Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act 2006, Section 1(1). Available at: <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/2006/wpb.html>.

14 Dawn, "Shariat Court knocks out 3 sections of women's protection act" 23 December 2010. Available at: <http://www.dawn.com/news/592999/shariat-court-knocks-out-3-sections-of-women-s-protection-act>

15 The Offences Against Property (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance 1979, Section 3. Available at: <http://punjabpolice.gov.pk/system/files/offences-against-property-ordinance-1979.pdf>.

16 The Offences Against Property (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance 1979, Section 17(4). 17 The Penal Code, Section 306.

[...] 30 Justice Project Pakistan, Death Row's Children: Pakistan's Unlawful Executions of Juvenile Offenders, February 2017. Available at: <http://www.jpp.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/JPP-Final-Edited.pdf>.

❖ [UN Committee Against Torture, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 1 June 2017](#)

[...] Juvenile justice

40. The Committee is concerned about the execution of individuals who were reportedly minors at the time of the offence, in breach of international and domestic prohibitions. While noting that minors have the possibility of challenging their age determination in court, the Committee is concerned about the reported lack of an adequate mechanism to determine the age of juvenile offenders that is in line with due process and fair trial standards.

41. The State party should ensure the existence of effective mechanisms for appealing age determination decisions in a timely manner. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to ensure that any minor accused of a crime receives independent and effective legal counsel. [...]

❖ [The Tribune, Rights body urges authorities to prevent juvenile executions, 4 July 2017](#)

[...] The National Commission on Human Rights (NCHR) has called for authorities to abstain from issuing execution warrants against Muhammad Iqbal – a juvenile offender convicted in a murder case.

Earlier, the authorities concerned had forwarded requests to issue a 'black warrant' under Iqbal's name to the Lahore High Court (LHC) on June 30.

Iqbal was just a 17-year-old when he was convicted of a fatal shooting in Mandi Bahauddin, Punjab in 1999. The prosecution requested an ossification test, the results of which confirmed that he was a juvenile. This was recognised by a trial court, and the judgement stated: "The ages of the accused ... at the time of the occurrence appears to be less than 18 years."

According to the statement, Iqbal's death sentence was upheld by the LHC on March 20, 2002 and subsequently his appeal was also dismissed by the Supreme Court on September 11 of the same year. Both the courts realised that he was a juvenile at the time of the crime, which made Iqbal's execution an even more brazen violation of Pakistan's domestic and international legal commitments.

A complaint has been launched on Iqbal's behalf by the Justice Project Pakistan on June 23 before the NCHR, which held an urgent inquiry into the matter on Tuesday. Officials from the Home Department and the Prison Department were present as well, and a Letter of Proceedings has been issued to the Home Department secretary, the registrar of Lahore High Court and the Anti-Terrorism Court, Gujranwala.

The commission has expressed serious concerns over the denial of appropriate relief to which Iqbal was entitled to under the JJSO [Juvenile Justice System Ordinance] and the Presidential Notification. They also noted that the age of the petitioner was not given due consideration by the trial court on account of which right to commutation of his death sentence remains unresolved. As a result, the execution of Iqbal under these circumstances would result in violations of human rights.

The NCHR has advised that until a proper inquiry is held by the government, the authorities must abstain from issuing warrants under Iqbal's name, passing the warning that hanging him would be a grim violation of Pakistan's own existing laws.

Iqbal's trial was conducted two years before the JJSO was passed in 2000, which prohibits the execution of juveniles. After Pakistan ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, the President of Pakistan issued Notification No.F.8/41/2001-PTNS in 2001, granting remission to those juvenile offenders whose death sentences had been confirmed prior to the enactment of the JJSO.

Iqbal was listed as one of the prisoners that would benefit from this notification. Despite this, his mercy petition was rejected altogether in 2016, and he has been languishing on death for more than half of his life.

As Pakistan prepares to appear before the Human Rights Committee, the monitoring body of the ICCPR on July 11, the issuance of execution warrants for a juvenile offender, will have detrimental consequences for the country's image and progress. [...]

❖ [Amnesty International, Pakistan: Widespread Human Rights Violations Continue: Amnesty International Submission For The UN Universal Periodic Review, 28th Session Of The UPR Working Group, November 2017, 10 July 2017](#)

[...] In January 2015, Parliament authorized the establishment of military courts for two years to try civilians accused of "terrorism motivated by religion or sectarianism".¹⁹ These military courts imposed the death penalty on 161 individuals following trials held in secret, in violation of international standards for a fair trial.²⁰ Among other concerns, the military courts were run by military officers subordinate to the military chain of command - and who had no formal legal training - in breach of the UN Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary.²¹ The charges against the defendants were not made public and those convicted did not have the right to appeal in civilian courts. On 22 March 2017, Parliament approved a new constitutional amendment bill to extend the tenure of the military courts for another two years.²² Amnesty International has urged Pakistan's lawmakers to reverse the decision to reinstate the military courts.²³

Civilian courts have used the death penalty in contravention of international law, including by imposing the death penalty on those with mental disabilities, or those who were below 18 years of age when the crime was committed.²⁴ [...] [pp. 6-7]

19 See Section 2, Pakistan Army (Amendment) Act, 2015.

20 International Commission of Jurists, "Details of civilians convicted by military courts (as of 6 January 2017)". Available:

<https://www.ici.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Pakistan-Updated-List-of-convicted-Advocacy-2017-ENG.pdf>

21 Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary, adopted by the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders held at Milan from 26 August to 6 September 1985 and endorsed by General Assembly resolutions 40/32 of 29 November 1985 and 40/146 of 13 December 1985. See, in particular, Principle 10. Available at:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/IndependenceJudiciary.aspx>

22 See the 28th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2017 and the Pakistan Army (Amendment) Act, 2017. Available:

http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1489140819_310.pdf

http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1489140981_151.pdf

23 Amnesty International, "Pakistan is surrendering the judicial system to the military", 22 March 2017. Available:

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/pakistan-surrendering-judicial-system-military>

24 Justice Project Pakistan, Death Row's Children: Pakistan's Unlawful Executions of Juvenile Offenders. February 2017. See also, Justice Project Pakistan/Yale Law School, A Most Serious Crime" Pakistan's Unlawful Use of the Death Penalty. September 2016.

❖ [UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 23 August 2017](#)

[...] Death penalty

17. The Committee notes with concern that the State party lifted its moratorium on the death penalty in December 2014 and that, since then, it has been one of the States with the highest rates of executions. It is particularly concerned that the death penalty is applied to crimes other than the "most serious crimes" within the meaning of article 6 (2) of the Covenant, such as drug trafficking and blasphemy; that juveniles and persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities are reportedly sentenced to death and executed; that a policy of blanket refusal of clemency applications is allegedly in place and no clemency applications have been granted; and that executions are allegedly carried out in a manner that constitutes torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Pakistan: Election to UN Rights Body Spotlights Failings, 18 October 2017](#)

[...] Courts have also imposed the death penalty, in violation of international law, on people with mental disabilities, individuals who were below 18 years of age when the crime was committed, and those whose convictions were based on "confessions" extracted through torture or other ill-treatment.

[...] Military Courts

Since January 2015, Pakistan's military courts have convicted at least 305 people, out of which 169 have been sentenced to death. Proceedings before Pakistani military courts fall short of national and

international standards on fair trial. Judges are part of the executive branch of the State and continue to be subjected to military command; the right to appeal to civilian courts is not available; the right to a public hearing is not guaranteed; the right to a duly reasoned, written judgment – including the essential findings, evidence, and legal reasoning – is denied; the procedures of military courts, the selection of cases to be referred to them, the location and timing of trial, and details about the alleged offences are kept secret; the right to counsel of choice is denied; and a very high number of convictions are based on “confessions” without adequate safeguards against torture and other ill treatment.

Pakistan should repeal or amend relevant laws in order to ensure that only civilian courts may try civilians, including for terrorism-related offences, and to ensure that military courts only have jurisdiction over military personnel for military offences. [...]

❖ [OMCT \(World Organisation Against Torture\), JPP \(Justice Project Pakistan\), WCADP \(World Coalition Against the Death Penalty\) and Reprieve, Joint Statement: PAKISTAN, 28th Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Human Rights Council, November 2017](#)

[...] (II) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In the four years since the second Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Pakistan in 2012, there has been a fundamental shift in the landscape on the use of the death penalty. On December 17, 2014, the Government of Pakistan resumed executions after a seven-year moratorium. Whilst originally the moratorium was lifted only for terrorism cases, in March 2015 the Government of Pakistan, without any public justification, extended the resumption of executions to cover all 31 offences carrying the death penalty. Since then nearly 432 prisoners have been executed, including juvenile offenders, persons with psycho- social disabilities, and countless others who did not receive a fair trial in line with international standards and had credible claims of innocence.

[...] 5. Pakistan’s imposition of the death penalty is, at its core, arbitrary. The death penalty is not limited to the most serious crimes, as required by international law, but instead is imposed for a wide range of offences including common place offences, such as kidnapping and drug-trafficking. Moreover, Pakistan’s justice system is ridden with deficiencies and abuses of authority. Police routinely coerce defendants into confessing, often by torture, and courts admit and rely upon such evidence. Poor defendants must rely on attorneys who typically provide only cursory and ineffective representation.

6. Once sentenced, defendants lack effective recourse to post-conviction relief, even in the face of new exonerating evidence. Finally, the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997 offers even fewer safeguards than the ordinary criminal justice system and has the effect of fast-tracking convictions. [p. 3]

[...] (VI) ARTICLE 6(5) OF THE ICCPR - EXECUTION OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS

21. Pakistan has put in place legislation, the Juvenile Justice Systems Ordinance 2000 (‘JJSO’), which prohibits the sentencing to death of a juvenile offender. However, since the moratorium was lifted in December 2014, Pakistan has knowingly executed at least 6 prisoners, where there was evidence to suggest that they may have been under 18 at the time of allegedly committing the offence.^{xvi}

22. With less than 34% of children under the age of 5 being registered and rates going to less than 1% in Baluchistan and Federally Administered Tribal Areas, lack of birth registration remains a major obstacle to juvenile justice.^{xvii} Consequently, when an offender is arrested they lack documentation that can substantiate their age, which results in the juvenile being treated as an adult. Even the police officers who first encounters the juvenile offender fail to adequately consider an individual’s age or deliberately register juveniles as adults to avoid the safeguards afforded to underage suspects by the JJSO.^{xviii} In the absence of any protocols for the determination of age, there is no mandatory requirement nor prescribed guidelines for the police to investigate the age of the accused at the time of the arrest. Therefore, often the police record the age of the accused on the basis of a cursory visual

assessment. In 2015 the Supreme Court of Pakistan commented that this practice is unreliable.^{xix} However, in the absence of age determining protocols, the courts continue to rely on such visual assessment.^{xx}

In the case of Ansar Iqbal, both Mr. Iqbal and his co-accused, Ghulam Shabbir, raised the issue of juvenility at trial. Mr. Iqbal offered a school leaving record while Mr. Shabbir presented a Form-B National Registration document. The police had recorded based on a visual assessment, Mr. Iqbal’s age to be 22/23 and Mr. Shabbir’s age as 16/17 years old.

24. The Court dismissed Mr. Iqbal’s school certificate on the grounds that it was inadmissible, because it was not an original document. The Court accepted the police assessment and held Mr. Iqbal to be an adult for trial. Similarly, Mr. Shabbir’s Form-B was dismissed as fake, however since the police had recorded his

age as 16/17 years the court accepted his juvenility claim irrespective of the documentation. Ansar Iqbal was executed on 29.09.2015.

25. There are several cases in which children are sentenced to death because their counsel fails to raise the plea of their juvenility at trial, on account of poor communication and/or negligence, despite the fact that raising the plea could have saved such children from the gallows.^{xxi} This is additional problematic since courts in Pakistan have ruled in several cases that a plea of juvenility at the time of investigation and trial and that a delayed claim “must be visited with an adverse inference against [the accused].”^{xxii} As a result, courts in Pakistan refuse to admit evidence of juvenility if raised at the appellate stages or during post-conviction reviews thereby leading to wrongful death sentences and executions of juvenile offenders.

26. In the event that a plea of juvenility is raised during legal proceedings, Courts consistently posit the burden of proof on the accused, which is virtually impossible to satisfy given the dismal rate of birth registration. Despite jurisprudence by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) mandating that the child be given every benefit of doubt in the event of uncertainty of age, no such benefit is extended by courts.^{xxiii} Even where government documents are presented they are often disbelieved by courts. A study by JPP looked at how courts considered four types of evidence (statement of the accused, medical evidence, birth certificate/Form-B, and school leaving certificate) in 140 cases between 2000-2016 wherein a plea of juvenility was decided. The research showed that there is no consistent precedent followed by courts in determining age and they inevitably rely upon whichever evidence that favours a verdict of their choice.^{xxiv}

27. The JJSO was not enacted retroactively. Therefore, in 2001, a Presidential Notification was issued commuting the death sentences for all juvenile offenders issued prior to 2000.^{xxv} Under the Notification, all juvenile offenders sentenced to death before 13.12.2001 were to be granted special remission which was to accrue on the basis of an age determination inquiry undertaken by the Sessions Court. Following the Notification the Provincial Government of Punjab issued a letter to the Registrar of the High Court directing the Home Department to forward the pleas of all prisoners claiming the benefit of the Notification to Sessions Court for an age determination.^{xxvi} Attached to the letter was a list of names of juvenile offenders who were to be granted an age determination assessment. However, requests of prisoners and their families, including those whose names were included in the list, have repeatedly been denied by either the Home Department or by the Sessions Court on the basis that such plea was not raised at the trial stage. Even in those rare cases where such an age determination was carried out it was in a cursory manner that fell short of due process.

28. Muhammad Anwar was arrested in 1993 when he was 17 years old, and in 1998 was sentenced to death. After the JJSO came into force in 2000, Mr. Anwar’s family made numerous comprehensive attempts, for over a decade and a half, to adduce evidence as to Mr. Anwar’s juvenility involving both the Home Secretary and several different courts. However, the evidence was either rejected or ignored at each attempt. Mr. Anwar remains on death row. [pp. 5-7]

[...] (IX) BREACH OF THE RIGHT TO FAIR TRIAL

41. Denial of the right to a fair trial is widespread in Pakistan, resulting in an unacceptably high rate of false conviction. The Ansar Burney Trust has reported that over 60% of individuals on Pakistan’s death row may be innocent.^{xxvii} A lack of coordination and inefficiencies of the criminal justice system combined with violations of due process often lead to gross

miscarriages of justice. It is, therefore, of little surprise that in October 2016 when the Supreme Court of Pakistan acquitted two brothers on the basis of contradictory evidence, it was discovered that both had been executed a year before despite their right to appeals remaining.^{xxviii}

42. Many death penalty cases are heard by the anti-terrorism courts (ATC) under the Anti- Terrorism Act, 1997 (ATA). These courts explicitly impose multiple curtailments on a defendant’s right to a fair trial, many of which are a departure from standard judicial procedure. For example S. 21-H, ATA allows for the admissibility of statements given in police custody therefore creating a heightened risk of ‘confessions’ extracted through torture. Additionally, given the broad and vague definition of terrorism under the ATA, a significant number of cases (around 88%) tried at the ATCs are concerned with ordinary crimes.^{xxviii}

43. An investigating officer’s report plays a central role in criminal trials, the prosecution relies heavily on this report thereby shifting the burden on the accused to prove his or her innocence. Furthermore, Pakistani jurisprudence recognises that false testimony from a witness does not necessarily mean all evidence of that witness will be excluded; the “real task of a judge” is to extract the truth from the wider evidence, even in the face of “greater and clear falsehood”.^{xxix}

44. A defendant is not given “adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defense” or adequate opportunity “to communicate with counsel of his own choosing.” The case of Aftab Bahadur, mentioned above in paragraph 39, is an illustrative example of Pakistan’s violation of this right. In this case Mr. Bahadur was convicted in 1993 just 44 days after his arrest under the much-maligned Speedy Trials Act. However, despite the abrogation of the Act in 1994, Bahadur was executed in 2015.

45. In its Initial Report to the Human Rights Committee in 2015 regarding its compliance with the ICCPR, the Government of Pakistan indicated that it was possible for criminal cases to be re-opened pursuant to Article 199 and 187 of the Constitution, coupled with the court’s inherent power to recall an order mistakenly passed.^{xi} However in practice the Pakistan’s superior courts have consistently refused to use these powers to reconsider previous convictions. In the cases of Shafqat Hussain and Faisal Mahmood, the courts refused to hear evidence as the issue of juvenility was raised too late. Such cases highlight that there remains a clear gulf between the interpretation of these powers suggested by the Government of Pakistan and that adopted by the courts. [...] [pp.8-10]

xvi JPP, ‘Death Row’s Children Pakistan’s Unlawful Executions of Juvenile Offenders’ (February 2017) (hereinafter ‘Death Row’s Children’) <http://www.jpp.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/JPP-Final-Edited.pdf> pg 5

xvii UNICEF, Progress Report 2013-2015: Results for Children in Pakistan: Birth Registration (July 2015) https://www.unicef.org/pakistan/Birthregistration_LR.pdf pg 7-8

xviii Death Row’s Children, supra at 16, pg 6

xix Muhammad Raheel v The State PLD 2015 SC 145

xx Death Row’s Children, supra note 16 at p. 16 - 21

xxi Society for the Protection of Children Rights, Juvenile Justice <http://www.sparc.pk.org/sopc2012/chapter5.pdf>

xxii Supreme Court of Pakistan, Muhammad Raheel v. The State, (PLD 2015 SC 145)

xxiii UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General comment No 6 (2005): Treatment of Unaccompanied and Separated Children Outside their Country of Origin (1 September 2005) (CRC/GC/2005/6), para 31

xxiv Death Row’s Children, supra 16, at p. 25

xxv President of Pakistan, Notification No. F.8/41/2001-Ptns, 13.12.2001

xxvi Government of the Punjab, Home Department, Grant of Special Remission Under Article 45 of the Constitution to Condemned Prisoners, (Aug 19,2003)

[...] xxxvi Ansar Burney Trust, Ansar Burney again urged Pakistan’s President and PM to commute death sentences into life <http://ansarburney.org/ansar-burney-again-urged-pakistans-president-and-pm-to-commute-death-sentences-into-life/>

xxxvii Irfan ul Haq, ‘Acquittal Verdict’ Executed Brothers Kin in Distress’. DAWN (Oct. 2016). Available at <https://www.dawn.com/news/1291711>

xxxviii JPP and Reprieve, Terror on Death Row: The Abuse and Overuse of Pakistan’s Anti-Terror Legislation (December 2014)

xxxix Ghulam Muhammad and others v State PLD 1951 Lah 66, 73

xl Human Rights Committee, Initial Report of Pakistan, 19 October 2015, para 137

❖ [Justice Project Pakistan, Trial And Terror: The Overreach Of Pakistan’s Anti Terrorism Act, 14 November 2017](#)

[...] One of the ATA’s [Anti-Terrorism Act] most problematic aspects is that juvenile offenders charged under the ATA are deprived of the special procedural safeguards accorded to them under Pakistan’s special regime for trying juvenile offenders (the Juvenile Justice Systems Ordinance, 2000) and guaranteed for all juvenile offenders under international law. ATCs continue sentencing juvenile offenders to death despite the existence of credible evidence in favour of their juvenility.

This was evidenced in the case of Muhammad Iqbal, who was sentenced to death by an ATC in Gujranwala on 5 July, 1999 under the provisions of the ATA. His death sentence was upheld by a Division Bench of the Lahore High Court on 20 March, 2002 and a subsequent appeal was dismissed by the Supreme Court on 11 September, 2002, despite his birth certificate confirming that he had been a juvenile at the time of committing the offence. This had been confirmed by the results of an ossification test, upheld by the trial court.

Following the 2001 Notification, the Government of Punjab issued a letter to the Registrar of the Lahore High Court setting out the eligibility criterion for the special remission for juveniles under the Notification on 18 August, 2003¹¹. Stating that all juvenile offenders were automatically entitled to remission if their death sentences were confirmed by the High Court before 17 December, 2001, the letter included a list of juveniles whose claims the Home Department was directed to forward to “the concerned District and Sessions Judge/Juvenile Court through the concerned Superintendent Jail.”

Despite the existence of the Notification and the letter by the Government of Punjab, juveniles sentenced prior to the enactment of the JJSO continue to be denied its protections¹². Requests by prisoners and/or family members for an inquiry regarding their juvenility under the Presidential Notification, including those identified by the provincial government, continue to be denied by the provincial Home Departments and the Courts.

[...] (iv) EXTRAORDINARY POLICE POWERS AND SUSPENSION OF FUNDAMENTAL SAFEGUARDS

The Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 provides law-enforcement agencies, including police, with enhanced powers and extended discretion that pose a direct threat to long-standing rights to privacy, security, due process, fair trial and protection from torture enshrined under the Constitution of Pakistan and international human rights law under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the UN Convention Against Torture. In a country where the police faces widespread allegations regarding arbitrary and discriminatory abuse of power, the existence of the counter-terrorism regime under the ATA has led to grave violations of key safeguards.

A vague and broad definition of terrorism additionally allows the police to use its exceptional powers in relation to all offences rather than just terrorism crimes. As a result, accused charged under the ATA essentially waive key procedural safeguards to which they are otherwise entitled, regardless of the nature of their crimes. These include being subject to:

(i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v) (vi)

enhanced powers with respect to the collection of evidence (S. 19A); use of necessary force by police (Section 5(1));

the arrest of suspects without warrant (S. 5(2)(ii));

recording of evidence in police custody (S. 21-H);

police remand of 30 days at a time (S. 21-E);

preventive detention of up to 3 months without review (Section 6).

Additionally, the ATA grants indemnity to police with respect to all acts done or intended to be done in good faith. Such indemnity essentially provides impunity to police for acts of brutality, custodial torture, false encounters, and unlawful detention.⁵⁵ Interviews with legal practitioners revealed that the discretion to exercise enhanced powers of arrest, investigation and detention is critical to the determination of the police regarding whether to charge an accused under the ATA or the PPC.⁵⁶ [...]

11 Government of the Punjab, Home Department, Grant of Special Remission Under Article 45 of the Constitution to Condemned Prisoners, (Aug 19, 2003)

12 See Death Row's Children, 19.

[...] 55 See Oves Anwar, Human Right and the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 in HUMAN RIGHTS AND PAKISTAN'S COUNTER-TERRORISM LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE (Research Society of International Law; January 2017), 64. Available at <http://rsilpak.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/2.-2017-Human-Rights-and-Pakistan%E2%80%99s-Counter-Terrorism-Legislative-Landscape-Final.pdf>

56 See Interview with Syed Abbas Haider. 20 March 2017. Available on file 57 Committee Against Torture. Concluding Observation on the Initial Report of Pakistan. Para 12, 60th Session, 4 May 2017 U.N. Doc.CAT/C/PAK/CO/1

Concerns with observance of due process in death penalty cases and execution of minors in 2018

❖ [Justice Project Pakistan, No Mercy: A Report on Clemency for Death Row Prisoners in Pakistan, 11 April 2018](#)

[...] Background

[...] In the three years since the moratorium was lifted, Pakistan has executed more than 487 individuals, bringing the country's annual rate of executions to the highest point in its history and making it among the five most prolific executioners in the world.³ An average of 3.5 executions have been carried out every week since the death penalty was reinstated, with the highest number of executions taking place in the province of Punjab.⁴ Although the implicit justification for resuming executions was to deter terrorism, most of those executed were convicted of non-terrorism-related crimes.⁵

Despite these alarming statistics, the President of Pakistan has pursued a blanket policy of refusing clemency to prisoners on death row and has made it effective impossible for prisoners on death row to obtain pardons or commutations of death sentences. Although the President possesses the constitutional authority to pardon death row defendants by accepted mercy petitions under Article 45 of the Constitution, in practice such petitions have been consistently denied since the moratorium was lifted in

December 2014. As highlighted in this report, the President has consistently rejected mercy petitions submitted by prisoners including those who have reported severe humanitarian abuses and violations. [...]

3 Amnesty International, The Death Penalty in 2016: Facts and figures (April 2017), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/04/death-penalty-2016-facts-and-figures/>

4 Justice Project Pakistan, Counting Executions: Data Analysis by Justice Project Pakistan (June 2016), <http://www.jpp.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/2017.07.04-Death-Penalty-Fact-Sheet1.pdf>

5 Id.

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Pakistan Should Remove People with Mental Disabilities From Death Row, 29 November 2018](#)

[...] This week, a medical board confirmed that Saleem Ahmad, a prisoner on death row for 14 years, has chronic schizophrenia.

Ahmad, 50, had been scheduled to be executed in November 2017, but a court suspended his execution and ordered a medical board to assess his mental health. Ahmad – who was convicted of murder – has been in prison for more than 17 years.

This is a scathing indictment of Pakistan’s criminal justice system and should be used as an opportunity for reform. While the death penalty is inherently cruel and should be abolished, executing an individual with psychosocial disabilities violates Pakistan’s international legal obligations. The United Nations Human Rights Committee and UN special experts have determined that the execution of a person with a psychosocial disability violates the right to be free from cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment.

Ahmad is one of many prisoners with psychosocial disabilities on death row. In April, the Supreme Court of Pakistan reviewed the death sentences of Kaniz Fatima and Imdad Ali, death row convicts with psychosocial disabilities. During the proceedings, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court remarked: “Neither reason nor sensibility allow me to believe that we can execute a mentally ill or disabled person.” Kaniz Fatima and Imdad Ali remain on death row.

Kaniz Fatima is one of the few women on death row in Pakistan. According to her lawyers, she has not spoken for 12 years and is unable to eat, drink, or take care of herself without assistance. She has been in prison for 29 years.

She is among more than 8,000 prisoners on death row in Pakistan – one of the world’s largest populations of prisoners facing executions. Pakistani law mandates capital punishment for 28 offenses, including murder, rape, treason, and blasphemy.

The arbitrariness, unfairness, and high risk of error in capital prosecutions in Pakistan has been documented extensively. The death penalty is inherently cruel – but even more so for those who may not recognize their crimes. It good to see Pakistani authorities beginning to realize executing people with psychosocial disabilities is an affront to human decency and serves no criminal justice purpose. Pakistan should strengthen its justice system and work towards a complete moratorium on death sentences, rather than sending people like Saleem Ahmad to the gallows. [...]

❖ [Justice Project Pakistan, Death Penalty Database, undated \(accessed 2 August 2019\)](#)

[...] Number of death sentences 2018: 250

[...] Number of executions 2018: 15 [...]

❖ [DFAT, Country Information Report Pakistan, 20 February 2019](#)

[...] . However, as many as 10 per cent of prisoners on death row are children under the age of 18.

Amnesty International has reported that multiple minors have been charged with blasphemy (see Blasphemy). These include Salamat Masih (11 years old) of Gujranwala, Rimsha Masih (13) of Islamabad, Nabil Chohan (16) of Kasur, Ryan Stenton (16) of Karachi and Aqib Saleem (15), an Ahmadi of Gujranwala. Amnesty claims Nabil Chohan has been in jail for two years without access to a lawyer of his choice. DFAT is aware of cases in Pakistan of minors being unable to prove their status due to absent documentation (missing birth certificates), which has resulted in some cases in their being tried as adults. [p. 56]

[...] Pakistan has executed people who were under 18 at the time their crime was committed (see Children), and people suffering from mental illness.

[...] Military courts, which in 2017 processed increased numbers of capital cases not related to terrorism, are not bound by the same due process requirements as civilian courts. [...] [p. 60]

with no explanation for why they were at the scene of the crime (47% of all acquittals) and witnesses whose testimony contradicted the physical evidence (44% of all acquittals).

- In 74% of the acquittals, the Supreme Court found that the trial court had imposed a death sentence without sufficient evidence to prove the guilt of the accused.
- In 65% of the acquittals, the Supreme Court noted serious doubts about reliability of the police investigation. The most common issues with police investigations were evidence that appeared planted, manipulated, or otherwise doubtful (53% of all acquittals) and unexplained delays in registration of the First Information Report (32% of all acquittals).
- In 40% of the acquittals and 61% of the commutations, the Supreme Court overruled the lower courts' death sentence in part because the prosecution had failed to prove motive, intent, or guilty mind of the accused.
- In 28% of the acquittals, the Supreme Court held that lower courts had unjustly sentenced an accused to death while acquitting his co-accused on the same evidence.

[...] The Supreme Court upholds death sentences only for lethal offences—every judgment dealing with a non-lethal offence ended with the Supreme Court overturning the conviction or commuting the death sentence. Despite this fact, lower courts continue to regularly impose death sentences for non-lethal offences, even to low-level drug mules.

[...] I. Miscarriages of Justice in the Lower Courts

[...] The Supreme Court of Pakistan does not overrule decisions by the lower courts lightly. [...] It is striking, therefore, that in 78% of the cases reviewed as part of the Study, the Supreme Court has been forced to 'correct' errors made by the lower courts, either by acquitting the death row prisoner or by commuting or ordering a review of his death sentence (see Annex 1).

[...] 1. Supreme Court Jurisprudence: By the Numbers

In the nine years from 2010 to 2018, the Supreme Court upheld death sentences in just 22% of its 310 reported cases.

[...] 2. Supreme Court Jurisprudence: Behind the Numbers

Detailed analysis of the Supreme Court's capital jurisprudence revealed systemic procedural flaws in the handling of capital cases by lower courts that rendered 78% of the convictions and death sentences that the Supreme Court reviewed unsafe.

The Supreme Court acquitted the accused in 39% of the cases reviewed. In 30% of those acquittal cases, the acquittal was on the grounds that the prosecution failed to prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt. In 14% of cases, the Supreme Court explicitly commented on the 'grave miscarriage of justice' done to the accused.²¹

A detailed analysis of the Supreme Court reported judgements from 2015 to 2018 reveals that there are serious evidential failings behind the miscarriages of justice at the lower court level that lead the Supreme Court to either acquit the accused or commute or order a review of his/her death sentence upon receiving the case, including:

- A. Reliance on unreliable witness testimony;
- B. Sentencing an accused to death who has not been properly identified;
- C. Application of death sentences despite a lack of evidence;
- D. Reliance on evidence that was planted or manipulated by corrupt police officers;
- E. Arbitrary application of a death sentence for one accused while acquitting co-accused on the same evidence;
- F. Conviction despite prosecution failure to establish "intention, guilty mind or motive" of the accused; and
- G. Reliance by the lower courts on confessions which were involuntary, retracted or obtained using improper procedure.

[...] A. Lower Courts Rely on Unreliable Witness Testimony

[...] The Supreme Court's most serious criticisms of proceedings in the lower courts arise from reliance on dubious eye witness testimony, especially where that testimony is not corroborated by independent physical evidence. In 70% of the cases where the Supreme Court acquitted the accused, the reason for the acquittal was that the lower courts wrongly relied on weak witness testimony (Figure 4).

[...] G. Lower Courts Rely on Confessions That Are Involuntary, Retracted or Obtained Using Improper Procedure

Pakistan's law of criminal procedure lays out strict rules governing how police can legally obtain a voluntary confession that can be admissible evidence in court.⁹⁸

[...] Despite this statutory authority, the Supreme Court routinely finds that convictions from lower courts are based on confessions which have been obtained in contravention of due process.

In 14% of reported cases where the Supreme Court acquitted the accused, the Supreme Court found a confession relied upon by the lower courts was involuntary, retracted or obtained using improper procedure (Figure 11).¹⁰²

[...] While the Supreme Court repeatedly discards confessions tainted by police malfeasance or Magistrate errors, the jurisprudence shows that such confessions remain common in the lower courts.

[...] 4. The Supreme Court Gives Weight to Mitigating Factors in Capital Cases

[...] Typical forms of mitigating evidence relevant to capital sentencing in Pakistan as identified through a review of the Supreme Court's jurisprudence from 2015 - 2018 include:

- A. Type and gravity of the offence;¹⁵⁴
- B. Lesser participation;¹⁵⁵
- C. Lack of premeditation;¹⁵⁶
- D. Provocation;¹⁵⁷
- E. Social and familial circumstances;¹⁵⁸
- F. Partial compromise with the victim's family;¹⁵⁹
- G. Age of the offender;¹⁶⁰
- H. Acting under the influence of an elder;¹⁶¹
- I. Mental state of the accused;¹⁶²
- J. Capacity for reform; and¹⁶³
- K. Time spent on death row.¹⁶⁴

[...] K. Time Spent on Death Row

[...] In practice, prisoners are still routinely executed after decades of incarceration. Evidence gathered by Reprieve shows that about 84% of prisoners are executed after spending more than a decade on death row.²¹⁶ Since the resumption of executions in late 2014, at least thirteen prisoners have been executed after serving more than two decades on death row²¹⁷ – essentially being executed after already serving a life sentence.

[...] III. Costs of a Broken System

There are over 40,000 cases currently pending before the Supreme Court.²¹⁸ Systematic flaws in the reasoning of the lower courts see the Supreme Court rectifying the same issues in case after case, often explicitly commenting that a miscarriage of justice has occurred.²¹⁹ Moreover, analysis of the jurisprudence has demonstrated that failures in the lower courts mean that the Supreme Court must often act as a court of first instance by weighing the evidence and assessing witness credibility. This only adds to the Supreme Court's colossal backlog – and lengthy wait times across the judicial system.

As a result, prisoners sentenced to death in Pakistan spend an average of nearly ten years with the 'sword of death hanging over their heads' before their case is heard by the Supreme Court (Figure 13).²²⁰ One in 10 prisoners must wait more than 15 years before their final appeal.²²¹ Thus each death sentence unlawfully handed down by the trial court imposes significant costs on taxpayers to imprison the accused. The economic and social cost of wrongfully imprisoning hundreds – if not thousands – of people on death row for decades, many of whom are family breadwinners and as many as two in five of whom are potentially innocent (see section I.1 above), is unquantifiable.

[...] IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study conducted by FFR and Reprieve has revealed systemic miscarriages of justice occurring in the trial and appellate courts, resulting in unsafe convictions. These unsafe convictions lead to innocent people spending over a decade on death row before finally being released by the Supreme Court or, worse still, to innocent people being executed and later acquitted of all charges.

Lower courts hand down capital convictions despite the prosecution's failure to prove the case against the accused. The trial and High Courts credit unreliable and inconsistent witness testimony, apply death sentences to accused who have not been properly identified, impose death sentences despite a lack of objective evidence, rely on evidence manipulated by police, sentence accused to death while acquitting their co-accused on the same evidence, impose death sentences despite the prosecution's failure to prove motive or intent, and rely on confessions that do not meet statutory requirements. Such a broken system cannot be trusted to impose the ultimate and irreversible penalty of death.

The Supreme Court has made great effort to establish modern standards of capital sentencing, bringing Pakistani law in line with international legal requirements and practice in other executing states like India. The Supreme Court has limited the death penalty to the most serious crimes, established a presumption in favour of life sentences over the death penalty, and firmly established that the circumstances of the

accused and the offence must be considered as factors mitigating against a death sentence. Yet the lower courts continue to hand down death sentences for crimes such as low-level drug possession, indicating a failure to follow the Supreme Court's jurisprudence. [...]

98 Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr.P.C.), 1898 as amended by Act II of 1997, sections 164, 364, 533.

[...] 102 Of the 57 analysed reported acquittal judgments from 2015 - 2018, the Supreme Court found in 8 cases that the trial court had relied on a confession that was not voluntary or obtained under duress, extrajudicial, and/or retracted.

[...] 154 See, e.g., Muhammad Asif v. Mukhtar Akhtar & others (2016 SCMR 2035); Mazhar Abbas alias Baddi v. the State (2017 SCMR 1884); Zafar Iqbal v. the State (2017 SCMR 1721); Sardar Muhammad & another v. Athar Zahoor & others (2017 SCMR 1668); Muhammad Anwar v. the State (2017 SCMR 630); Hassan & others v. the State & others (PLD 2013 SC 793).

155 See, e.g., Sabeeha v. Ibrar & others (2012 SCMR 74); Abdul Rehman & others v. the State (2010 SCMR 1758); Muhammad Akram Rahi & others v. the State (2011 SCMR 877); Khalid & others v. the State (2012 SCMR 327); Muhammad Imran @ Asif v. the State (2013 SCMR 782).

156 See, e.g., Muhammad Sharif v. the State (2009 PLD 709); Hassan & others v. the State & others (PLD 2013 SC 793)

157 See, e.g., Muhammad Saleem v. the State (2002 SCMR 436); Abdul Haq v. the State (PLD 1996 SC 1); Farman Ali v. the State (1992 SCMR 2055); Zafar Iqbal v. the State (2017 SCMR 1721); Subedar (Retd.) Abdul Majeed & others v. Mulazim Hussain Shah & another (2010 SCMR 641).

158 See, e.g., Muhammad Sharif v. the State (2009 PLD 709); Muhammad Ismail v. the State (2017 SCMR 713); Muhammad Saleem v. the State (2002 436) (citing Muhammad Afzal v. the State (1987 SCMR 1864)).

159 See, e.g., Muhammad Amin v. the State (2016 SCMR 116); Razaqat Ali & others v. the State (2016 SCMR 1766); Tariq Mehmood v. the State (2011 SCMR 1880).

160 Amjad Shah v. the State (PLD 2017 SC 152); Muhammad Hanif v. Muhammad Zubair (2010 SCMR 182); Aleeq Shah v. the State (2010 SCMR 1590).

161 Muhammad Imran alias Asif v. the State (2013 SCMR 782).

162 See notes 197 to 204 and accompanying text.

163 See, e.g., Tariq Mehmood v. the State (2011 SCMR 1880); Zeeshan @ Shani v. the State (2012 SCMR 428).

164 See, e.g., Hassan & others v. the State & others (PLD 2013 SC 793); Ghulam Mohy-ud-Din v. the State (2014 SCMR 1034);

[...]216 Reprieve has closely monitored public reporting of executions in Pakistan since the lifting of the moratorium in December 2014. For each publically reported execution, Reprieve tracks the date on which the prisoner was sentenced to death (when available) and the date of the execution, among other factors. By calculating the time elapsed between these two dates, Reprieve can determine how long each executed prisoner spent on death row before his execution. Because the data is reliant on public reporting, it provides a picture of general trends but does not include every single execution.

217 Id. For example, Abdul Sattar was sentenced to death for murder in 1992 and was executed 22 years later, in 2015. Haseeb Bhatti, 'Four More Prisoners Sent to the Gallows', Dawn, 19 Mar. 2015, available at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1170589/four-more-prisoners-sent-to-the-gallows>. Javed alias Jeeda was sentenced to death for double murder in 1989 and was executed 25 years later in 2015. Express Tribune, 'Two More Murder Convicts Sent to the Gallows', 4 June 2015, available at: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/897494/two-more-murder-convicts-sent-to-the-gallows/>.

218 Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, 'Consolidate Statement Showing Pendency, Institution And Disposal of Cases During the Period 1-30th September, 2018 in The Supreme Court of Pakistan, Federal Shariat Court, High Courts and District Judiciary', available at: http://ljcp.gov.pk/nljcp/assets/dist/news_pdf/courts.pdf.

219 See, e.g., Pathan v. the State (2015 SCMR 315); Mst. Sughra Begum v. Qaiser Pervez & another (2015 SCMR 1142); Ali Sher v. the State (2015 SCMR 142); Azeem Khan v. Mujahid Khan (2016 SCMR 274); Javed Khan alias Bacha v. the State (2017 SCMR 524); Hashim Qasim v. the State (2017 SCMR 986).

220 For each Supreme Court case reviewed, researchers recorded the date of the original trial where available and the Supreme Court decision date, and calculated the time elapsed between these dates. This data was available for 152 judgments, and the average time elapsed was 9.81 years.

221 The same data referenced above revealed that 11% of appellants waited 15 years or more from their trial court date for their Supreme Court appeal to be decided.

Concerns with observance of due process in death penalty cases and execution of minors in 2019

❖ [Planete Refugies Droits De L'Homme and PMHA, 75th Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\), 22nd to the 26th of July 2019](#)

[...] 4. Women facing the death penalty in Pakistan do not systematically benefit from all the basic judicial guarantees they are entitled to, such as: the right of the accused person to be tried by an independent and impartial tribunal, and without undue delay; the right of the accused person to be informed of the

nature and cause of the charges against her; the rights and means necessary for the defence, for example the right to have the assistance of a qualified defence counsel of one's choice; the right to the assistance of legal counsel free of charge, if the interests of justice so require (though legal aid is available, it is difficult to access); the right of the accused person to be assisted by an interpreter if necessary; the right of the accused person to communicate freely with her counsel; the right to have the time and facilities necessary for the preparation of the defence; the principle of the presumption of innocence; and the right of the accused person not to testify against himself or herself or to confess guilt. The fact remains that maintaining family links for women facing death row is extremely difficult due to social barriers and social origin (the majority of women facing the death penalty are from the most vulnerable segments of society, e.g. religious or ethnic minorities) and this triggers additional obstacles that prevent the full realisation of those basic judicial guarantees or fair trial. This constitutes a clear violation of basic rights enshrined in the Constitution.¹⁹

5. During the judicial process, women that could potentially face the death penalty are also tortured, and confessions are extracted through coercion.²⁰ [...]

19 Constitution of Pakistan, Article 10 (1): "No person who is arrested shall be detained in custody without being informed, as soon as may be, of the grounds for such arrest, nor shall he be denied the right to consult and be defended by a legal practitioner of his choice."

Article 10A: "For the determination of his civil rights and obligations or in any criminal charge against him a person shall be entitled to a fair trial and due process."

20 One prominent example of a woman who confessed after being tortured is Kaniza Bibi, who has been on death row for 30 years, since she was 16. Kaniza and a man named Khan Muhammad were accused of murdering a woman and her five children. He was executed in 2003, but Kaniza is still in prison. Kaniza was diagnosed paranoid schizophrenia and maintains her innocence. Her health is deteriorating and she has reportedly not spoken for several years.

❖ [FCO – UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Annual report on human rights in selected countries in 2018: Pakistan, 5 June 2019](#)

[...] The use of military courts to try terrorism suspects continued. These courts lack transparency and are not subject to independent scrutiny, making it difficult to assess their compliance with international standards. There were ongoing reports of the detention of prisoners without trial, and of extrajudicial killings by the security forces. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Pakistan: Events of 2019, 14 January 2020](#)

[...] Pakistan has more than 4,600 prisoners on death row, one of the world's largest populations facing execution. At least 511 individuals have been executed since Pakistan lifted the moratorium on death penalty in December 2014. Those on death row are often from the most marginalized sections of society. In June 2019, Pakistan's Supreme Court halted the execution of Ghulam Abbas, a prisoner with a psychosocial disability who had spent more than 13 years on death row. [...]

❖ [Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2020: Pakistan, 4 March 2020](#)

[...] In the wake of the 2014 terrorist massacre at an Army Public School in Peshawar, the government allowed some civilians to be tried in military courts. These courts have since been criticized for lack of transparency and due process guarantees, such as access to a competent defense. A number of death sentences issued by the courts have been overturned for a lack of evidence. The government announced its intention to extend the life of the courts in January 2019, but was unable to secure support for the necessary legislation, and their mandate lapsed in March. [...]

1.3.2. Omissions in 2018 (compared to 2017 and 2016)

Continued allegations of politically motivated killings in Balochistan and Sindh

Reports of politically motivated killings by political factions or unknown assailants in Sindh

The provincial governments and political parties in Sindh, Balochistan, KP, and Punjab remained targets of attack by militant and other nonstate actors

A. Sindh in 2018

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019](#)

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2018

[...] 2.3 Sindh

In all, 12 terrorist attacks happened in Sindh – 9 in Karachi, 2 in Hyderabad and one in Larkana districts – which killed a total of 19 people and injured another 21 people. Among those 19 killed were 6 civilians, 5 policemen and one Rangers personnel besides 7 militants. Six of these attacks were perpetrated by the TTP, Hizbul Ahrar and similar other groups that killed 8 and injured 6 people. Sindhi nationalist group Sindhudesh Liberation Army (SDLA) and a Baloch insurgent group.

Out of the total 12 reported attacks from Sindh, 5 targeted security forces and law enforcement agencies, 3 attacks hit political leaders and workers, and another 2 attacks targeted Chinese nationals and civilians.

Besides one suicide blast, militants employed IEDs in 4 attacks, firing in 6 attacks and hand grenade in another one attack. [...]

2.9 Violence against Political Leaders and Workers

Although attacks on political leaders and workers have become a regular feature of terrorist violence in Pakistan, frequency of such attacks usually increases before and during election times. That exactly happened during the election year of 2018.

Similarly, supporters and workers of different parties were also seen engaged in incidents of political violence in terms of armed clashes as well as attacks during election campaign and on the polling day. Compared to 13 such attacks in previous year, as many as 24 terrorist attacks in 2018 targeted political leaders and workers including some lethal ones. In all, these attacks claimed the lives of 218 people and injured 394 others. Eight of these attacks were carried out by Baloch and Sindhi nationalist insurgent group, which were low-intensity attacks and caused injuries to 27 people. Nonetheless, all 218 fatalities reported in such attacks resulted from 16 attacks perpetrated by the Pakistani Taliban such as the TTP as well as Islamic State terrorist group also known as ISIS, or Daesh.

As cited earlier, this reported surge in casualties in attacks targeting political leaders coincided with the holding of general election in Pakistan in July 2018; 14 out of 24 reported attacks against political leaders/workers and election-related targets in 2018 happened in the month of July alone.

Similarly, incidents of political and election-related violence among activists and supporters of different parties also surged significantly, from 4 in 2017 to 22 in 2018. Thus, on the whole, 46 reported incidents of violence in 2018 – including terrorist attacks against political leaders/workers as well as incidents of political violence cited earlier – claimed the lives of 229 people and injured 449 others.

2.9.1 Terrorist Attacks on Political Leaders

A higher number of casualties in the terrorist attacks targeting political leaders, as cited earlier, was caused by some lethal attacks in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. [...]

Out of the total 24 terrorist attacks targeting political leaders, 10 took place in Balochistan which claimed 184 lives. Eleven such attacks happened in KP and three in Sindh. [...]

2.9.2 Political Violence

Compared to 4 in 2017, as many as 22 incidents of political violence also took place, mostly between May and July 2018. These incidents claimed 11 lives and injured 55 others. [...]

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Sindh 2018, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	13-Jan-2018	Ilyas Goth area/Karachi/Sindh	NA	1	1	0	0
2	09-May-2018	Ghatib Shah Road of Lyari/Karachi/Sindh	NA	1	0	1	0
3	08-Dec-2018	Gol market / Paposh Nagar/Karachi/Sindh	NS	1	1	0	0
4	08-Dec-2018	Jahangirabad/Karachi/Sindh	NS	1	1	0	0
5	25-Dec-2018	Phase-V/Karachi/Sindh	NS	1	1	0	0
Total				5	4	1	0

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Government Employees Sindh 2018, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)

Civilian Data : Attacks on Government Employees

Sindh:2018

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
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No data currently available

A. Sindh in 2019

- ❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020](#)
[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2019
2.3 Sindh
[...] 2.3.3 Ethno-Political Violence in Karachi
[...] There has been a steep downturn in the incidents of ethnic/political violence in Karachi since 2013 when the Rangers-led security operation started there. Since 2016 this type of violence has almost become negligible when compared to the preceding years. In 2019, 3 incidents of political violence claimed 4 lives in the city. Those killed in these incidents included a worker of Muttahida Qaumi Movement – Pakistan’s (MQM-P); two workers of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI); and a leader of the Pak Sarzameen Party (PSP), Abdul Habib. [...]
- ❖ [Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies, Anti-State Violence Dropped to 15-years low. PICSS Security Report, 9 January 2020](#)
[...] Security Situation in Sindh
[...] Security forces conducted as many as 28 operations in which four suspected militants were killed and 65 others were apprehended, most of them were associated with MQM-L. [...]
- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Sindh 2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

Civilian Data : Attacks on Politicians

Sindh:2019

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	15-Feb-2019	Orangi Town/Karachi/Sindh	NS	1	1	0	0
Total				1	1	0	0

- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Government Employees Sindh 2018, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

Civilian Data : Attacks on Government Employees

Sindh:2019

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
No data currently available							

Continued allegations of politically motivated killings in Balochistan and Sindh

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B. Balochistan in 2018

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, General election 2018: Trends of terrorist and political violence, 27 July 2018](#)

[...] 19 terrorist attacks took place from May 1st to July 25th (the polling day) 2018 – including 4 suicide blasts – which claimed 215 lives and injured 393 others. Seven of these attacks were carried out by Baloch and Sindhi nationalist insurgent group, which were low intensity and caused injuries to 26 people. Nonetheless, all 215 fatalities reported in such attacks resulted from 11 attacks perpetrated by the Pakistani Taliban such as the TTP and ISIS. [...]

A higher number of casualties in the terrorist attacks cited earlier was caused by some lethal attacks in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. Indeed a single suicide blast in Mastung district of Balochistan claimed 150 lives. Nawabzada Siraj Raisani, Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) candidate for a Provincial Assembly seat, was among those killed.¹ Similarly, on July 25, a suicide blast near Eastern Bypass of Quetta claimed 31 lives including 6 policemen and 2 minors and injured 70 others. Quetta police said the suicide bomber blew himself up after he was stopped from entering the Tameer-i-Nau Education Complex school, which served as a polling station.² Both these attacks were claimed by ISIS. [...]

1 Dawn, July 14, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1419972/128-perish-as-savage-attack-on-mastungrally-stuns-nation>;

Daily Dunya (Urdu), July 14, 2018, http://dunya.com.pk/index.php/dunyaheadline/447938_1#.W0oSTGQzbZs; Daily Dunya (Urdu), July 17, 2018, http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2018-07-17&edition=ISL&id=4046202_22010588

2 Daily Jang (Urdu), July 25, 2018, <https://jang.com.pk/news/525636>;

Dawn, July 26, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1422870/31-die-in-suicide-bombing-outside-quetta-pollingstation>;

Dawn, July 25, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1422529>

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019](#)

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2018

[...] 2.2 Balochistan

[...] Table 3a: Targets Hit by Terrorists in Balochistan in 2018

Targets	No. of attacks	Killed	Injured
Security forces/law enforcement	64	112	234

Educational institutions	1		
Non-Bloch settlers/workers	3	14	5
Govt. officials	1	3	2
Tribal elders	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
Civilians	<u>15</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>35</u>
Shia religious scholars/community	<u>5</u>	7	2
Govt. installation/hospitals/banks/property	1	0	0
Political leaders/workers	10	184	279
Hindu community	1	1	0
Christian community/Church	2	6	6
Foreign interest/Diplomats/Foreigners	1	3	6
Health/polio workers	1	2	0
Pro-govt. tribesmen and peace committee members	2	4	10
CPEC/workers/Chinese	1	1	6
Former militants	2	2	0
Railway tracks/trains	3	0	1
Total	115	354	589

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2018

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Although attacks on political leaders and workers have become a regular feature of terrorist violence in Pakistan, frequency of such attacks usually increases before and during election times. That exactly happened during the election year of 2018.

Similarly, supporters and workers of different parties were also seen engaged in incidents of political violence in terms of armed clashes as well as attacks during election campaign and on the polling day. Compared to 13 such attacks in previous year, as many as 24 terrorist attacks in 2018 targeted political leaders and workers including some lethal ones. In all, these attacks claimed the lives of 218 people and injured 394 others. Eight of these attacks were carried out by Baloch and Sindhi nationalist insurgent group, which were low-intensity attacks and caused injuries to 27 people. Nonetheless, all 218 fatalities reported in such attacks resulted from 16 attacks perpetrated by the Pakistani Taliban such as the TTP as well as Islamic State terrorist group also known as ISIS, or Daesh.

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Compared to 4 in 2017, as many as 22 incidents of political violence also took place, mostly between May and July 2018. These incidents claimed 11 lives and injured 55 others. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Law and Order

[...] Violence

[...] Thirty-one people were killed on polling day in Quetta in an attack outside a polling station. [...]

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Balochistan 2018, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	13-Jul-2018	Dringarh village/Mastung/Balochistan	Islamic State (IS)	1	1	0	0
2	15-Jul-2018	Chaman town/Killa Abdullah/Balochistan	NS	1	0	1	0
Total				2	1	1	0

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Government Employees Balochistan 2018, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	25-Jul-2018	Near Pak-Iran border at Dashtak village/Kech/Balochistan	NS	1	1	0	0
Total				1	1	0	0

B. Balochistan in 2019

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020](#)

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2019

2.2 Balochistan

[...] 2.2.1 Attacks by Baloch Insurgents

[...] Meanwhile a combined total of 5 attacks by Baloch insurgents targeted political leaders and pro-government tribesmen or peace committee members. Six people were killed and 23 others in these attacks. On February 24th, militants targeted the clinic of Dr Ishaq, provincial member of a peace

committee, with a bomb that was planted in a motorcycle. The incident happened near Mazdoor Chowk, DM Jamail. One person was killed and 18 others were injured in the blast including Dr Ishaq.⁴⁹ On the same day, allegedly BLA militants shot dead Haji Akbar Jamali, brother of a Balochistan Awami Party leader Mir Sanjar Khan Jamali, in Jaffarabad and managed to escape.⁵⁰ In a major attack reported from Khuzdar, a central leader of Balochistan National Party Nawabzada Mir Amamullah Khan was killed along with a grandson and 2 guards in a targeted attack near Bulbul villager.⁵¹ [...]

2.2.2 Attacks by Religiously-inspired Militants

[...] sporadic attacks also targeted tribal elders, government officials, media, political leaders and polio vaccination workers. [...]

Separately, a senior leader of the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI-F) Maulana Mohammad Hanif and two others including a young boy were killed and at least 11 others were injured when a motorbike bomb explosion ripped through the main bazaar of Chaman, a border town in Qilla Abdullah.⁶⁸

2.8.1 Terrorist Attacks on Political Leaders

[...] As cited earlier, 9 reported terrorist attacks in 2019 targeted political leaders and workers, claiming 11 lives and injuring 19 others. Five such attacks happened in KP and 4 in Balochistan. (See Chart 5). [...]

49 Daily Jang (Urdu), February 25, 2019, <https://e.jang.com.pk/02-25-2019/pindi/pic.asp?picname=549.png>;

Dawn, February 25, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1465850/man-killed-in-dera-murad-jamali-blast>

50 Daily Dunya (Urdu), February 25, 2019, http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2019-02-25&edition=ISL&id=4462930_52581222

51 Daily Express (Urdu), August 18, 2019,

https://www.express.com.pk/epaper/PoPupwindow.aspx?newsID=1106670676&Issue=NP_LHE&Date=20190818[...]

68 Dawn, September 29, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1507917>

- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Balochistan 2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

Civilian Data : Attacks on Politicians

Balochistan:2019

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	16-Aug-2019	Khuzdar/Balochistan	NS	1	1	0	0
2	28-Sep-2019	Chaman area/Killa Abdullah/Balochistan	NS	1	1	0	0
Total				2	2	0	0

- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Government Employees Balochistan 2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2019\)](#)

Civilian Data : Attacks on Government Employees

Balochistan:2019

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	06-Jan-2019	Pishin town/Pishin/Balochistan	NS	1	0	1	0
Total				1	0	1	0

Provincial governments and political parties in KP remained targets of attack by militant and other nonstate actors

C. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, General election 2018: Trends of terrorist and political violence, 27 July 2018](#)

[...] 19 terrorist attacks took place from May 1st to July 25th (the polling day) 2018 –including 4 suicide blasts – which claimed 215 lives and injured 393 others. Seven of these attacks were carried out by Baloch and Sindhi nationalist insurgent group, which were lowintensity and caused injuries to 26 people. Nonetheless, all 215 fatalities reported in such attacks resulted from 11 attacks perpetrated by the Pakistani Taliban such as the TTP and ISIS.

Two such attacks were reported from Peshawar including a major one. Reportedly, ANP leader and a candidate for a provincial assembly seat Haroon Bilour was among 21 killed in a suicide blast in a corner party meeting in Yakatoot area of Peshawar; 65 others were injured. Haroon's father Bashir Bilour, a prominent ANP leader, was also killed in a suicide blast in Peshawar in 2012.³ Similarly, in DI Khan district of KP, former provincial minister and PTI candidate for a provincial assembly seat Ikramullah Gandapur was killed along with his driver and a policeman in a suicide blast in Kulachi tehsil.⁴

In Bannu, JUI-F leader and MMA candidate from NA-35 Akram Khan Durrani survived two terror attacks. In one of these attacks, a remote controlled motor cycle-fitted IED blast targeted his convoy killing 5 people.⁵ [...]

3 Daily Jang (Urdu), July 11, 2018, <https://jang.com.pk/news/519095da>; Daily Jang (Urdu), July 12, 2018, <https://e.jang.com.pk/07-12-2018/pindi/pic.asp?picname=52.png>

4 Daily Jang (Urdu), July 23, 2018, <https://e.jang.com.pk/07-23-2018/pindi/pic.asp?picname=517.png>; Dunya (Urdu), July 23,2018, http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2018-07-23&edition=ISL&id=4056397_93712003

5 Dawn, July 14, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1419972/128-perish-as-savage-attack-on-mastungrally-stuns-nation>; Daily Dunya (Urdu), July 14, 2018, http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2018-07-14&edition=ISL&id=4038734_73415703

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019](#)

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2018

[...] 2.1 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including erstwhile FATA)

Table 1a: Targets Hit by Militants in KP in 2018

Targets	No. of attacks	Killed	Injured
Security forces/law enforcement	62	75	128
Educational institutions	3	0	3
Govt. officials	3	1	10
Tribal elders	2	2	0
Civilians	27	28	77
Shia community	2	36	41
Sunni community	1	2	0
Political leaders/workers	11	34	108
FC/army/police convoys	1	2	2
NGO/civil society members	1		
Sikh community	1	1	0
Rival sectarian group	1	3	0
Health/polio workers	1	2	0
Pro-govt. tribesmen/peace committee members	6	7	6
Former militants	2	2	0
Member of banned groups	1	1	1
Total	125	196	376

[...] 2.1.3 Attacks on Political Leaders and Workers

In 2018, as many as 11 terrorist attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa targeted political leaders and workers. In all, 34 people were killed and 108 others injured in these attacks that were reported from Peshawar (4 attacks), Bannu (3), and Bajaur, DI Khan, North Waziristan, and Tank districts (one attack each). The TTP was behind most of these attacks. Two of these attacks were suicide blasts.

Some major and high-profile attacks on political leaders in 2018 are listed below.

- July 10: Awami National Party (ANP) leader and a candidate for a provincial assembly seat Haroon Bilour was among 14 killed in a reported suicide blast in a corner party meeting in Yakatoot area of Peshawar; 65 others were injured. Daily Jang reported on July 12 that death toll had reached to 21 as 7 more injured died at hospital. Haroon's father Bashir Bilour, a prominent ANP leader, was also killed in a suicide blast in Peshawar in 2012.³¹
- July 13: A remote controlled motor cycle-fitted IED blast targeted the convoy of JUI-F leader and MMA candidate from NA-35 Akram Khan Durrani in Bannu. Though he survived the attack, 5 people were killed and 30 others injured.³²
- July 22: Former provincial minister and PTI candidate for a provincial assembly seat Ikramullah Gandapur was killed along with his driver in a suicide blast in Kulachi tehsil of DI Khan; One of the injured policemen later died in hospital. Reportedly a suicide bomber blew himself off as soon as Mr Gandapur came out of his house and sat in his car.³³ [...]

31 Daily Jang (Urdu), July 11, 2018, <https://jang.com.pk/news/519095da>; Daily Jang (Urdu), July 12, 2018, <https://e.jang.com.pk/07-12-2018/pindi/pic.asp?picname=52.png>

32 Dawn, July 14, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1419972/128-perish-as-savage-attack-on-mastung-rallystun-nation>; Daily Dunya (Urdu), July 14, 2018, http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2018-07-14&edition=ISL&id=4038734_73415703

33 Daily Jang (Urdu), July 23, 2018, <https://e.jang.com.pk/07-23-2018/pindi/pic.asp?picname=517.png>; Dunya(Urdu), July 23, 2018, http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2018-07-23&edition=ISL&id=4056397_93712003

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2018

2.9 Violence against Political Leaders and Workers

Although attacks on political leaders and workers have become a regular feature of terrorist violence in Pakistan, frequency of such attacks usually increases before and during election times. That exactly happened during the election year of 2018.

Similarly, supporters and workers of different parties were also seen engaged in incidents of political violence in terms of armed clashes as well as attacks during election campaign and on the polling day. Compared to 13 such attacks in previous year, as many as 24 terrorist attacks in 2018 targeted political leaders and workers including some lethal ones. In all, these attacks claimed the lives of 218 people and injured 394 others. Eight of these attacks

were carried out by Baloch and Sindhi nationalist insurgent group, which were low-intensity attacks and caused injuries to 27 people. Nonetheless, all 218 fatalities reported in such attacks resulted from 16 attacks perpetrated by the Pakistani Taliban such as the TTP as well as Islamic State terrorist group also known as ISIS, or Daesh.

As cited earlier, this reported surge in casualties in attacks targeting political leaders coincided with the holding of general election in Pakistan in July 2018; 14 out of 24 reported attacks against political leaders/workers and election-related targets in 2018 happened in the month of July alone.

Similarly, incidents of political and election-related violence among activists and supporters of different parties also surged significantly, from 4 in 2017 to 22 in 2018. Thus, on the whole, 46 reported incidents of violence in 2018 – including terrorist attacks against political leaders/workers as well as incidents of political violence cited earlier – claimed the lives of 229 people and injured 449 others.

2.9.1 Terrorist Attacks on Political Leaders

A higher number of casualties in the terrorist attacks targeting political leaders, as cited earlier, was caused by some lethal attacks in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. [...]

Out of the total 24 terrorist attacks targeting political leaders, 10 took place in Balochistan which claimed 184 lives. Eleven such attacks happened in KP and three in Sindh. [...]

2.9.2 Political Violence

Compared to 4 in 2017, as many as 22 incidents of political violence also took place, mostly between May and July 2018. These incidents claimed 11 lives and injured 55 others. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Law and Order

[...] Violence

[...] Violence spiked sharply during the time of the general elections. The PICSS said that 40 percent of the total deaths took place in July. Several candidates were targeted during public gatherings, including a sitting minister. Five separate attacks took place in July alone. On 7 July, an attack on the convoy of Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) candidate Shiren Malik in Bannu [KP province] resulted in injuries to him and six others.

A second fatal attack on 10 July in Peshawar claimed the life of Awami National Party (ANP) leader Haroon Bilour, along with 21 others. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazal (JUI-F) leader Akram Khan Durrani's survived an attack on his convoy on 13 July as it headed back from an election rally in Bannu [KP province], but four others were killed. Hours after, a suicide attack on a rally in Mastung targeted Balochistan Awami Party (BNP) provincial assembly candidate Nawabzada Siraj Raisani. At least 131 people lost their lives along with Raisani. [...]

Ikramullah Gandapur from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was also killed in Dera Ismail Khan [KP province]. [...]

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2018, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	08-Jun-2018	Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NA	1	0	0	0

2	03-Jul-2018	Razmak tehsil/North Waziristan/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NA	1	0	10	0
3	07-Jul-2018	Bannu/Bannu/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NA	1	0	1	0
4	10-Jul-2018	Yakatoot area/Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	TTP	1	1	0	0
5	13-Jul-2018	Nasir Bagh Road/Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	1	0	0
6	22-Jul-2018	Kulachi area/Dera Ismail Khan or D.I. Khan/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	TTP	1	1	0	0
7	25-Jul-2018	Swabi/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NA	1	1	2	0
8	05-Sep-2018	Subhanabad area/Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	1	0	0
Total				8	5	13	0

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Government Employees Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2018, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	23-Feb-2018	Dir Colony on Peshawar's Ring Road/Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	JuA	1	0	1	0

2	29-Oct-2018	Bajaur/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	0	1	0
Total				2	0	2	0

C. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2019

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020](#)

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2019

[...] 2.1 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa [...]

Meanwhile 25 attacks apparently targeted civilians, another 9 hit pro-government tribesmen or peace committee members, and 5 attacks each targeted political leaders and polio vaccination workers. [...]

2.1.4 Attacks on Political Leaders and Workers

Compared to 11 in 2018, as many as 5 terrorists attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa targeted political leaders and workers, which killed 3 people and injured 5 others. Hizbul Ahrar, Jamaatul Ahrar and TTP

were involved in these attacks. In one of these attacks, Sartaj Khan, president of the Awami National Party Peshawar city chapter, was in his vehicle behind the Gulbahar police station, Peshawar, when attackers opened fire, killing him on the spot. He was also a member of the Peshawar District Council. The ANP leaders termed it a targeted killing.³¹

Separately in Bajaur, militants shot dead Mian Gul Jan, senior vice-president of Pakistan People Party (PPP), Bajaur chapter.³²

³¹Dawn, June 30, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1491154/anp-leader-gunned-down-in-peshawar>

³²Dawn, October 18, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1511480/ppp-leader-shot-dead-in-bajaur>

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

Civilian Data : Attacks on Politicians

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:2019

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	29-Jun-2019	Gulbahar area/Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	1	0	0
2	28-Oct-2019	Badan area of Mamond tehsil/Bajaur/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	0	1	0

3	11-Dec-2019	Kanju area of Mingora town/Swat/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	1	0	0
Total				3	2	1	0

- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Government Employees Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

Civilian Data : Attacks on Government Employees

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:2019

#S.N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed	Injured	Abducted
1	28-Feb-2019	Hayatabad/Peshawar/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	0	2	0
2	25-Apr-2019	Kot Murtaza/Tank/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	NS	1	0	0	4
Total				2	0	2	4

D. Punjab in 2018

- ❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019](#)

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2018

2.9 Violence against Political Leaders and Workers

Although attacks on political leaders and workers have become a regular feature of terrorist violence in Pakistan, frequency of such attacks usually increases before and during election times. That exactly happened during the election year of 2018.

Similarly, supporters and workers of different parties were also seen engaged in incidents of political violence in terms of armed clashes as well as attacks during election campaign and on the polling day. Compared to 13 such attacks in previous year, as many as 24 terrorist attacks in 2018 targeted political leaders and workers including some lethal ones. In all, these attacks claimed the lives of 218 people and injured 394 others. Eight of these attacks were carried out by Baloch and Sindhi nationalist insurgent group, which were low-intensity attacks and caused injuries to 27 people. Nonetheless, all 218 fatalities reported in such attacks resulted from 16 attacks perpetrated by the Pakistani Taliban such as the TTP as well as Islamic State terrorist group also known as ISIS, or Daesh.

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2.9.2 Political Violence

Compared to 4 in 2017, as many as 22 incidents of political violence also took place, mostly between May and July 2018. These incidents claimed 11 lives and injured 55 others. [...]

- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Government Employees Punjab 2018, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)
[...] No data currently available [...]
- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Punjab 2018, undated \(accessed 9 August 2019\)](#)
[...] No data currently available [...]

D. Punjab in 2019

- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Government Employees Punjab 2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)
[...] No data currently available [...]
- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Attacks on Politicians Punjab 2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)
[...] No data currently available [...]

Journalists, teachers, students and HR defenders targeted by state and non-state actors in Balochistan in 2018

- ❖ [Committee to Protect Journalists, Acts of Intimidation: In Pakistan, journalists' fear and censorship grow even as fatal violence declines, 12 September 2018](#)
[...] Pakistan's government-appointed Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, founded in 2011, has received 4,608 cases, according to Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, with many from the eastern Pakistan provinces of Baluchistan or Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. While few of these directly involve journalists, editors and reporters said they are acutely aware of the cases and fear they could be next. [...] Baluchistan has long been dangerous for journalists trying to report on the province's long-running independence insurgency and military's determination to stamp it out—with both sides willing to act against the press.
A 2011 ruling by the Baluchistan High Court banned coverage of Baluch separatists or nationalist groups, stating that "If the electronic media and the press publish propaganda reports out of fear and propagate the views of banned organizations they are not acting as good and responsible journalists, but as mouthpieces for malicious and vile propaganda." The court ordered the government to enforce the ruling, which could lead to a The ruling proved impossible to follow for many journalists, as militant groups

threatened them with violence to ensure their statements and actions were reported. “Better we are jailed for six months than to be killed by one group or another,” former president of the Quetta Press Club, Shahzada Zulfiqar, told Freedom Network [...]

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019](#)

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2018

[...] 2.2 Balochistan

[...] Table 3a: Targets Hit by Terrorists in Balochistan in 2018

Targets	No. of attacks	Killed	Injured
Security forces/law enforcement	64	112	234
Educational institutions	1		
Non-Bloch settlers/workers	3	14	5
Govt. officials	1	3	2
Tribal elders	2	1	3
Civilians	15	14	35
Shia religious scholars/community	5	7	2
Govt. installation/hospitals/banks/property	1	0	0
Political leaders/workers	10	184	279
Hindu community	1	1	0
Christian community/Church	2	6	6
Foreign interest/Diplomats/Foreigners	1	3	6
Health/polio workers	1	2	0
Pro-govt. tribesmen and peace committee members	2	4	10
CPEC/workers/Chinese	1	1	6
Former militants	2	2	0
Railway tracks/trains	3	0	1
Total	115	354	589

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Enforced Disappearances

[...] The scourge of enforced disappearances continued unchecked across the country in 2018. Political activists, students, human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists, members of religious groups, and various ethnic minorities have all fallen victim in recent years. No one has ever been held accountable. Whether through lack of training or lack of independence, police are powerless to investigate the cases of missing persons where either military or intelligence agencies are implicated. [...]

In December, it was reported that students of Bahauddin Zakariya University were protesting the disappearance of a classmate. Jiand Baloch was allegedly taken by security agencies from his residence in Quetta along with his father and 13-year-old brother on 30 November. Education [...]

The GEM report [UN Global Education Monitoring report] included Pakistan among countries heavily affected by attacks on education facilities, or use of such facilities by military personnel.

The report also highlighted the plight of women teachers in the militancy hit regions in the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Balochistan. Based on a series of interviews with women teachers displaced from these areas, the report found that they were reluctant to return out of fear for their safety. [...]

Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) alleged that the paramilitary Sindh Rangers kidnapped, tortured, and killed some of its members in security operations in Karachi in 2018

- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Incidents of Abduction Pakistan: 2018, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Civilian	SF	Total
06-Jun-2018	Korangi	MQM-Haqiqi	1	0	0	0

- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Sindh: Timeline \(Terrorist Activities\) -2018 undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

[...] January - 13 Muttahida Qaumi Movement-London's (MQM-L) Leader and Convener Professor Hassan Zafar Arif was found dead in Ilyas Goth area of Karachi the provincial capital of Sindh on January 13, reports The Nation. He had earlier gone missing on the same day and there were conflicting reports on whether there were torture marks on his body or not, adds Daily times. [...]

December - One MQM cadre, Mohammad Abid (40) was shot dead in a targeted attack near Gol market in Paposh Nagar of North Nazimabad Town in Karachi on December 8, 2018, reports The Express Tribune.

[...] December - 25 Former Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) leader and Member of National Assembly (MNA) Syed Ali Raza Abidi (46) was shot dead near his residence on Khayaban-e-Ghazi street in Phase-Vof Defence Housing Authority(DHA) in Karachi, the provincial capital of Sindh, on December 25, reports Dawn. Two unidentified assailants riding a motorcycle opened fire on Abidi's car near his residence, according to Station House Office Gizri Asad Mangi. Abidi was alone in his car when the attack took place and was taken to PNS Shifa hospital by his father, Akhlaq Abidi, where he succumbed to his injuries during treatment, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) South Pir Muhammad Shah said. A post-mortem examination showed that Abidi sustained four bullet wounds — two on his chest, one on his neck and as many on his arm. Abidi was elected to the National Assembly in the 2013 general elections from Karachi's NA-251 constituency on an MQM ticket. In November 2017, he had opposed Sattar and Pak Sarzameen Party (PSP) Chairman Mustafa Kamal's short-lived alliance, and even announced that he was resigning from his NA seat as "this is not what I believed in and stood for". Abidi was one of the leaders who had stood with former convener Sattar in the buildup to the 2018 elections when MQM-P was subject to an internal power battle. He contested the July 25 elections from Karachi's NA-243 constituency, but was defeated by Prime Minister Imran Khan. In September this year, Abidi tendered in his resignation from the MQM-Pakistan's "basic membership" citing "personal reasons".

Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) alleged that the paramilitary Sindh Rangers kidnapped, tortured, and killed some of its members in security operations in Karachi in 2019

- ❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020](#)

[...] Chapter 2 Security Landscape of Pakistan in 2019

2.3 Sindh

[...] 2.3.3 Ethno-Political Violence in Karachi

[...] There has been a steep downturn in the incidents of ethnic/political violence in Karachi since 2013 when the Rangers-led security operation started there. Since 2016 this type of violence has almost become negligible when compared to the preceding years. In 2019, 3 incidents of political violence claimed 4 lives in the city. Those killed in these incidents included a worker of Muttahida Qaumi Movement – Pakistan's (MQM-P); two workers of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI); and a leader of the Pak Sarzameen Party (PSP), Abdul Habib. [...]

- ❖ [Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies, Anti-State Violence Dropped to 15-years low. PICSS Security Report, 9 January 2020](#)

[...] Security Situation in Sindh

[...] Security forces conducted as many as 28 operations in which four suspected militants were killed and 65 others were apprehended, most of them were associated with MQM-L. [...]

[South Asian Terrorism Portal, Sindh: Timeline \(Terrorist Activities\) -2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2019\)](#)

[...] February - 11

A worker of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), Shakeel, was shot dead while an official employee of a Union Council (UC) was critically injured in a gun attack on a UC office in New Karachi area of Karachi, the provincial capital of Sindh, on February 11, reports Dawn. The chairman of UC-6 and other people were present in the 'reconciliation committee' room when six assailants riding motorbikes opened indiscriminate fire on them and fled, according to New Karachi Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Irshad Ali Bhutto. The DSP said that the attackers were armed with Kalashnikovs and pistols and managed to escape from the incident site. [...]

Abductions of JSQM and JSMM members in 2018

- ❖ [ANI news, Slogans of freedom reverberate at JSMM rally in Sindh, 17 January 2018](#)

[...] Paying tribute to scholar ideologue, and founder of Sinhudesh Movement Ghulam Murtaza Shah Syed, also known as G.M. Syed on his 114th birth anniversary, the Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM) organised a massive rally where they demanded freedom of Sindh from Pakistani occupation, the abolition of human rights abuses and religious fundamentalism. [...]

The protestors also chanted slogans against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). They said Pakistani forces were involved in enforced disappearances, extra judicial killings, rape and other atrocities. [...]

- ❖ [Dawn, JSQM-A demands end to 'enforced disappearances', 5 March 2018](#)

[...] Workers of the Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz-Arisar (JSQM-A) and rights activists culminated their march outside the Karachi Press Club on Sunday, which began 19 days ago from Bhit Shah to protest against 'enforced disappearances' and various other issues. [...]

- ❖ [Deccan Chronicle, Protest camp of families of missing political activists attacked by forces in Pak, 21 May 2018](#)

[...] Karachi: Pakistani forces have attacked the protest camp settled by the families of missing Sindhi political activists abducted by the Pakistani Military Intelligence and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). [...]

JSMM Chairman Shafi Burfat condemned the use of force against the protestors in a Facebook live session.

He said, "The state forces have violated the sanctity of Sindhi values and democratic right to protest the state-inflicted violations of human rights in Sindh. The act of tearing the clothes of women, dragging them

on the roads and torturing the protestors is an act of aggression, violence, and fascism. Sindhi, Baloch, and Pashtuns are under the occupation of Punjabi civil-military establishment in the unnatural, undemocratic, forced framework of Pakistan."

"The Pakistani forces are committing utter fascism and apartheid against Sindhi, Baloch and Pashtun national movements while this theocratic Islamo-fascist Pakistani state is patronizing and sponsoring the radical Islamist terrorist forces," he added.

He also appealed to all Sindhi political organizations and nation to mobilize and protest the fascist actions of Pakistani forces and state in solidarity with the families of missing Sindhi political activists. [...]

❖ [Dawn, Campaign for 'missing' persons' recovery continues, 30 May 2018](#)

[...] Activists of various nationalist and civil society organisations and student groups continued their 72-hour hunger strike for a second day on Tuesday in Nawabshah and Larkana.

In Nawabshah, they protested outside Nawabshah press club on the call of the Voice for the Missing Persons of Sindh.

The participants included workers of the Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz (JSQM) and its Aresar and Kernani groups, Sindh Taraqqi-pasand Party (STP), Sindhi Adabi Sangat (SAS), Jeay Sindh Students Federation (JSSF), and groups of the Quaid-i-Awam University students and other civil society activists.

The protesters said that over the past two years, "agencies' personnel" picked up scores of nationalist activists and intellectuals, including Inamullah Abbasi, Deedar Amrat, Hidayatullah Lohar, Nangar Channa and Khadim Arejo, from different parts of Sindh and never released. [...]

❖ [View Point, Anit-Pak Protests Erupt in Sindh, Demand for Independent Sindh Raised, 12 December 2018](#)

[...] Hundreds of activists of the Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM), a banned Sindhi organisation in Pak, recently participated in a march in Hyderabad to demand independence for Sindh province and the release of Sindhi political activists abducted and enforced disappeared by the Pakistani Army and its Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) wing. The massive rally commenced from Sindh University (Old Campus) and ended at the District Press Club, Hyderabad.

Protestors carried banners and placards that demanded total independence for Sindh and urged the United Nations, international community and human rights organisations to take immediate notice of what they called Pakistani occupation of the province, and acts of Fascism, state torture, atrocities, besides exploitation of the region's rich natural resources. [...]

Abductions of JSQM and JSMM members in 2019

❖ [International Human Rights Council, PAKISTAN: Call to release a Hindu human rights defender who is disappeared after his arrest, 8 January 2019](#)

[...] The international Human Rights Commission-HK is concerned about the report of Hindu activist and vice chairman of a Sindhi national organization being missing since January 5 along with his friend.

The vice chairman of Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM) Mr. Ramesh Kumar along with his friend Ghulam Murtaza Shar, went missing after his arrest by the men in uniforms from Jogi Shar Goth near Garhor Shareef, district, Sanghar Sindh province.

According to Jeay Sindh Mutehda Mahaz, Security agencies took Rameesh Kumar and his friend Ghulam Murtaza in custody on 5th January, 2019, when he was organizing meetings in regards to the birth anniversary of great Sindhi nationalist, Mr. G. M. Syed, former chief minister of Sindh and founder of Pakistan. [...]

In a statement, chairman JSMM , Shafi Burfat stated that security agencies are abducting members , with impunity. The Chairman JSMM also claimed that thousands of Party workers, leaders, supporters and sympathizers have been disappeared and killed by Pakistan Secret Agencies. [...]

❖ [Business Standard, Sindhis call for independence from Pakistan on GM Syed's 115th Birthday, 17 January 2019](#)

[...] A large number of Sindhi activists carried out an anti-Pakistan protest march on the 115th birth anniversary of GM Syed, the founder of Sindhudesh movement, in his hometown, Sann.

The activists from Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM) demanded freedom of the Sindh province from Pakistani occupation, the abolition of human rights abuses in Sindh and religious fundamentalism.

Raising slogans against the Pakistan Army, the activists accused them of abducting and killing Sindhi human rights activists and scholars.

Activists claim that a heavy contingent of Pakistani security forces besieged the outskirts of Sann and established checkpoints to harass and restrain Syed's followers from entering the town for two days.

Several arrests were made and dozens of leaders and activists from different cities were abducted in order to stop the political gatherings of various Sindhi nationalist parties to be held on the eve of Syed's birthday. [...]

❖ [Unrepresented Nations & Peoples Organization, Sindh: Activists Raise Concern over Human Rights Violations, 23 May 2019](#)

[...] Human Rights activists and politicians have shown concern over the growing state-run violations of human rights in Sindh and other provinces of Pakistan at a seminar here on Saturday.

The event titled 'Rights, Security and Development in Sindh: Realities for Pakistan's Southern Province' was organised by the World Sindhi Congress.

A panel of speakers including Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, Michael Kugelman, the Deputy Director of the Asia Program and Senior Associate for South Asia at the Wilson Centre and T Kumar, former International Advocacy Director Amnesty International USA, highlighted the persecution of Sindhi political activists in the hands of state and non-state actors in Pakistan. [...]

There is growing dissatisfaction among the people of Sindh as they have been facing issues ranging from arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, torture, extra-judicial killings and political repression. [...]

❖ [Pakistan Forward, Militant youth in Sindh renounce violence, vow to work with government, 26 August 2019](#)

[...] Dozens of young members of banned groups in Sindh in recent months have publicly denounced violence and declared their intention to work toward the development of Pakistan.

Youth associated with the proscribed Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM) and the Sindhudesh Liberation Army (SDLA) as well as other ethno-nationalist groups such as Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz (JSQM) announced at the Sukkur Press Club on August 15 that they had quit their groups.

Law enforcement agencies have been targeting Sindh separatist groups as well as the Hafeez Pandrani group, which is affiliated with "Islamic State of Iraq and Syria" (ISIS) and operates in rural Sindh.

Pakistan's Interior Ministry banned JSMM and SDLA in 2013 for their involvement in province-wide violence. The groups have been involved in attacks on security forces, railway tracks, gas pipelines and electricity pylons; targeted killings; and other subversive activities. [...]

❖ [Current Balochistan, Another political activist has abducted from Sindh by forces, 11 November 2019](#)

[...] The process of abductions and disappearances of Political activists have been continued in Sindh for the several years.

The senior worker of Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz Pathan Khan Zahrani's house was raided at Ghaghar Phatak in Karachi last night by Pakistani security forces, after that he was disappeared. [...]

❖ [The Week, Sindh is a victim of political tyranny and exploitation, 23 November 2019](#)

Interview/ Shafi Burfat, chairman, Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz, in exile in Germany

[...] What kind of human rights violations are taking place in Sindh and Balochistan?

Sindhi and Baloch nations are facing worst form of oppression and fascism by the hands of Punjabi army. Pakistani military establishment is repeating the barbarism, holocaust, massacre and genocide of oppressed nations the same way they did in Bengal (East Pakistan) in 1971. Political activists disappear, are abducted in broad daylight, brutally tortured, killed in cold blood and their bullet-riddled, mutilated bodies are either dumped on roadsides or trash piles. Sindh is a victim of political tyranny and economic exploitation today. The progressive, secular, independence seeking political voices and parties of Sindh and Balochistan, including our party Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz, have been banned. The Punjabi army is kidnapping, molesting and raping women in Balochistan and Pashtun areas like WANA and Waziristan.

Torture, abduction and extra-judicial killings of Sindhi, Baloch and Pashtun youth have become a common phenomenon these days. The only politicians and political line that is either partially supported or tolerated by the Army is the politics of pro-military patriotism and obedience. A majority of Pakistani politicians is “made in military” branded like present Prime Minister Imran Khan. [...]

Individuals accused of blasphemy from both majority and minority communities were killed during 2018

❖ [Amnesty International, Pakistan’s anti-blasphemy movement is showing once again that real power lies in the streets, 8 November 2018](#)

[...] There is nothing that stirs more outrage in Pakistan than the charge of blasphemy. A mere accusation is enough to endanger someone’s life; in Bibi’s case, for example, there is no evidence that she ever made the statement of which she is accused. Judges are terrified of acquitting anyone, lest they become the next target. Defense lawyers have been killed in court. Witnesses and families have to go into hiding. The authorities, instead of standing firm in defending human rights, meekly give ground to those using violence to suppress those rights. [...]

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies \(PIPS\), Pakistan Security Report 2018, Conflict and Peace Studies, Volume 11, January-June 2019, 6 January 2019](#)

[...] Table 12: Incidents of Communal and Mob Violence

[...] District: Charsadda; Violent Incidents: 1; Killed 1; Injured: 0; Damages/target: Blasphemy accused. [...]

2.11 Communal and Mob Violence

Compared to 5 in 2017, as many as 6 incidents of individual or mob/communal violence – including 5 faith-based – were recorded in 2018, which claimed 4 lives and injured 29 others.

Three of these attacks targeted Ahmedi community, two were on the issue of blasphemy and one had local security related motive.

[...] January 22: A second-year student of a private college, Faheem Ashraf, shot dead Sareer Ahmed, principal of the New Islamia Public High School and College on the Matta Road in Shabqadar town in Charsadda district after accusing him of blasphemy.⁹⁷

[...] The sensitive nature of blasphemy cases serves to heighten religious fervour and has created an environment of mob violence in which people take matters into their own hands, often with fatal consequences. [...]

97 The News, January 23, 2018, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/271910-bunking-off-college-for-joining-faizabad-dharna-student-kills-college-principal-over-blasphemy>

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Farhan Aziz, a Christian youth from Gujranwala accused of sending blasphemous text messages, has been languishing behind bars since 2 August. Following the accusations, an incensed mob surrounded the neighbourhood where Farhan lived and he had to be rescued by the police. Many Christian residents of the street fled out of fear as the mob appeared ready to take matters into their own hands. [p. 116]

[...] Blasphemy

The blasphemy laws have been grossly abused with many people lodging false complaints to settle their personal vendettas. In many cases, blasphemy allegations end up in a mob lynching or targeted killing of the accused before they can be tried or heard in a court of law. Even if the accused is found innocent by the court, they are unable to lead a normal life for fear of threats from extremists or social boycott. Since 1990, close to 70 people have been lynched so far on blasphemy charges, while another 40 are currently on death row or serving a life sentence. [...]

Blasphemy remains a highly sensitive issue and allegations do not have to be proven before provoking murder. On 23 January, a student killed his college principal on the allegation of blasphemy in the Shabqadar area of Charsadda. The incident happened after the student had allegedly been reprimanded over his absence from college. He had skipped college to attend the Faizabad sit-in in November 2017.

Those accused of blasphemy suffer prolonged periods of pre-trial detention before appeals are decided. Lawyers and judges involved in blasphemy cases live in a climate of fear and face real threats of extrajudicial violence. Junaid Hafeez, a former teacher at Bahauddin Zakaryia University, has been under trial for a blasphemy allegation since March 2013. A few months after the case went to trial, his counsel Rashid Rehman was assassinated in his office by two unidentified gunmen. To this day, his murderers have not been apprehended. Hafeez's case has been needlessly shifted as many as six times from one judicial officer to another while he languishes in jail. His lawyer has been denied an opportunity to meet him in private in prison.

On 1 February in Swat, an ATC court sentenced a man arrested for blasphemy in the Damair area of Chitral to life imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs300,000. On the same day, Burewala police arrested a man on blasphemy charges.

Blasphemy suspect Sajid Masih jumped off from the 4th floor of FIA building to escape the brutal treatment and sexual harassment by officials during interrogation at the end of February. A day earlier, his teenaged cousin Patras Masih, had been arrested on blasphemy charges when a vigilante mob blocked Shahdara crossing and demanded his arrest and public hanging for allegedly posting blasphemous material on his Facebook page.

[...] In April, Jaranwala police arrested two drunk men who allegedly burnt pages of the Holy Quran.

On the same day in the same city, a man attacked his friend with a knife inflicting serious injuries on him. He alleged that his friend said blasphemous words. [...] [pp. 120-123]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2019, 17 January 2019](#)

[...] Freedom of Religion and Belief

[...] In May, then-Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal was shot in an assassination attempt by an individual affiliated with an anti-blasphemy group at an election rally in Narowal district, Punjab.

In May, a mob led by anti-blasphemy clerics attacked and destroyed two historic Ahmadiyya religious buildings. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commissions of Pakistan \(HRCP\), State of Human Rights in 2018: A meaningful democracy, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] In April, Jaranwala police arrested two drunk men who allegedly burnt pages of the Holy Quran.

On the same day in the same city, a man attacked his friend with a knife inflicting serious injuries on him. He alleged that his friend said blasphemous words. [...]

Individuals accused of blasphemy from both majority and minority communities were killed during 2019

❖ [DFAT, Country Information Report Pakistan, 20 February 2019](#)

[...] Communal violence also often targets those accused of blasphemy. [...] [p. 35]

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies \(PIPS\), Pakistan Security Report 2019, Conflict and Peace Studies, Volume 12, January-June 2020, 5 January 2020](#)

[...] An enraged mob in Ghotki town attacked properties worth millions of rupees and looted several shops belonging to the Hindu community after the owner of a school was accused of committing blasphemy in September last year.¹The episode was another indication of how blasphemy accusations could trigger a severe and extensive wave of violence, mainly against minority communities, before some legal action was taken or evidence produced. [...]

[...] Apart from the 229 terrorist attacks cited earlier, incidents of violence of some other types were also recorded across Pakistan in 2019. These included a combined total of 128 cross-border attacks from India, Afghanistan and Iran; 28 anti-militant operational strikes carried out by security forces and their 25 armed clashes/ encounters with militants; eight (8) incidents of political/ethnic violence; 12 thwarted/failed

terror plots; two (2) targeted attacks, whose motivation was not clear; and one clash between protestors and security forces.

[...] 2019: Faith-based Violence and Other Incidence: Najam U Din

[...] Let us start with the silver lining. In terms of faith-based violence, the number of incidents and casualties both declined in 2019 compared to the previous year. In fact, the incidence of violence against religious minorities and sects in the country has been falling for the last five years.

[...]. After all, there have been reminders in 2019 itself, such as mob violence in Ghotki in September, that the specter of faith-based bloodletting might still be just around the corner. Another noticeable one was the targeting of Shia Hazara citizens in a fruit and vegetable market Quetta in a suicide bombing in April. A sectarian militant group as well as Daesh claimed responsibility for that attack.

1 Waseem Shamsi, "Unrest in Ghotki as teacher accused of blasphemy," Dawn, September 16, 2019.

❖ [Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2020: Pakistan, 4 March 2020](#)

[...] Members of the Christian and other religious minorities remain at risk of blasphemy accusations that can arise from trivial disputes and escalate to criminal prosecution and mob violence. [...]

Militant abductions in 2018

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019](#)

[...] Chapter Seven Competing with each other: AQIS and IS-K in 2018

[...] IS-K's terrorist strikes in Pakistan during 2018

[...] The IS-K presence in Sindh province was further confirmed by the arrest of three ISK militants from Karachi in September 2018. According to the CTD Karachi official statement, the three Islamist terrorists were linked to broader IS-K's broader network in Pakistan and the suspects in custody were involved in generating funds by involving in target killings and kidnappings for ransom in Karachi. [...]

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Incidents of Abduction Pakistan: 2018, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

Other Data: Incidents of Abduction

Pakistan: 2018

Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Civilian	SF	Total
01-Jan-2018	FC Checkpost, M G Road		1	0	0	0
01-Jan-2018	M G Road		1	0	0	0
02-Jan-2018	Baleli area		1	0	0	0
05-Jan-2018	Ainger area		1	0	0	0

06-Jan-2018	Saryab Road		1	0	0	0
06-Jan-2018	Sharib Flyover		1	0	0	0
09-Jan-2018	Zarghoon Road		1	0	0	0
09-Jan-2018	Zarghoon Road	TTP	1	0	0	0
10-Jan-2018	Turbat		1	0	0	0
11-Jan-2018	Sarobai		1	0	0	0
12-Jan-2018	North Nazimabad		1	0	0	0
13-Jan-2018	Ilyas Goth area		1	0	0	0
14-Jan-2018	Pakistan		2	0	0	0
14-Jan-2018	Sarkokae area		1	0	0	0
15-Jan-2018	Bharwal area		1	0	0	0
15-Jan-2018	Shapok area		1	0	0	0
17-Jan-2018	Chaman town		1	0	0	0
17-Jan-2018	Double Road area		1	0	0	0
17-Jan-2018	Double Road area		1	0	0	0
18-Jan-2018	Shalkot area		1	0	0	0

21-Jan-2018	Yat Road area	NS	1	0	0	0
29-Jan-2018	Qasimabad town	NS	1	0	0	0
30-Jan-2018	Maqbal area	NS	1	0	0	0
03-Feb-2018	Army camp in Kabal area	TTP	1	0	0	0
04-Feb-2018	Mughalkhel area		1	0	0	0
04-Feb-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0
05-Feb-2018	Chitkan area	Baloch Liberation Front	1	0	0	0
05-Feb-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0
07-Feb-2018	Mir Ali tehsil		1	0	0	0
14-Feb-2018	near Sariab road		1	0	0	0
15-Feb-2018	Tor Simat area		1	0	0	0
23-Feb-2018	Dir Colony on Peshawar's Ring Road	JuA	1	0	0	0
28-Feb-2018	Nosahar area	NS	1	0	0	0
28-Feb-2018	Samungli Road	TTP	1	0	0	0
02-Mar-2018	Tirah valley		1	0	0	0

06-Mar-2018	Kandahari Bazaar	NS	1	0	0	0
07-Mar-2018	Hazar Ganji vegetable market		1	0	0	0
09-Mar-2018	Perak area, Hub town		1	0	0	0
13-Mar-2018	Zikri Para area of Lyari		1	0	0	0
14-Mar-2018	Tablighi Jamaat Markaz ,Raiwind town	TTP	1	0	0	0
14-Mar-2018	Tablighi Jamaat Markaz, Raiwind town	TTP	1	0	0	0
16-Mar-2018	Pakistan	NS	1	3	0	3
17-Mar-2018	Aman Kot area of Khar Tehsil (revenue unit)	NS	1	0	0	0
21-Mar-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0
22-Mar-2018	Sachal area		1	0	0	0
28-Mar-2018	Ring road peshawar		1	0	0	0
29-Mar-2018	Aka Khel area		1	0	0	0
30-Mar-2018	Hathala Road area		1	0	0	0
01-Apr-2018	Kandahari Bazaar		1	0	0	0
02-Apr-2018	Shah Zaman road		1	0	0	0

04-Apr-2018	Pinsin Kaur		1	0	0	0
09-Apr-2018	Belili area		1	0	0	0
15-Apr-2018	Essa Nagri		1	0	0	0
18-Apr-2018	Abdul Sattar Road		1	0	0	0
20-Apr-2018	Abdul Sattar Road		1	0	0	0
22-Apr-2018	North Waziristan Agency		1	0	0	0
22-Apr-2018	Western Bypass area		1	0	0	0
24-Apr-2018	Airport Road		1	0	0	0
24-Apr-2018	Mian Gundi area	JuA	1	0	0	0
26-Apr-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0
28-Apr-2018	Jamaluddin Afghani Road		1	0	0	0
28-Apr-2018	Momi Karam area		1	0	0	0
29-Apr-2018	Jan Muhammad Road		1	0	0	0
30-Apr-2018	Splingy and Qabu	LeJ	1	0	0	0
03-May-2018	Dhok Gama area		1	0	0	0
03-May-2018	Jani Khel area		1	0	0	0

04-May-2018	Laijay area		1	0	0	0
09-May-2018	Ghatib Shah Road of Lyari		1	0	0	0
09-May-2018	Ghatib Shah Road of Lyari		1	0	0	0
11-May-2018	Bus Stand,Bannu town		1	0	0	0
13-May-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0
16-May-2018	Killi Almas area	LeJ)	1	0	0	0
18-May-2018	Bilal Town	NS	1	0	0	0
19-May-2018	Shabqadar tehsil		5	0	0	0
20-May-2018	Shabqadar town		5	0	0	0
27-May-2018	Sarki Road	NS	1	0	0	0
27-May-2018	Sarki Road	NS	1	0	0	0
28-May-2018	Dera Murad Jamali town	NS	1	0	0	0
29-May-2018	Circular Road East near the Sate Life building in Dera Ismail Khan town		1	0	0	0
29-May-2018	Scheme Chowk area on Kohat Road		1	0	0	0
30-May-2018	Datakhel area		1	0	0	0

02-Jun-2018	Landi Town	NS	1	0	0	0
03-Jun-2018	Pak-Afghan Border		1	0	0	0
03-Jun-2018	Wana Town		1	0	0	0
04-Jun-2018	Khud Cocha Area		1	0	0	0
06-Jun-2018	Korangi	MQM-Haqiqi	1	0	0	0
07-Jun-2018	Main bazaar	NS	1	0	0	0
07-Jun-2018	Sara Panra		2	0	0	0
08-Jun-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0
08-Jun-2018	Shaheed Abad locality		1	0	0	0
15-Jun-2018	Shawal area	NS	1	0	0	0
16-Jun-2018	Kali Bangalzai in Sariab area	NS	1	0	0	0
20-Jun-2018	Dashta area		1	0	0	0
21-Jun-2018	Hayatabad area		1	0	0	0
22-Jun-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0
24-Jun-2018	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
03-Jul-2018	Pakistan	NS	1	1	0	1

03-Jul-2018	Razmak tehsil		1	0	0	0
03-Jul-2018	Toba Nokhani		1	0	0	0
07-Jul-2018	Bannu		1	0	0	0
10-Jul-2018	Yakatoot area	TTP	1	0	0	0
13-Jul-2018	Dringarh village	Islamic State (IS)	1	0	0	0
13-Jul-2018	Haved Bazaar, Bannu town	TTP	1	0	0	0
13-Jul-2018	Nasir Bagh Road	NS	1	0	0	0
15-Jul-2018	Chaman town	NS	1	0	0	0
18-Jul-2018	Prom area		1	0	0	0
22-Jul-2018	Kulachi area	TTP	1	0	0	0
25-Jul-2018	Bhosa Mandi area		1	0	0	0
25-Jul-2018	Bhosa Mandi area		1	0	0	0
25-Jul-2018	NA-153	NS	1	0	0	0
25-Jul-2018	Near Pak-Iran border at Dashtak village	NS	1	0	0	0
25-Jul-2018	Near Pak-Iran border at Dashtak village	NS	1	0	0	0

25-Jul-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0
31-Jul-2018	Miramshah		1	0	0	0
31-Jul-2018	Pakistan	constables	1	0	0	0
05-Aug-2018	Tanger		1	0	0	0
08-Aug-2018	Absar area of Turbat town		1	0	0	0
10-Aug-2018	Kargah checkpost in Gilgit town		1	0	0	0
11-Aug-2018	Dalbandin	BLA	1	0	0	0
11-Aug-2018	Dalbandin	BLA	1	0	0	0
12-Aug-2018	Chaman town		1	0	0	0
13-Aug-2018	Chaman town		1	0	0	0
23-Aug-2018	Dand Killay area		1	0	0	0
23-Aug-2018	Ghaseet Pura RB-69 area		1	0	0	0
26-Aug-2018	Turbat		1	0	0	0
26-Aug-2018	Turbat		1	0	0	0
02-Sep-2018	Khataka Post		1	0	0	0
03-Sep-2018	Mastung town		1	0	0	0

05-Sep-2018	Subhanabad area	NS	1	0	0	0
07-Sep-2018	Parwa Police Station	NS	1	0	0	0
13-Sep-2018	Khattey Kalley area	NS	1	0	0	0
18-Sep-2018	Junction Chowk area of Killa Saifullah town	NS	1	0	0	0
22-Sep-2018	Dasht Goran		1	0	0	0
22-Sep-2018	Gharlamai		1	0	0	0
22-Sep-2018	Hoshab Thal		1	0	0	0
25-Sep-2018	Khar		1	0	0	0
26-Sep-2018	Mangochar		1	0	0	0
30-Sep-2018	Jungle Khel		1	0	0	0
02-Oct-2018	Pirandar		1	0	0	0
02-Oct-2018	Tump		1	0	0	0
03-Oct-2018	Matka Chowk		1	0	0	0
04-Oct-2018	Chairman Daftar area	NS	1	0	0	0
11-Oct-2018	Makeen tehsil	NS	1	0	0	0
16-Oct-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0

20-Oct-2018	Walma Langar Khel	TTP	1	0	0	0
22-Oct-2018	Sipah area	NS	1	0	0	0
23-Oct-2018	Khola	NS	1	0	0	0
23-Oct-2018	Miranshah	TTP	1	0	0	0
23-Oct-2018	Speen Wam		1	0	0	0
25-Oct-2018	Nag	NS	1	0	0	0
27-Oct-2018	Pakistan	TTP	1	0	1	1
29-Oct-2018	Pakistan	NS	2	0	0	0
29-Oct-2018	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
31-Oct-2018	Jewani town	NS	1	0	0	0
07-Nov-2018	Mohmad Gat		1	0	0	0
10-Nov-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0
11-Nov-2018	Pakistan		1	0	0	0
12-Nov-2018	Rogha Bahadar	NS	1	0	0	0
17-Nov-2018	Junior Assistant Colony		1	0	0	0
18-Nov-2018	Margit	NS	1	0	0	0

21-Nov-2018	Chaman	NS	1	0	0	0
21-Nov-2018	Charmang	NS	1	0	0	0
23-Nov-2018	Block 4 of Clifton area	BL	1	0	0	0
23-Nov-2018	Block 4 of Clifton area	BLA	1	0	0	0
23-Nov-2018	Kalaya town	NS	1	0	0	0
29-Nov-2018	Inayat Kaly		1	0	0	0
03-Dec-2018	Achini Chowk	NS	1	0	0	0
08-Dec-2018	Gol market / Paposh Nagar	NS	1	0	0	0
08-Dec-2018	Jahangirabad	NS	1	0	0	0
08-Dec-2018	Malir Cantonment	NS	1	1	0	1
08-Dec-2018	Perfume Chowk	NS	1	0	0	0
08-Dec-2018	Sufi Chowk	NS	1	0	0	0
14-Dec-2018	Wakai		1	0	0	0
19-Dec-2018	Boghra Road in Chaman town	NS	1	0	0	0
25-Dec-2018	Phase-V	NS	1	0	0	0
26-Dec-2018	Bhosa Mandi	NS	1	0	0	0

26-Dec-2018	Old Golimar	NS	1	0	0	0
28-Dec-2018	Jarobi Darra	NS	1	0	0	0
31-Dec-2018	Sector I-8/3	NS	1	0	0	0
Total			190	5	1	6

Militant abductions in 2019

- ❖ [Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies, Anti-State Violence Dropped to 15-years low. PICSS Security Report, 9 January 2020](#)
 [...] Security Situation in FATA
 [...] Three incident each of targeted killing and rocket attacks were observed while two incidents of kidnapping were also reported. [...]
- ❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Incidents of Abduction Pakistan:2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

Other Data: Incidents of Abduction

Pakistan: 2019

Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Civilian	SF	Total
01-Jan-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
05-Jan-2019	Saddar area	NS	1	0	0	0
06-Jan-2019	Panjgur bazaar	NS	1	0	0	0
06-Jan-2019	Panjgur bazaar	NS	1	0	0	0
06-Jan-2019	Pishin town	NS	1	0	0	0

06-Jan-2019	Pishin town	NS	1	0	0	0
11-Jan-2019	Nazimabad	NS	1	0	0	0
19-Jan-2019	Pakistan	Islamic State	1	0	0	0
29-Jan-2019	Pakistan	TTP	1	0	0	0
29-Jan-2019	Pakistan	TTP	1	0	0	0
11-Feb-2019	New Karachi		1	0	0	0
12-Feb-2019	Maharah area of Parowa sub-district	NS	1	0	0	0
12-Feb-2019	Maharah area of Parowa sub-district	NS	1	0	0	0
12-Feb-2019	Old Golimar area	NS	1	0	0	0
13-Feb-2019	Norak area	NS	1	0	0	0
13-Feb-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
15-Feb-2019	Orangi Town	NS	1	0	0	0
15-Feb-2019	SITE Town	NS	1	0	0	0
16-Feb-2019	Majeed Market area	NS	1	0	0	0
16-Feb-2019	Majeed Market area	NS	1	0	0	0
17-Feb-2019	Goran area	NS	1	0	0	0

18-Feb-2019	Heronk area of Turbat town	NS	1	1	0	1
18-Feb-2019	North Nazimabad Town	NS	1	0	0	0
19-Feb-2019	ShamSher road area	NS	1	0	0	0
19-Feb-2019	ShamSher road area	NS	1	0	0	0
24-Feb-2019	Mazdoor Chowk of Dera Murad Jamali town	NS	1	0	0	0
28-Feb-2019	Hayatabad	NS	1	0	0	0
03-Mar-2019	Hijrat Colony	NS	1	0	0	0
04-Mar-2019	Mall Road	NS	1	0	0	0
06-Mar-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
08-Mar-2019	Sui	BLT	1	0	0	0
08-Mar-2019	Sui	BLT	1	0	0	0
14-Mar-2019	Chatkan area	NS	1	0	0	0
14-Mar-2019	Zangal Khel area	NS	1	0	0	0
15-Mar-2019	Muddy area in Kulachi tehsil	NS	1	0	0	0
17-Mar-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
18-Mar-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0

21-Mar-2019	Sanjawi	NS	1	0	0	0
22-Mar-2019	Chowrangi	NS	1	0	0	0
22-Mar-2019	Chowrangi	NS	1	0	0	0
24-Mar-2019	Boyatehsil	NS	1	0	0	0
24-Mar-2019	Zadin	NS	1	0	0	0
26-Mar-2019	Nasirabad	NS	1	0	0	0
29-Mar-2019	Boya	NS	1	0	0	0
09-Apr-2019	Ghazi Baig	NS	1	0	0	0
12-Apr-2019	Chaman town	NS	1	0	0	0
12-Apr-2019	Chaman town	NS	1	0	0	0
12-Apr-2019	Hazarganji vegetable market	TTP	1	0	0	0
12-Apr-2019	Hazarganji vegetable market	TTP	1	0	0	0
14-Apr-2019	Bara Gate area	NS	1	0	0	0
14-Apr-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
16-Apr-2019	Hayatabad	TTP	1	0	0	0
16-Apr-2019	Hayatabad	TTP	1	0	0	0

17-Apr-2019	Buzi Pass	NS	1	0	0	0
17-Apr-2019	Buzi Pass	NS	1	0	0	0
22-Apr-2019	Pakistan	NS	2	0	0	0
23-Apr-2019	Domal	NS	1	0	0	0
24-Apr-2019	GhaloTangay	NS	1	0	0	0
25-Apr-2019	Chaman	NS	1	0	0	0
25-Apr-2019	Kot Murtaza	NS	1	4	0	4
27-Apr-2019	Shewa tehsil	NS	1	0	0	0
29-Apr-2019	Ghulam Khan tehsil	NS	1	0	0	0
29-Apr-2019	Sheen Kandai	NS	1	0	0	0
30-Apr-2019	Paroa Tehsil	NS	1	0	0	0
01-May-2019	Alwara Area	NS	1	0	0	0
04-May-2019	Umary area of Mamond tehsil	NS	1	0	0	0
05-May-2019	Manzar Khel area	NS	1	0	0	0
05-May-2019	Mullanpur area	NS	1	0	0	0
06-May-2019	KherQamarin Data Khel	NS	1	0	0	0

08-May-2019	chaman	NS	1	0	0	0
08-May-2019	Data Darbar	NS	2	0	0	0
09-May-2019	Khosat	NS	1	0	0	0
09-May-2019	Khosat	NS	1	0	0	0
11-May-2019	Pearl Continental hotel	BLA	1	0	0	0
11-May-2019	Pearl Continental hotel	BLA	1	0	0	0
13-May-2019	Mini Market area	TTP	1	0	0	0
15-May-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
17-May-2019	Malir Town	NS	1	0	0	0
23-May-2019	Barg	NS	1	0	0	0
24-May-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
24-May-2019	Rehmania mosque, Pashtoonabad	NS	1	0	0	0
24-May-2019	Sachal	NS	1	0	0	0
26-May-2019	Makki Garh	NS	1	0	0	0
01-Jun-2019	Boya	NS	1	0	0	0
06-Jun-2019	Khost	NS	1	0	0	0

07-Jun-2019	Kawas	NS	1	0	0	0
07-Jun-2019	Kharqamar	NS	1	0	0	0
16-Jun-2019	G-9/4 area	NS	1	0	0	0
17-Jun-2019	G-9/4 area	NS	1	0	0	0
17-Jun-2019	Orangi Town area	NS	1	0	0	0
19-Jun-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
24-Jun-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
25-Jun-2019	Nizampur area	NS	1	0	0	0
25-Jun-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
29-Jun-2019	Gulbahar area	NS	1	0	0	0
03-Jul-2019	Buleda Staff in Turbat town	NS	1	0	0	0
03-Jul-2019	Buleda Staff in Turbat town	NS	1	0	0	0
05-Jul-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
09-Jul-2019	Pehalwan Goth	NS	1	0	0	0
10-Jul-2019	Kharqamar check-post	NS	1	0	0	0
10-Jul-2019	Mir Ali town	NS	1	0	0	0

21-Jul-2019	Kotla Saidan checkpoint	TTP	1	0	0	0
21-Jul-2019	Pakistan	TTP	2	0	0	0
23-Jul-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
26-Jul-2019	near Takhta Baig check-post under Jamrud tehsil	NS	1	0	0	0
27-Jul-2019	Gurbaz area	NS	1	0	0	0
27-Jul-2019	Turbat	NS	1	0	0	0
30-Jul-2019	Kirani road area on the outskirts of Quetta	NS	1	0	0	0
30-Jul-2019	Quetta city	TTP	1	0	0	0
30-Jul-2019	Quetta city	TTP	1	0	0	0
02-Aug-2019	Akka Khel	NS	1	0	0	0
02-Aug-2019	Razmak area	NS	1	0	0	0
05-Aug-2019	Niaga Banda area	NS	1	0	0	0
06-Aug-2019	Jinnah Shoe Market	NS	1	0	0	0
06-Aug-2019	Pishin town	NS	1	0	0	0
07-Aug-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
08-Aug-2019	Datta Khel and Mir Ali Tehsil	NS	2	0	0	0

16-Aug-2019	Kuchlak area	NS	1	0	0	0
16-Aug-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
17-Aug-2019	Laddha tehsil	NS	1	0	0	0
18-Aug-2019	Gumadand area	NS	2	0	0	0
24-Aug-2019	Drabin area	NS	1	0	0	0
30-Aug-2019	Gulshan-i-Iqbal Town	NS	1	0	0	0
01-Sep-2019	Charmang area	NS	1	0	0	0
02-Sep-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
03-Sep-2019	Eastern Bypass area	MS	1	0	0	0
05-Sep-2019	Khezai Chowk	NS	2	0	0	0
05-Sep-2019	Khezai Chowk	NS	2	0	0	0
05-Sep-2019	Pishtakhara	NS	1	0	0	0
11-Sep-2019	Mauza Kali Shah	NS	1	1	0	1
13-Sep-2019	Abba Khel area	NS	1	0	0	0
13-Sep-2019	Dir	NS	1	0	0	0
20-Sep-2019	Pakistan-Afghanistan border	NS	1	0	0	0

25-Sep-2019	Eastern Bypass area	NS	1	0	0	0
28-Sep-2019	Chaman area	NS	1	0	0	0
28-Sep-2019	Zafarabad Colony	NS	1	0	0	0
29-Sep-2019	Preedy area	NS	1	0	0	0
30-Sep-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
05-Oct-2019	Azizabad town	NS	1	0	0	0
15-Oct-2019	Double Road area	NS	1	0	0	0
15-Oct-2019	Double Road area	NS	1	0	0	0
18-Oct-2019	Killi Kavar area near the University of Loralai	NS	1	0	0	0
21-Oct-2019	Spinny Road	NS	1	0	0	0
21-Oct-2019	Spinny Road	NS	1	0	0	0
23-Oct-2019	Ramak area	NS	1	0	0	0
25-Oct-2019	Hathyala area of Dera Ismail Khan City	NS	1	0	0	0
28-Oct-2019	Badan area of Mamond tehsil	NS	1	0	0	0
29-Oct-2019	Jamal Mela area	NS	1	0	0	0
04-Nov-2019	Mir Ali area	NS	1	0	0	0

05-Nov-2019	Bacha Abad area	NS	1	0	0	0
05-Nov-2019	Bacha Abad area	NS	1	0	0	0
08-Nov-2019	Nawagai area	NS	1	0	0	0
12-Nov-2019	Arbi Tibba area	BLA	1	0	0	0
12-Nov-2019	Arbi Tibba area	BLA	1	0	0	0
12-Nov-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
15-Nov-2019	Buleli area of old Kuchlak Bypass area	NS	1	0	0	0
25-Nov-2019	Tank area	NS	1	0	0	0
29-Nov-2019	Chauburji area on Multan Road	NS	1	0	0	0
01-Dec-2019	near the Pak-Afghan border	NS	1	0	0	0
03-Dec-2019	Janikhel subdivision	TTP	1	0	0	0
05-Dec-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
11-Dec-2019	Kanju area of Mingora town	NS	1	0	0	0
11-Dec-2019	Lakki Marwat town	NS	0	0	0	0
13-Dec-2019	Gomal area	NS	1	0	0	0
16-Dec-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0

16-Dec-2019	Pakistan	NS	1	0	0	0
18-Dec-2019	Maidan area	NS	1	0	0	0
19-Dec-2019	Khona Kandaw, Pasad Khel	NS	1	0	0	0
Total			174	6	0	6

Targeted killings of Ahmadi community in 2018

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Pakistan: Ensure Ahmadi Voting Rights, 28 June 2018](#)

[...] Anti-Ahmadiyya violence has intensified in the past year, exemplified by the government's pandering to groups using inflammatory language against the Ahmadis and seeking to exclude them from the political process. [...]

In addition to being denied suffrage, the Ahmadiyya community has faced deadly violence by militant Islamist groups. The separate list of all registered Ahmadi voters with contact information places them at greater risk of targeted attacks. In recent years, hundreds of Ahmadis have been injured and killed in bombings and other attacks by militants. [...]

❖ [Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Ahmadi Muslim man shot dead, 5 July 2018](#)

[...] Mr Qazi Muhammed Shoban, an Ahmadi Muslim man, was shot dead in his home in the Nishtar Colony area of Lahore, Pakistan on 25 June.

Two masked men entered his home and one led his wife away at gun point, detaining her in a room with their three children, while the second man shot Mr Shoban three times in the stomach. He was killed instantly.

Mr Shoban, who had become an Ahmadi Muslim 15 years previously, had no personal enmity with anyone and was not involved in any disputes. According to his wife, he had been receiving death threats from people in the local area during the past few days. It is believed that he was targeted because he was an Ahmadi Muslim. [...]

❖ [Daily Times, Five Ahmedis shot, injured in two incidents, 9 July 2018](#)

[...] In Jaranwala, an Ahmedi couple was shot and injured by two identified gunmen who broke into the house in Abu Zar Colony.

In his complaint to the police, Ziaudin, 41, a gold jeweler, said that he was home with his wife and son when two assailants broke in while a third man stood guard at the main door. He said his wife suffered a bullet injury in her thigh as the attackers opened fire.

In another incident reported from Karachi's Korangi Industrial Area late night on Saturday, robbers entered the office of Zafarullah, 25. Zafarullah, with the help of Nasrullah, 20, and Mubeen Ahmed, 20, overpowered one of the robbers, while the other accomplice opened fire. All three men were injured in the attack. They were shifted to a hospital where their condition was stated to be critical.

Talking to Daily Times, Jamat-e-Ahmadiya spokesperson Saleemudin said there had been four major incidents of attacks against Ahmadis after Islamabad High Court's March 8 judgement against Ahmadis. On March 24, a historic place of worship of the community was attacked and demolished in Sialkot. Then on June 27, an Ahmadi was shot and killed in Nishtar Colony area of Lahore. The deceased left behind three differently abled children. He demanded authorities concerned to ensure security of the persecuted

minority community. “Being Pakistani citizens, protection to lives and businesses is our basic rights,” he said.

❖ [Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Pakistan sees second attack on an Ahmadi mosque, 29 August 2018](#)

[...] An Ahmadi mosque in Ghaseet Pura, Faisalabad was attacked by a mob on 23 August 2018, injuring five Ahmadis.

The incident occurred after a minor personal dispute between some Ahmadis and Sunni Muslims escalated into a heated argument. Sources informed CSW that extremist clerics incited anti-Ahmadi sentiments and gathered a mob of 300 to 400 people, some of whom were armed, to attack the mosque. Following an exchange of gunfire, five Ahmadis were injured. The mosque was then set on fire and the main prayer hall along with a nearby Ahmadi home were damaged. [...]

Targeted killings of Ahmadi community in 2019

❖ [Persecution of Ahmadis, A report on persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan 2019, February 2020](#)

[...] An Ahmadi murdered

Dowk Nawa Lok, District Mandi Bahauddin; January 3, 2019: Mr. Mahdi Khan S/O Nawab Khan, 64 was shot dead in Dowk Nawa Lok, District Mandi Bahauddin on January 3, 2019.

Mr. Khan was a devoted Ahmadi, switched over to Ahmadiyya Jamaat with his family in 1994. He was a school teacher and the only Ahmadi in the village. He faced a lot of hostility from his non-Ahmadi relatives and mullas as well. He received threats from extremist religious organizations like Tehrik Labbaik. He was survived by his widow, three sons and five daughters.

Mr. Khan’s bereaved family had to shift residence in search of security, due to severe hostility. [...]

❖ [Pakistan Today, Bodies of two Ahmadi doctors recovered in Attock, 18 March 2019](#)

[...] Bullet-riddled bodies of two doctors abducted a couple of days ago were recovered on Monday. Police said that bodies of Dr Iftikhar and Dr Aziz, who reportedly belong to the Ahmadiyya community, were recovered from a small dam in Dhoke Soba area of Attock district. [...]

1.3.3. New omissions in 2019 (compared to 2018)

Security forces orchestrating “police encounters” in 2019

❖ [TRT World, 'Staged' shootout in Pakistan raises questions about police impunity, 21 January 2019](#)

[...] A family’s killing by police highlights the use of excessive force where trigger-happy policemen claim taking down hardened criminals for the sake of rewards.

If it weren’t for the video of a boy shared on Twitter, no one would have known how police in Pakistan shot dead his parents in cold blood.

“Papa said take money and spare us, but they fired,” nine-year-old Muhammad Umair said from a hospital bed in Lahore on Saturday.

Umair's parents, a 13-year-old sister and a neighbour were killed after the car they were travelling in was fired upon by police in Sahiwal city in the Punjab province.

Initially, authorities claimed they were chasing kidnappers, and a shootout ensued. But witnesses who recorded the incident on their cellphones say they only saw police shooting at the vehicle. [...]

This case is one of the hundreds where, human rights activists say, police have killed unarmed civilians in fake shootouts often under the pretext of killing terrorists. [...]

"It comes down to the question of credibility of our police, which has time and again killed innocent men after labelling them as extremists," Inam Ur Raheem, a lawyer who represents people unlawfully detained by security forces, told TRT World.

"You hear all the noise around this case because videos and pictures came out on social media. Think about all the other incidents where we didn't have such evidence. They go mostly unreported."

Raheem, a retired military officer, says police officers are eager to hunt down militants because of the head money they get as a reward. [...]

"In my experience, around 70 percent of these shootouts are fake. We never get to know the facts — were the victims even terrorists, were they armed," says Raheem. [...]

❖ [Asia Times, Society must refuse to tolerate fake 'encounters', 22 January 2019](#)

[...] Pakistan has been traumatized by the news that four people, including a woman and a 13-year-old girl, were shot dead in an allegedly fake police "encounter" near Sahiwal in Punjab.

A man identified as Khalil was traveling by car to a wedding with his family and a friend when the incident occurred. His three lucky children — two daughters and a son — survived the attack as they were sitting in the trunk of the car.

The police version of the story is that the male passenger, allegedly a terrorist known as Zeeshan, opened fire at Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) officers, who returned fire, killing him and the three others.

However, witnesses said the CTD officers opened fire on the car without provocation. No weapon was recovered from the car. The officers, it is claimed, then took the three children sitting in the trunk to a petrol pump and left them there. [...]

Later, a video surfaced on the Internet that clearly showed the CTD officers open fire on the car and that the police claims were false as not a single bullet was fired by the passengers. However, the PTI-led Punjab and Federal governments continue to defend the incident, saying the CTD only wanted to kill Zeeshan. Punjab Law Minister Raja Basharat described the incident as "collateral damage" and said the CTD only wanted to kill Zeeshan and had no intention of killing Khalil or his family.

❖ [Indian Express, All four accused in the Hyderabad rape-murder case were shot dead by the Telangana Police on Friday morning. Here is the sequence of events that took place, according to the police, 6 December 2019](#)

[...] In first confirmation of the incident, Cyberabad Police Commissioner V C Sajjanar told news agency PTI: "The four accused were killed in an encounter with police."

[...] In a dramatic development in the Hyderabad rape-murder case, all four accused were shot dead by the Telangana Police in the early hours of Friday. The accused were reportedly taken to Chattapally post midnight in an attempt to recreate the crime scene when they allegedly tried to escape after attacking the police. An official told The Indian Express the police fired at them in self-defence and killed all four on the spot. [...]

❖ [Amnesty International UK, India: Urgent investigation needed after rape suspects 'extrajudicially executed', 6 December 2019](#)

[...] Amnesty International is calling for a full, independent and impartial criminal investigation into the alleged extrajudicial execution of four rape suspects by police in India earlier today.

In a shocking incident, four men suspected of raping and killing a 25-year old female veterinarian in Hyderabad last week were reportedly shot dead this morning. The killings occurred when police in the southern state of Telangana had taken the men to the site where the rape was carried out as part of an ongoing investigation.

Police have alleged that the men attempted to grab their firearms, attack them and try to flee, which then led to the police firing at them and subsequently killing them.

Avinash Kumar, Executive Director of Amnesty International India, said:

"Extrajudicial killings are not a solution to preventing rape.

“In a modern and rights-respecting society, using extrajudicial executions to offer justice to victims of rape is not only unconstitutional, but circumvents the Indian legal system and sets a grossly-wrong precedent. An independent investigation is essential.

“The reported delay in filing the First Information Report by the Telangana Police in this case, coupled with the shoddy investigation and the general low conviction rate for those accused of rape, raises deeply disturbing questions about the state of justice in India.” [...]

Use of collective punishment in 2019

❖ [Sayhooon, Balochistan: 35 killed and 42 forcibly disappeared in September alone, 6 October 2019](#)

[...] The Information Secretary of Baloch National Movement Dil Murad Baloch commended the courage of Hani Baloch for exposing the brutalities of Pakistan Army and intelligence agencies. Hani had herself been a victim of enforced disappearances by the Pakistani intelligence agency.

Hani Gul was subjected to enforced disappearance along with her fiancé Mohammad Naseem. After three months of continuous physical and mental torture, she was released by the Intelligence agency, but her fiancé Mohammad Naseem is still in the custody of Intelligence agencies, and his whereabouts are still unknown.

Dil Murad Baloch said, “Pakistani army has been targeting people of Jahoo and punishing them while employing the policy of collective punishment. In the ongoing week-long military operation more than 400 people were arrested and shifted into military torture cells from the villages of Dumb, Gazzi, Sawadan, Karim Goth, Dumb Gazzi, Mullah Gazzi, Koto, Sistagaan, Mallan, Bagaadi Zeelag, and Baag. Reports of them being brutally tortured in the military torture cells are coming out from several people who have been released after this inhuman torture.

The army has imposed a total curfew in the area and no one is allowed to get out of the area, not even to access medical treatment for those who have sustained injuries during their detention; the majority of the released people’s health conditions is also very critical.”

He also stated, “The brutality and oppression are continued in the width and breadth of Balochistan. People are still being extrajudicially killed. Edhi Foundation buried 4 dead bodies without identification in October. A graveyard is built in Tera Mill, Dasht, where dead bodies are buried without identification by the Edhi Foundation. The burying of dead bodies without identification in this modern world verifies that these are the dead bodies of Baloch who are abducted by Pakistani security forces in the last decade.

When a few human rights organizations took notice of the policy of enforced disappearances and abduction or “Kill and Dump”, as a result of this, Pakistan adopted a new policy of fake encounters. Now the new government has raised a graveyard in the name of unidentified people.

Dil Murad Baloch said, “Brutal military operations are going in the areas of Jahoo, Mashkey, Awaran, Kech, Dasht, Kharan, Panjgur, Parom, Washuk and Kalat. The life of Baloch people is safe nowhere in Pakistan. Military and Intelligence agencies have got the license to kill anyone belonging to the Baloch nation which is mounting to a genocidal level. International Laws, rules and regulations and human values are non-existent in Balochistan.” [...]

❖ [Baloch National Movement, Collective punishment is continuously being used in Balochistan: BNM, 14 September 2019](#)

[...] Spokesman of Baloch National Movement said in a statement to the media that the Pakistani army is targeting people in the worst mass executions in Jhao area of Awaran district. In the latest wave of operations, hundreds of people have been detained, shifted to military camps and torture cells in the past four days, where they are being inhumanely tortured. Some of them have later been released and are in very critical conditions.

The spokesman said that most of the areas of Jhao; Gazzi, Sawadan, Kareem Goth, Dumb Gazzi, Mulla Gazzi, Kooto, Sistagan, Malan, Bagari Zeelag and Baag are suffering from this military barbarism. Due to ongoing operation and barbarities, the routine life is suspended. Transport is non-existent, houses and shops are out of stocks. Those who are wounded due to military violence, receiving no medical aid. On the other hand, operations are being intensified, and fresh troops are arriving in the area. The army has created a blockade denying access and exit from the area of Jahoo.

The spokesman said that an undeclared curfew was imposed in Jahoo. The occupying army had blocked all transit routes, the occupying army is creating a new history of brutality in the area. It was for the first time that all the people of such a large area had been detained and transferred to the camps. People had been dumped inhumanly like cattle into army trucks and shifted to military camps, where they are being tortured day and night.

Some of them had been released after the inhuman torture due to shortage of space in the military camp. He said that due to undeclared curfew and the ongoing brutalities, the injured are being provided unprofessional medical services on a self-help basis. Today, those who were released from various areas including Bagadi Zeelag were injured, Mohammed Hassan s/o Sher Mohammad, Imtiaz s/o Eid Mohammed, Sawali s/o Khair Bakhsh, Abdul Qadeer s/o Waleed, Shakeel Ahmed so Dil Murad, Juma s/o Dil Murad, Sabzal s/o Rozi, Mohammad Hayat s/o Naik Mohammad are still an unconsciousness state. Apart from this another estimated hundreds of people are facing brutalities in the camps. Many of them suffered severe injuries as broken legs and limbs and suffered serious head injuries. If the blockade of the area remains in place people many may lose their lives.

Baloch National Movement spokesperson said that the recent wave of brutalities of Pakistan is part of its horrendous policy of collective punishment. Pakistan believes that with state terrorism, it would prevent the Baloch nation from supporting and joining the national movement but history proves in the war of vice and virtue, it seems impossible either to destroy or defeat a nation that stood on the right path. [...]

❖ [Business Standard, Pakistan committing war crimes by kidnapping Baloch women: Allah Nazar Baloch, 18 December 2019](#)

[...] Condemning Pakistan's security forces for kidnapping Baloch women from Quetta, pro-independence Baloch leader Allah Nazar Baloch has accused Islamabad of committing "war crimes".

"Pakistan is committing war crimes in the broad daylight and before the eyes of the world. We do not ask our enemy to spare the freedom fighters and political workers, but we have always said that the world should bind Pakistan to respect the laws of war. We have repeatedly appealed to the world to force Pakistan to abide by the laws of war, but in return, we are getting our women, children and the elderly abducted and killed by Pakistan's armed forces," Allah Nazar said.

"The kidnapping and disappearance of women, little children, and elderly Baloch from Quetta is a clear sign of the continuation of the collective punishment policy and showing utter disregard for the international laws of war through guns," he added.

The Baloch leader called out the United Nations for not taking action in order to save lives of people of Balochistan.

"When we talk of any law, it should not be limited to the creation of the law, but it is the creators' responsibility to enforce it. Similarly, when we talk of war laws or UN conventions, it is the UN's responsibility to bind the signatories to enforce those laws. But surprisingly, the international community with regard to Pakistan, including the United Nations, is clearly oblivious of its duties, which is costing the Baloch people with their lives and livelihood and honor," Allah Nazar said.

He said that under the policy of collective punishment, not only women from different areas are taken away from their homes but they also suffer the torture at secret prisons for a long time.

Allah Nazar cited several examples of recent abductions by Pakistani forces. He said, "Seven-year-old Amin, Izzaton Bibi, Murad Khatoon, Mahnaz Bibi, 60-year-old Haji Dost Ali and 80-year-old Farid Bugti were abducted and their only crime was that they were Baloch,"

Calling Pakistan an "unnatural state" which is based on lies, Allah Nazar said that Baloch have to fight against the "brutality of Pakistan" with collective force.

"The kidnapping of women and children is a policy of collective punishment. Under it, Pakistan is trying to crush the Baloch national movement forever by destroying the Baloch nation. Thousands of Baloch have gone missing in Pakistan's hands and thousands have been martyred already. Women and children and unarmed people are protected under every law of the world in any situation. But Pakistan is an unnatural state which is based on lies. That is why the Baloch have to fight against the brutality of Pakistan with collective force," he added. [...]

Police resources and effectiveness varied by district, ranging from well-funded and effective to poorly resourced and ineffective

❖ [Jahangir's World Times, Police Reforms in Pakistan, 18 March 2019](#)

[...] Policing in Pakistan faces many of the problems affecting the whole Subcontinent. Adding to those is the deteriorating security situation in the country; threats of insurgency, fundamentalism and terrorism, all further compounding the constraints of the police. Under the country's 1973 Constitution, policing is a provincial subject. All four provinces of the country, i.e. Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh, have their own police forces with jurisdiction extending only to their own respective territory – Islamabad Capital Territory has its own police force. Up till 2002, policing in the country was done under the Police Act of 1861. Several efforts were made to reform the outdated legal and institutional framework governing the police but they have been largely futile.

[...] In Pakistan, there is a mixed perception about police. Generally, police personnel are considered inhumane as they hardly take care of common people or of providing justice if one seeks police help. During a long spate of terrorism in Pakistan, the police force, like other law-enforcement and security agencies, suffered a lot in terms of lives, resources and infrastructure. This situation gives birth to a very pertinent question: is the police force too weak to meet up its job requirements or it is the denial of their rights somewhere in the system that police are not performing their job well? A cursory look reveals that despite having quality personnel in their force, police lack technological resources to combat miscreants. Although the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was established, in 2009, to coordinate and integrate the counterterrorism efforts carried out by the military and the police, it failed to take off owing, mainly, to squabbling between and among political leaders.

[...] Today, we are in dire need of reforming the police and the policing. Any efforts for reforming the police require an improvement in working conditions and salaries, as well as a big change in organizational culture. Police must also be provided with technology that is most pressingly needed today to combat criminals and terrorists, and police personnel must have better tools of accessing terrorists' communications, mobile-tracking systems and telephone call data analysis. The objective of police reform is largely achievable through implementation of Police Order, 2002, with minor amendments, throughout the country. In due course, the Order should be extended to the areas of erstwhile FATA as well so that the whole country is governed under a common set of rules. These elements would surely help to create a force that is respected by the people and thus is more effective in maintaining security and stability. Therefore, to regain public trust on police and improvement in the rule of law, the government needs to bring changes within the system and address improper influences.

There is also a need to address the issues of ineffective command and control, inefficiency, corruption, poor public dealing, trust deficit, arbitrary use of power, misuse of authority and political interference, which indeed is a daunting task. Addressing these concerns requires diagnostic approaches coupled with the establishment of public safety apparatus and independent complaint authorities. Though Police Order, 2002, ensured the tenure for senior police officers, public welfare and safety were compromised due to vested interests. Anyhow, there is need to depoliticize the police, equip them and train them properly to increase their effectiveness.

As the PTI [Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf]-led government is gearing up for reforming the police, especially the Punjab police, it must pragmatically address the issue of thana culture that has ossified corruption and criminal behaviour within the police. This has severely challenged efforts that aim to bring relief and justice to those who continue to suffer, regardless of whether they live in urban or rural settings.

[...] And, more recently, the Sahiwal incident (2019) is still an eye-opener for the whole nation and the authorities as well. Police murdered innocent school-going girl along with her parents in front of the eyes of her siblings. This single incident is enough to understand, what is the performance and credibility of our police department.

Today, the demand for police accountability has become vociferous like never before. So, a robust and result-oriented accountability mechanism is a must for improving the performance as well as credibility of the police. [...]

❖ [Newline Magazine, Seeds of Police Reform, 20 May 2019](#)

[...] The police force in Pakistan is one of the most feared and least trusted of all government institutions. It has garnered a reputation for poor internal and external accountability, for corruption at the highest

levels, for being the handmaiden of powerful politicians, feudals and assorted influential members of society, for its involvement in extrajudicial executions, the torture of detainees and harassment and extortion of individuals who seek to file criminal cases or even register a First Information Report (FIR).

[...] These issues became the ground for a civil society initiative for police reforms in Pakistan in 2011. Rozan, an Islamabad based non-profit, along with other like-minded civil society organisations such as Strengthening Participatory Organisation (SPO), Aurat Foundation, Shehri-CBE, and Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) became founding members of the Pakistan Forum for Democratic Policing (PFDP). Other organisations who joined the forum included the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), the Hamdard School of Law, Shirkat Gah, Khwendo Kor, HANDS, the Legal Rights Forum, and the Consumer Rights Commission of Pakistan, among others. Several of these non-profits had experts who had already been working on police reforms, but in pockets, until Rozan took the lead in bringing them under one umbrella. The foundation of the PFDP was laid in Islamabad – a national chapter that organised them into a network.

The PFDP's core focus was to initiate a process among all key stakeholders to reform the police department so that it became an institution that was politically neutral, citizen-centric, accountable and gender sensitive. The forum aimed to examine the criminal justice system in Pakistan as a whole, identify the existing gaps and difficulties as well as provide technical support and lobby for revisions in the rules, procedures and by-laws that governed the police force.

[...] The PFDP held a series of consultations with parliamentarians from all major political parties, including the PPP, the PML-N and the MQM. In 2016, after four years of extensive work covering all the possible challenges and hurdles, and taking on board all recommendations for changes and amendments from key stakeholders, a host of constitutional experts and researchers, the PFDP presented the comprehensive 76-page draft Sindh Police Bill, 2014 to the Government of Sindh and the National Assembly's Standing Committee. The draft bill was subsequently amended, in 2016.

Five years on, the bill has neither been presented nor debated. Unfortunately, police reforms have never been a part of any political party's agenda or manifesto. All they have done is provide lip service to it in the media. There has been total silence on the matter because in reality, no political party wants the police to be empowered. Whether it is the PPP or the PML-N, or other political parties, once they come to power, the first thing they do is establish control over the police force.

[...] The draft of the PFDP's police reform bill handed over to the PPP was sent to the party's secretariat in 2015 – but has not moved forward since.

[...] The core issue is that the police force is deeply politicised. The first priority of any political party after coming to power is the induction of their party workers in the police department. Their intervention extends to the level of the local thanas where they want to place their own people at the SHO, ASI, and even investigation officer level.

[...] The PFDP is now lobbying to implement the Sindh Police notification of November 26, 2009 to establish a Human Rights Cell in every District Police Office (DPO). A D Khawaja had issued a notification in 2012 to implement a notification first issued by the previous IG Sindh. Human Rights (HR) cells in every District Police Office that would ensure specialised handling of cases in four categories: human rights violation, violence against women, bonded labour and children's rights. An amount of Rs 150,000 was to be allocated for each HR cell by the Central Police Office, along with one vehicle. Suitable accommodation with a dedicated staff was to be provided in each District Police Office.

The function of each HR cell would be to establish a special helpline for women; collect, collate, analyse and update data of cases in the four categories; monitor the handling of such cases and inform higher forums if intervention was required to provide justice and relief to the victims of human rights violations; to liaise with the victims for the redressal of their grievances. The Woman's Helpline was to be manned by female police officers. The support mechanism for the HR cell had been provided but never executed.

[...] On January 14, 2019 the then Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mian Saqib Nisar, launched the Police Reforms Committee report titled, 'Police Reforms: The Way Forward,' at a special ceremony which took place in the Supreme Court of Pakistan. The report provided major recommendations and a national roadmap for overhauling the current policing system in keeping with the new challenges.

Senior officials within the police force admit that a vast number among them are not particularly interested in improving their image, primarily because of their own clandestine activities and conduct – and a mind-set they have passed on to their subordinates as well. A majority of them who are close to retirement age cannot be retired prematurely.

In April 2019, the tussle between the Sindh government and the provincial police chief intensified when the police department did not submit a report over the tragic killing of a minor boy on University Road,

that the Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah had sought; the Sindh government indicated that they were unhappy with the federal government-appointed police chief. Subsequently, the IGP, Kaleem Imam, held a Police Darbar at the Karachi Arts Council, followed by a news conference, attended by senior police officers, including Additional IGPs, SSPs and the Karachi police chief, Amir Shaikh.

[...] While apologising to the family of 19-month-old Ahsan Shaikh and admitting the mistakes made by the Sindh Police in the cases of Amal and Nimra, he also said that the media should highlight the positive efforts made by the police department. He pointed out that he was attending a policeman's funeral every 10 days and that over 2,500 police officials were martyred in the line of duty, adding that 71 terrorists and 12 target killers were arrested this year in addition to thousands of other criminals, including the vice-chief of Daesh. He added that the biggest network of the outfit was eliminated under the supervision of DIG Irfan Baloch. Interestingly, IGP Imam announced that a meeting had been held and a five-year master plan was being devised for improving the Sindh police.

"The PFDP's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter was established in 2017 in Peshawar. And in comparison to the Sindh government, the KP government's attitude towards police reforms has been more positive, as is evident from their participation in PFDP activities and willingness to adopt their recommendations and take the relevant steps," says Shariq Imam, PFDP's project lead in Sindh. In 2018, PFDP's Punjab chapter was also launched, and in 2019 plans are to launch in Balochistan as well. With a body of more than 100 civil society organisations representing the academia, national and local CBOs, media, the bar, religious minorities, transgenders, human rights activists and the business community from the federal capital and the four provinces, the forum is gathering momentum on a one-point agenda – to change the police culture and work towards a professional, politically neutral and people-friendly police force. [...]

❖ [The News, Inefficiency and corruption blotch police, 17 June 2019](#)

[...] By and large performance of police has touched the most minuscule ebb with hardly any interest being shown by the government or by the department itself to first to arrest the rot and then take steps to revive the actual spirit of policing, a police officer holding a key office in the Punjab, observed on the condition of anonymity.

It may sound harsh and sort of a sweeping statement but unfortunately this is an undeniable fact that the priorities of a vast majority of our 'Police Service of Pakistan' (PSP) officers have completely changed from policing to self-projection and money collection by using their office. But majority of the PSP officers are intend to concentrate on professional policing with dignity and honour, the pragmatic officer kept up.

Gone are the days when the corrupt or dishonest police officers used to get immediately spotted and marked and would be described as the 'black sheep' of the department by their own brethren in uniform, the officer maintained.

Now are the days that if we find an honest and upright officer, we immediately start eulogizing him with good intention because of their dedication and aim to perform their duties with a noticeable level of honesty and commitment, he said and added "good repute is actually respect from God."

"Any police command doesn't carry a 'magic wand' that he will wave with a flourish and the things will change. We don't expect him to turn the Islamabad Police into a model police force in the country over a short period of time," the officer upheld. "But what pains us to note is that he has yet to take the right steps in the right direction to achieve what he has promised and what he is actually supposed to do as the commander of the police force," he added.

There are still high hopes pinned on him concerning change in the prevailing police culture, which has crept in the federal territory from Punjab and has become so rotten that to change it has become a slogan for the political parties.

Amidst the prevailing environments, made murkier by the political confusion in the country, the inefficiency and corruption throughout the country, particularly, in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police Department is going un-noticed.

Simply, because the evils of corruption, nepotism, dishonesty and abuse of power have dug their claws too deep in our society.

With obvious political influence on the department the 'check and balance system' for monitoring the performance of officials and officers, have tailed off badly, ultimately, reflecting adversely on the crime control and maintenance of law and order situation in the twin-cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

[...] Because of the political deeds, the government could not introduce the police reforms that were their first main concern and prime intention.

[...] Afzal Ali Shigri, author of the police reform, when contacted by this scribe to know, how the police culture could be modified, said, "Yes, a notable number of PSP officers are involved in financial and moral

corruption and getting away from professionalism. It is due to deteriorating situation of the society but lack of training is prime reason of the opting wrong track.” He said that weak command was not fulfilling his responsibilities and most important responsibility is to give motivation to the officers of young lot. Peer pressure from the close relative, friends and politicians put them on wrong track.

He admitted that the political intervention is not confined to the Police department all over the country but almost every department has been manipulated by the politicians for their own gains instead of serving the public and the state. [...]

❖ [Dawn, Sisyphian Task, 21 July 2019](#)

[...] In Pakistan, the police are perceived as inefficient, corrupt, brutal, unprofessional and politicised, but has there been any real effort at reform? Reforms have largely been cosmetic. Instead of structural readjustments, capacity building and financing, the focus has been on increasing the force’s numerical strength. [...]

❖ [European Asylum Support Office \(EASO\), Pakistan Security Situation: Country of Origin Information Report, October 2019](#)

[...] Malik Siraj Akbar [Washington based political analyst and a Baloch journalist] stated that multiple security forces are intertwined in Balochistan and there is an institutional breakdown. The police is responsible for the city centres in Balochistan and the Levies for the outskirts of the province. There is no cooperation between these two forces. When attacks occur, the provincial government relies upon the Frontier Corps. The problem is that there is no follow up according to Malik Siraj Akbar and this leads up to a break up in law and order.⁸⁰⁶ [...]

806 Akbar Siraj M., Skype interview, 23 May 2019

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan \(HRCP\), HRCP Fact-Finding Report on Child Abuse and Murder in Chunian \(Kasur\), 27 September 2019](#)

[...] The district of Kasur in Punjab has resurfaced in the media amid the grisly discovery of four children’s bodies on 17 September 2019: Faizan, Hussnain, Imran and Suleman. It is suspected that they were also subjected to sexual assault.

[...] While the police explained the measures they had taken to some extent, almost all the victims’ families felt they had received very little or no support from the administration and law enforcement agencies and held little hope that the police investigation would reveal the culprit or culprits.

[...] Azhar Hayat, the deputy commissioner in Kasur, described the efforts being made by the civil administration and police to apprehend the culprits. He said that (a) local groups were to be set up to increase awareness of the prevalence of child abuse and prevent such incidents from recurring, and (b) the Child Protection Bureau would be strengthened. To maximize the department’s outreach, the government had decided to set up village/union council-level committees within the next 15 days: in each case, these would consist of the headmaster of the local government school, the imam masjid, the nambardar and other notable people of the village. He could not, however, explain why this had not been done so far, especially following the Zainab Ansari case. When asked whether they planned to include NGOs in this process, Mr Hayat said he would try to do so if he received a specific request. The team felt he was reluctant to involve NGOs in this initiative.

Mr Durrani, DSP Chunian and the investigation officer of the cases, apprised the team of the details of the case and the efforts being made by the police. He said that the DPO’s office had shifted temporarily from Kasur to Chunian, but he was not available to meet the team. Mr Durrani said that the police were obtaining DNA samples of people living within a 3-km radius of each of the victims’ homes before expanding their search. He claimed that the police were almost 80% close to finding the culprit and resolving the case. However, he appeared to attribute the problem of child abuse to poverty and parents’ failure to look after their children. He also said that the police would benefit from obtaining the DNA sam[ples collected during the Zainab Ansari rape-murder investigation. However, so far people had readily complied with requests for their DNA samples.

[...] He also said that the civil administration, especially the police, had responded coldly when he lodged his initial complaint. On the morning of 16 September, local people had gathered to protest against the police and civil administration for their lack of cooperation in the case of the other three missing children – Ramzan’s son disappeared the same evening.

[...] Salman's family informed the HRCP team that he had been missing since 8 August 2019. His parents had repeatedly visited the police station before registering an FIR. However, on every visit, they were told to search for their son themselves, for example, at a relative's home, a neighbor's home or a nearby shrine. The family claims that the police registered the FIR only after the news of these disappearances went viral and after locals held a demonstration demanding justice.

[...] Finally, the team met Ali Hussnain's parents, who live two streets away from Salman's family. [...] His parents visited the police station on 18 August to report the disappearance: they gave the police a photograph of their son and filled out an application. As in Salman's case, the police advised them to search for Ali at Data Darbar or at a neighbor or relative's home. Ali's father showed the team a torn submission slip from the application they had filed. He said he did not have an official copy of the FIR because the police did not give one to him.

[...] Informants claimed that the police had sent the remains of these victims for DNA reports. On 27 September, the media reported that the police had arrested 21 suspects, but had no conclusive evidence yet with which to make any charges. [...]

❖ [The Express Tribune, What's the deal with Pakistan's police?, 10 October 2019](#)

[...] Lack of training and resources, outdated laws stand in way of effective criminal investigation.

[...] If someone were asked to pick an example of what's wrong with Pakistan, many would say the police without any hesitation. From conducting investigations to ensuring public safety, the most basic of law enforcement services, the entire institution is beset by structural weaknesses.

Lack of training, dearth of resources, failure to keep up with modern law enforcement practices, you name it and the police in Pakistan suffers from it. As a result, criminals, both petty and serious, end up operating with impunity and public loses even more faith in their protectors from crime.

Speaking to *The Express Tribune*, both serving and former police officials discussed in detail the structural flaws that keep Pakistan, Punjab in particular, from effective law enforcement.

Tiny budgets, archaic laws

In Punjab, on paper at least, a paltry Rs20,000 is the maximum amount allocated for case investigations, the officials explained. The complete sum, they said, is only reserved for major criminal cases like murder or kidnapping for ransom. Cases of robbery are only allocated between Rs10,000 and Rs11,000.

The entire investigation must be completed within the aforementioned sum, something the officials said is next to impossible to do with honesty and integrity. And if that detail was not so bad on its own, officials said in 95 per cent of cases, inquiry officers never even receive that budget.

That is not to say cases never get resolved. The officials said that extensive scrutiny by the media does propel the police into action and cases do appear to be resolved with uncharacteristic speed. However, these 'high-profile' investigations often involve third-degree torture of suspects, the officials admitted.

This brutal police culture is at least partly a result of archaic laws imposed for a different purpose. The Police Act of 1861, enacted when the British ruled the Subcontinent, is still in place in one form or another, and allows police officials who resort to heavy-handedness an escape from accountability. Interestingly, historians and researchers have pointed out that the British legislation was a means to reinforce hegemony over the natives of the Subcontinent.

Under dictator Gen (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf, the government did chalk out a comprehensive police reform plan in the form of Police Order 2002, police officials said. They pointed out that the order envisioned a police force that would serve as the guardians and servants of the public. It also segregated operational and investigative aspects of the current police structure. But 17 years on, the order has yet to be fully implemented.

Weak training, weak evidence

According to both former and current police officials, one major reason why investigation officers resort to torture is that they neither have the training nor the aptitude that the task requires.

"Conducting an investigation is no piece of cake," said former superintendent of the Punjab Criminal Investigation Agency Umar Virk. "Not every police officer can do it."

Virk insisted that investigators must have an inquisitive personality to begin with before they can receive the necessary training. "In most cases, the police officer is not inquisitive at all."

The former CIA SP bemoaned the current state of police's investigation capacity. "Investigation officers don't even have a proper seating arrangement in police stations," he pointed out. "And of course, many of them are not familiar with modern investigation tools and techniques."

More than 70 per cent of investigation officers are unaware of modern scientific techniques, particularly on how to collect evidence and preserve crime scenes, police officials said. Consequently, the key to

finding perpetrators of criminal actions is often lost right at the beginning of the investigation and police challans and evidence presented in courts are usually weak and unsubstantial.

According to Virk, police investigators' failure to coordinate with concerned government departments and agencies is also a big stumbling block. "While all departments work with coordination while investigating high-profile cases, a majority of everyday cases go unattended and unresolved," he said. Police also face extreme difficulties and delays when they need to obtain footage from the Safe City Authority, records from intelligence agencies or support from forensic facilities, he added.

While Punjab Police is setting up the country's first investigation school in Lahore's Chung Centre, officials said it alone would not suffice. The police needs more human capital and resources to create a better investigation infrastructure, they said.

Cause for optimism?

Speaking to *The Express Tribune*, Punjab Police focal person Additional Inspector General Inam Ghani claimed the investigation branch of the police has been showing better performance over the past few years.

"Police these days make use of modern tools like geo-fencing, mobile phone call locator and other crime scene instruments during investigations," he said. "There has also been an increase in the formation of judicial investigation teams for resolving high-profile cases."

Ghani added that the investigation school would impart modern investigation training to police officers and that his department is working on enhancing the quality and speed with which probes are conducted. Regarding the lack of funds for investigations, the AIG said investigation officers were paid for expenses in an informal way earlier but will now receive money through cross cheques to reduce misstatement opportunities. He also insisted the department has an 'effective accountability mechanism'.

He added that more than 39,000 police officers have received major and minor punishments from the internal accountability branch. [...]

❖ [The News, Resource starved, 26 January 2020](#)

[...] Whether it is improving service delivery, changing public opinion about 'the least trusted institution' in the country – also considered the most feared and corrupt, or ensuring the implementation of an accountability mechanism, the police force has been unsuccessful.

According to some former senior police officers, 17 commission reports (since 1969), and independent analyst, police in Pakistan are faced with numerous challenges that are both complex and multidimensional. One of these is insufficient budget allocations.

The annual budget allocation for police in all provinces has a visible trend – a consistent annual increase of 9 to 10 percent. Total allocation for the year 2019-20 for the Punjab is Rs 115 billion, for Sindh Rs 98.5 billion, for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rs 44 billion, for Balochistan Rs 28 billion and for the ICT Rs 7.5 billion.

[...] Sarmad Saeed Khan, a former additional inspector general (AIG) and head of Welfare and Finance, Punjab Police says that insufficient human resources, financial constraints, and poor infrastructure indicate that reforms have not been introduced seriously.

"The annual increase in budget is due to a few regular features like yearly increments, additional allowances announced by governments, and salaries of new recruits. Budget figures also show that salaries constitute 83 to 84 percent of budget and other non-developmental expenditures add another 9 to 10 percent. Same is the situation with training budget. A major portion of the budget is normally spent on salaries."

A comparison of total provincial budget allocations against population of relevant jurisdictions shows that Punjab Police is the most under budgeted police organisation. The average annual spending on police can be calculated by dividing population of the province with the total annual budget allocation.

"The calculation shows that each person living in the Punjab is spending only Rs 1,046 on its Police Department. Other provinces are better off such as Sindh, where each citizen spends Rs 2,057, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rs 1,572, Balochistan Rs 2,032 and the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, where the allocation stands the highest with Rs 3,742", Khan adds.

Out of the total budget allocation to provincial Police Departments, each district is allocated its share of budget. This district police budget has two major portions, which are salary and non-salary. The non-salary portion includes funds for fuel, stationery, utility bills, cost of investigations, rewards and others. Further, allocation or distribution at the level of police stations is carried out by the head of district police keeping in view the operational and administrative requirements.

A comparative study of funds for cost of investigation conducted by the Pakistan Forum for Democratic Policing (PFDP) in 2019 shows that most of the police stations in the country are receiving a maximum of 300 litres of fuel per month and a maximum of two vehicles (2006 model), one for investigation and the other for operations.

It is surprising to see that the Punjab has five times more cases registered than Sindh but the cost of investigation is less than double that of Sindh. Total cases registered in the Punjab for the year 2018 were 409,030 and funds allocated for investigation were Rs 510 million (Rs 1,247 per case) for the year 2018-19. For the same period for Sindh Rs 321 million were allocated for 83,336 cases (Rs 3,852 per case) registered. Keeping in view the comparison of average investigation cost allocated to Sindh, the allocation to Punjab should be Rs 1,576 million, which means thrice the current allocation.

Muhammad Ali, who leads the PFDP's initiative, says that each police station needs an additional amount of Rs 0.7 million beyond what the budget provides it to cater for fuel, utilities, maintenance and investigation cost.

Another impediment that hinders the capacity building and performance of police is disproportionate allocation of funds, says Ali. "The PFDP study shows that Sindh, KP, Balochistan and the ICT Police are financially better resourced than Punjab. Due to its sheer size, the largest budget allocation to a police department of the country becomes proportionately the smallest when divided over the population of the province and the size of the required infrastructure.

Though the budget of police departments has seen a gradual rise, the insufficient human resource and infrastructure also impact the performance of police stations.

Syed Ibne Hussain, Punjab's former inspector general, says that police to population ratio is often considered a criterion to evaluate the sufficiency of police force in a country, city or municipality. It remains a universally accepted criterion for gauging the sufficiency of a specific police force.

This ratio is calculated as number of police officers per 100,000 people or number of citizens per one police officer. Generally, a police to citizen ratio of 1:450 or 220 officers for a population of 100,000 is taken as the yardstick for analysis.

The PFDP report's data shows that average population to be catered for by a police station in the Punjab is 154,511, Sindh 80,077, KP 104,532, Balochistan 95,957 and in ICT is 91,208. Keeping in view the average in all provinces and the ICT, it can be concluded that Punjab needs more police stations.

In terms of infrastructure, it is found that provinces such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan are able to develop their basic police infrastructure better than Punjab and Sindh. In Balochistan there is only one police station in a rented building out of a total 130 stations. In KP, 273 out of 292 police stations are in official buildings. The Punjab, Sindh, and the ICT still have a long way to go in this regard with 127, 148 and 8 police stations working in rented or non-official buildings respectively.

Achieving infrastructure independence for police stations in the Punjab and Sindh is much more serious, demanding a consistent funding plan, says Ibne Hussain. "Apart from infrastructural development and insufficient human resources, positive results from police force cannot be achieved without providing them with other basic necessities like accommodation, medical facility, better transportation and equipment." [...]

[Police often failed to protect members of religious minorities--including Ahmadiyya Muslims, Christians, Shia Muslims, and Hindus--from attacks in 2019](#)

❖ [Dawn, Forced conversions, 26 March 2019](#)

[...] THE alleged abduction of two young Hindu sisters, Reena and Raveena, from their home in Daharki last week is one of only a handful of the many claims of forced conversions in Sindh that actually gain public attention.

Too often, officials casually lean into the suggestion that such incidents are simply a matter of women deciding to convert and marry of their own free will, a 'family dispute' that should be resolved privately, ignoring the power dynamics that make this so suspect.

The fact is that the majority of new converts in Sindh are young women or minor girls from socioeconomically vulnerable Hindu families.

The nexus of power — politically influential families, clerics and seminaries — behind this phenomenon are also well known to all, while religious minorities have repeatedly pointed to a lack of appropriate concern displayed by police and judicial officers. [...]

❖ [The Diplomat, Hazaras Gripped by Religious Extremism in Balochistan, 16 April 2019](#)

[...] The Hazara community has tried all possible means to make their demands for justice, protection, and security heard: from sit-ins in the cold and heat to worldwide protests; from knocking on government doors to searing hunger strikes. Sad to say, however, none of these efforts have borne fruit – even the international community has turned blind eyes to their plight. In May 2018, Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar declared that Hazaras were effectively undergoing “ethnic cleansing” at the hands of extremist groups and called for serious actions. Later that year Pakistan’s chief of army staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, paid a personal visit to meet the leaders of the community, promising them protection and security. In practice, however, they have defaulted on those promises. That implies either incapability, indifference, or possible complicity with the extremists. [...]

❖ [European Asylum Support Office \(EASO\), Pakistan Security Situation: Country of Origin Information Report, October 2019](#)

[...] According to Sarah Belal in an interview in May 2019, minorities and women were denied protection in Pakistan, but this was also related to the socio-economic background of the victim.⁵²⁵ [...] In terms of protection from sectarian violence, minority communities are inherently more vulnerable and require a higher degree of protection afforded to them by the state - which was lacking at the time of the interview.⁵²⁶

[...] Malik Siraj Akbar [Washington based political analyst and a Baloch journalist] stated that multiple security forces are intertwined in Balochistan and there is an institutional breakdown. The police is responsible for the city centres in Balochistan and the Levies for the outskirts of the province. There is no cooperation between these two forces. When attacks occur, the provincial government relies upon the Frontier Corps. The problem is that there is no follow up according to Malik Siraj Akbar and this leads up to a break up in law and order.⁸⁰⁶ [...]

525 Belal, S., Skype interview, 28 May 2019. Sarah Belal is the executive Director of Justice Project Pakistan (<https://www.jpp.org.pk/>).

526 Belal, S., Skype interview, 28 May 2019

[...] 806 Akbar Siraj M., Skype interview, 23 May 2019

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan \(HRCP\), Balochistan: Neglected Still, 28 October 2019](#)

[...] HRCP’s team met representatives of the Hindu and Christian communities in Quetta and with representatives of the Hindu community in Gwadar to assess the situation of religious minorities in Balochistan. Although there has been a decrease in the number of attacks against religious minorities in recent years, these communities continue to live with an inherent sense of fear.

Over the years, successive provincial governments have attempted to provide security to them and to their places of religious significance and worship, but the respondents to whom HRCP spoke felt that these were merely temporary measures and not long-term solutions that would protect their constitutional freedoms and security. [...]

❖ [Christian Solidarity Worldwide \(CSW\), Religious freedom under attack, 10 December 2019](#)

[...] Christian and Hindu communities remain particularly vulnerable, especially women and girls. Each year hundreds are abducted and forced to convert and marry Muslim men. Victims have little or no hope of being returned to their families due to the serious threats and intimidation from abductors against the girls and their families. This is compounded by the lack of police will to take action, weaknesses in the judicial process and discrimination from both police and judiciary towards religious minority victims.

[...] CSW continues to urge the government to provide protection for religious minorities as directed by the Supreme Court’s June 2014 judgement; to comply with its obligations under international law; and to implement the recommendations made in the 2017 UPR in regard to religious minority communities.

[...] Violations against religious minorities are made worse by existing legislation being poorly implemented, weaknesses in police investigative procedures and judicial processes, and widespread perpetrator impunity.

[...] Religious minorities are particularly vulnerable when it comes to blasphemy cases. In addition to the burden of the accusation itself, the accused often faces threats and discrimination from the community and even prejudice from police authorities handling cases. Patras Masih, a 17-year-old Christian living in Shahdara Town in Lahore, was allegedly accused of sharing 'blasphemous content' on Facebook and was charged on 19 February. Tehreek Labaik Ya Rasool Allah (TLYR) and other religious parties blocked the Shahdara intersection

in Lahore and demanded the arrest of Patras Masih, while inciting violence against his family. Christian residents of Shahdara fled their homes due to fears of communal violence.

After pressure from TLYR, an FIR was registered against Patras Masih by a TLYR supporter under Section 295(C) of the PPC on 19 February 2018. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) took Sajid Masih, the accused's cousin, into custody for questioning on 23 February 2018.

The investigation ended when Sajid Masih jumped from the fourth floor of the FIA building to escape, after he was subjected to torture and humiliation by being ordered to have sex with his cousin, Patras Masih. Sajid Masih suffered broken legs and serious head injuries and an

FIR was filed against him for attempted suicide. The incident was initially denied by the police officials. CSW received reports that even when he was being treated in hospital the doctors discriminated against him and were reluctant to treat him. Patras Masih, who was a minor at the time of the incident (17 years old according to his birth certificate) was tried as an adult because his national ID card showed his age as 21; it had been changed so he could get a job and support his family.

The disturbing nature of this case highlights serious concerns over the ill-treatment of marginalised groups by law enforcement agencies, and also a disregard of their international commitments under the CRC, to which Pakistan is party.

[...] Furthermore, police and security forces fail to adequately protect Shi'as despite intelligence regarding threats against them.

[...] CSW interviewed several Hindu families whose daughters had been abducted. They said they were reluctant to file a complaint or a First Information Report (FIR) due to the poor response and weak investigative procedures carried out by the police, who actively discourage them from filing the FIR. The families reported that if they did file an FIR they were harassed, threatened and intimidated by the abductor and his family before and after the FIR was filed, and during court proceedings.

[...] The Hindu community has raised concerns that police are reluctant to register allegations of forced conversion, and that investigations are poorly conducted due to institutionalised bias against Hindus and Christians. Reports from the Hindu community and activists allege that there are multiple flaws on the part of the police authorities and the judiciary in cases of forced conversion and forced marriage, which include personal religious bias towards the community; failure to follow proper criminal and judicial procedures; a lack of gender-based training; poor knowledge of national legislation; and little sensitivity when dealing with forced conversion cases. These factors, combined with intimidation or threats by abductors, mullahs and their associates within and outside of the courts, in addition to the deprived social and economic status of the Hindu community, contribute to girls and women frequently never being recovered by their families. [...]

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies \(PIPS\), Pakistan Security Report 2019, Conflict and Peace Studies, Volume 12, January-June 2020, 5 January 2020](#)

[...] 2019: Faith-based Violence and Other Incidence: Najam U Din

[...] Media coverage in the last fortnight of 2019 highlights that the authorities tightened security around churches and mass prayer sites across the country ahead of Christmas. The security measures that were deemed necessary included not just walk-through gates, but also deployment of snipers on the rooftops and having bomb disposal units at hand. The Punjab police chief said the idea was to ensure that Christians could celebrate their religious festival without any fear.

[...] Another noticeable one was the targeting of Shia Hazara citizens in a fruit and vegetable market Quetta in a suicide bombing in April. A sectarian militant group as well as Daesh claimed responsibility for that attack. It was a measure of the desperation of the long-suffering Hazaras that they staged a four-day sit-in amid heavy showers and biting cold and demanded that the prime minister visit them to assure them of protection and impartial implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP).

[...] Progress on many of these goals is far from impressive. In December 2019, none other than the chief justice of Pakistan lamented successive governments' failure to implement NAP to wipe out terror. It may be argued that heightened security around religious festivities and security escorts to the particularly vulnerable might fall short any way if the challenge posed by intolerance, open promotion of faith-based hatred and hostility to other people's religions or sect are not confronted and the perpetrators are not prosecuted.

[...] The conundrum is two-fold: firstly, even the authorities themselves are not yet confident that the routine security measures would be sufficient to ward off the threat confronting the citizens affiliated with minority religions or sects. The other, related, aspect is that although increased security on important religious days is meant to reassure citizens from religious minorities, it simultaneously has the unintended consequence of conveying to these same citizens' feelings of continued vulnerability and persistence of the perils they have been facing. And in order to address these threats and these feelings of vulnerability, much hard work remains. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2020: Events of 2019 – Pakistan, 14 January 2020](#)

[...] Women, religious minorities, and transgender people continued to face violence, discrimination, and persecution, with authorities often failing to provide adequate protection or hold perpetrators accountable. [...]

Detainee transfers to internment centers continued under the 2011 Actions in Aid of Civil Power Regulation in 2019

❖ [Geo News, A review of Pakistan's commission on missing persons, 27 May 2019](#)

[...] In its monthly progress report for May 2019, the state's Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (CIED) reported that 6,051 cases had been registered before the CIED since March 2011. Out of these, 3,793 cases had been "disposed", while 2,258 cases were still pending with the Commission. Significantly, out of the 3,793 cases "disposed" by the CIED, 743 "missing people" were traced in internment centres; [...]

❖ [The News, Notices issued as PHC moved against internment centres, 31 May 2019](#)

[...] The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Thursday issued a notice to the federal and provincial government in Constitutional petition challenging the recent legislation meant to protect the laws, which were enforced in the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas, including one governing internment centres.

A division bench comprising Justice Ikramullah and Justice Musarrat Hilali also issued a notice to Attorney General of Pakistan and Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to appear in the court to assist it on legal issues raised in the petition. The bench directed the respondents to submit a reply within 14 days. Shabbir Hussain Gigyani pleaded before the court to strike down the KP Continuation of Laws in Erstwhile Pata Act, 2018, and KP Continuation of Laws in Erstwhile Fata Act, 2019. He insisted the two laws violated the Constitution and the judgments of superior courts.

He said the legislations illegally kept intact all the laws, regulations, rules, notifications meant for the erstwhile Fata and Pata, including the Action (in aid of civil power) Regulation, 2011. The petitioner requested the court to declare unconstitutional the establishment of internment centres in Fata and Pata under the Action (in aid of civil power) Regulation (AACPR), 2011, and order the government to hand over all internees to the relevant courts for trials. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan \(HRC\), KP Reimagined: FATA's Long-Awaited Merger with Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, 17 September 2019](#)

[...] There are also concerns about the criminal justice system, the role of the judiciary and the legal status of prisons and internment centres post-merger.

[...] As per official prison data from the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, there are at least five documented internment centres (in Kohat, Lakki Marwat and Malakand, and Paithom and Fizaghat in Swat).⁹ According to the President of the Peshawar High Court Bar Association, prior to the merger law enforcement agencies had the authority to arrest anyone without any due process and preventively

detain them in an internment centre. He was aware of at least four internment centres (in Swat, Kohat, Mohmand and Miranshah).

Internment centres are operating in the region as a result of the Action (in Aid of Civil Power) Regulation 2011, which essentially allows provincial statutes to abrogate constitutional amendments. Post-merger, it remains unclear how many internment centres exist, how many people are detained in them, how internees are treated, and on what charges they are being held. Even more alarming is that recently the provincial government enacted legislation protecting Presidential Regulations like the Action (in Aid of Civil Power) Regulation 2011. The fact that these internment centres still operate in the tribal districts as well as some settled parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is a clear violation of Pakistan's human rights obligations. [...]

❖ [Dawn, Internment centres, 21 October 2019](#)

[...] IT is a long overdue redressal of rights violations perpetuated against the people of the tribal areas, an injustice that became all the more indefensible after the region's merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in early 2017. On Thursday, the Peshawar High Court declared the scores of internment centres operating in the area since years as being unconstitutional. The two-judge bench also ordered the provincial police chief to assume control of the sites within three days and form a committee to review each case and free the individuals found to be detained on undetermined grounds. Crucially, the Peshawar High Court also struck down the legislation that allowed laws in force in Fata and Pata before their merger with KP to remain extant even after that historic event, whose avowed purpose was to bring these areas into the constitutional fold. These regulations, enacted in 2011 but applied retrospectively from 2008, gave security forces sweeping powers to arrest and indefinitely detain any individual, and also sanctioned the setting up of internment centres. For the government to not only try and maintain the status quo through its legislative powers, but to extend that status quo surreptitiously to the rest of KP through an ordinance passed in August — also declared illegal by the court — defies all norms of justice.

The shadowy detention centres in Fata and Pata, sometimes likened to the Guantanamo Bay prison complex or the 'black sites' in Afghanistan, have long been a stain on this country's reputation. 'Security concerns' is a bogey calculated to elicit unquestioning acquiescence of the wider public to repressive, extralegal measures that jettison constitutional guarantees of due process and security of person. This is nowhere better illustrated than with the internment facilities and all that has become associated with them; including enforced disappearances and unprecedentedly opaque trials by military courts, many of which ended in the death penalty being handed down. [...]

❖ [Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty Gandhara, Apex Pakistani Court Suspends Provincial Ruling Against Forced Disappearances, 21 October 2019](#)

[...] The Pakistani Supreme Court has suspended a ruling by the high court in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province that could have led to the release of thousands of victims of forced disappearances and indefinite detentions

On October 25, Pakistani newspapers reported the Supreme Court in Islamabad suspended an October 17 order by the Peshawar High Court that scrapped the Actions in Aid of Civil Power Ordinance. A larger bench of the Supreme Court is set to hear the case again on November 15.

[...] Pakistani daily Dawn reported that Chief Justice Asif Saeed Khosa declared the case a matter of national importance. Citing the additional advocate general of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a government lawyer, the paper reported that Khosa said the apex court would protect the fundamental rights guaranteed by the country's constitution.

But former lawmaker Afrasiab Khattak argues that the Supreme Court's order will have the opposite effect. He told RFE/RL's Gandhara website that the apex court avoided entertaining numerous lawsuits challenging the Actions in Aid of Civil Power law after it was first introduced in 2011 because the law empowers the country's powerful army to run detention centers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where it carried out its domestic war on terrorism against the Taliban and allied groups.

"Now that the Peshawar high court struck down the black law, the Supreme Court took no time in saving the notorious internment centers by suspending the order of the court," he said.

Last week, Khattak joined several former lawmakers in challenging the Actions In Aid Of Civil Power in the Supreme Court. He says with its suspension of the Peshawar High Court's ruling, the Supreme Court appears to have once again invoked the "doctrine of necessity."

[...] The suspension will have an immediate impact on the fate of thousands of people. A copy of the October 17 move by the Peshawar High Court, the apex court in Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, outlined how to handle the thousands of accused held under various versions of the Actions in Aid of Civil Power.

Pakistani and international human rights campaigners have opposed it since it was first implemented in 2011. But it was retroactively implemented from 2008 to provide the Pakistani security forces with legal cover for arbitrary detentions and other abuses committed during security sweeps in the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Provincial Administered Tribal Areas (PATA). Last year, Islamabad merged the two regions into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where the provincial authorities quietly updated the law in August.

Last week, two high court justices determined the Actions in Aid of Civil Power infringed on the constitutional rights of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's estimated 35 million residents. The judgement ordered provincial police to seize control of detention centers run by the armed forces.

"He [the inspector general of police] is ordered to release all the internees who have not been charged," the detailed judgement obtained by RFE/RL Gandhara noted. "All those who have been charged shall be brought before a competent court of law."

The court ruling highlighted the manner suspects detained under the law were dealt with by the security forces and spy services.

"We have witnessed in a number of missing persons cases that they detained [people] for years and years," the judgment noted while referring to cases of forced disappearances. "In about 15 to 20 percent cases, suddenly [the detainee] appears before the court and says he has been released by the [intelligence] agencies and on the assurance of not disclosing anything."

The ruling specifically mentioned the abuse and lack of legal access for detainees despite spending years at military detention centers, locally called internment centers. "They are denied meeting with their families. Nor is any charge communicated to them. Neither is any time given for persecuting them," the judgement noted.

[...] In late September, a government-appointed Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances said it registered 6,372 cases since its formation in 2011. Local and international rights watchdogs, however, say the number of disappearances is underreported.

The commission claims to have resolved some 4,140 of these cases by tracing victims or determining they were kidnapped or went into hiding because of criminal cases. Some of them are traced to military-run detention camps across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In September, the commission traced four victims to internment centers in the province. With 2,679 cases, the province has the highest number of forced disappearances among all four provinces and regions of Pakistan.

[...] For years, Pakistani and international rights campaigners criticized the Actions In Aid of Civil Power of undermining the human rights of the predominately Pashtun residents of FATA and PATA.

The court verdict acknowledged that the armed forces can be called on to support civilian authorities but noted that Actions in Aid of Civil Power Ordinance "clearly shows a violation of all human rights enshrined in the constitution." It observed that Pakistanis "under no circumstances can be put to the mercy of the armed forces for an indefinite period, or for investigation, persecution, or trial." [...]

❖ [Dawn, Internment centres for miscreants' reeducation: AGP, 16 November 2019](#)

[...] Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Anwar Mansoor Khan has strongly defended setting up military administered internment centres, whose main purpose, according to him, is elimination of terrorism through reeducation of miscreants.

Appearing before a Supreme Court five-judge larger bench, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Asif Saeed Khosa, the AGP on Friday said internment centres are necessary to reeducate miscreants.

He revealed that 72 individuals were rounded up and kept in an internment centre for two years where they were de-radicalized through education. Later, they were released and allowed to return home.

[...] The CJP observed that it might be possible that these internment centres were established on basis of the doctrine of necessity as the country is being targeted by enemy states. The AGP said he will try to convince the bench that the internment centres are working legally and are a need of the hour.

[...] The larger bench is hearing the federal and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) governments' appeal against the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) order to annul the Action (in Aid of Civil Power) Ordinance, 2019.

The ordinance issued by the K-P governor on August 5 gave a legal cover to several detention centres set up during military operations in the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) which was merged with the K-P last year.

The ordinance also assigned wide-ranging powers to authorised officers and armed forces, besides giving an internment authority to detain a suspect until the continuation of action in aid of civil power by the armed forces.

However, the PHC on Oct 18 declared it unconstitutional and in violation of all fundamental rights as enshrined in the Constitution. It directed the K-P government to share the list of inmates with the police department, while directing the provincial police chief to take over all 'illegal' internment centres.

The federal and K-P governments later challenged the PHC order in the apex court. [...]

❖ [Dawn, SC looking into legality of internment centres, says CJP, 25 November 2019](#)

[...] Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Asif Saeed Khosa on Monday said the apex court was only looking into the legal status of the internment centres as the Supreme Court resumed hearing of the appeals of the federal and provincial governments against the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) verdict in the case.

[...] "Terrorists, outlawed groups and non-state actors remain present in erstwhile FATA and PATA," the AGP argued to which Justice Gulzar Ahmed responded that internment centres were established in 2008 but no one had challenged their legal status till now.

"It is the first case of the legality of detention centres," the AGP [Attorney General for Pakistan] said, adding that a new law is being made on internment centres and related legal issues, which will come into force within three to four months.

[...] On a question of the bench, the AGP said that presently the 2011 Act was in force in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. "It is a federal law enacted by the president," CJP Khosa said.

Justice Qazi Faez Isa, another member of the bench, said that the law was enacted by the president in erstwhile FATA but now that the tribal districts have been merged into KP, how is that law still being enforced in the region.

The AGP said that FATA laws have now become provincial laws and a new law is being drafted to cover all these matters.

"Now there is the matter of civil liberties on one side and survival of the state on the other," the CJP said, adding that the new law must provide solution of both issues. [...]

❖ [Amnesty International, Human Rights in Asia-Pacific: Review of 2019 – Pakistan, 30 January 2020](#)

[...] The risk of enforced disappearance was heightened in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province with the promulgation of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Actions (in Aid of Civil Power) Ordinance, 2019. The ordinance gives security agencies a range of abusive powers, including the power to detain people without trial or charge on vaguely defined grounds. The detainees are to be kept at internment centres in the province, where other victims of disappearances have also been kept. [...]

2019 sectarian violence

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020](#)

[...] 1.1 Overview of Security Situation in 2019

[...] Meanwhile, 14 of the reported terrorist attacks in 2019 were sectarian-related – two more from the year before – which killed 38 people and inflicted injuries on 78 others. [...]

Civilians were the apparent targets of 39 attacks (over 17 percent of the total attacks), which claimed 34 lives and injured 123 others. Eleven attacks targeted Shia community members, mainly Hazaras, claiming 32 lives; five attacks on Sunni community members also killed eight people. [...]

Posting an increase of about 17 percent from previous year, 14 sectarian-related terrorist attacks happened in 2019. The number of people killed in such incidents however decreased by over 25 percent, from 51 in 2018 to 38 in 2019. Rival Sunni and Shia violent sectarian groups as well as ISIS-affiliates were involved in perpetrating these attacks.

A combined total of 11 sectarian-related attacks, or over 78 percent of the total 14 such attacks, happened in Karachi (6 attacks) and Quetta (5 attacks) alone. A major sectarian-related suicide attack targeted Hazara community members in Quetta causing significant casualties (21 deaths; 48 injured). Two sectarian-related attacks were reported from Ziarat in Balochistan that claimed five (5) lives, and one such attack happened in DI Khan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Out of the 14 reported sectarian attacks, as many as 10 targeted Shia religious community and scholars, another three (3) Sunni community members and leaders while one attack targeted Bohra community in Ziarat. [...]

2.7 Sectarian Violence

Two more from previous year, 14 incidents of sectarian violence took place in 2019 – all sectarian-related terrorist attacks by violent sectarian groups, without any incident of armed sectarian clash between sectarian groups or communities and individuals. The number of people killed in such incidents decreased by over 25 percent, from 51 in 2018 to 38 in 2019.

Rival Sunni and Shia violent sectarian groups – mainly factions of Lashkar-eJhangvi and Sipah-e-Muhammad, respectively – as well as ISIS-affiliates were involved in perpetrating these attacks.

Out of the 14 reported sectarian attacks, as many as 10 targeted Shia religious community and scholars, another 3 Sunni community members and leaders while one attack targeted Bohra community in Ziarat.

A combined total of 11 sectarian-related attacks, or over 78 percent of the total 14 such attacks, happened in Karachi (6 attacks) and Quetta (5 attacks) alone. A major sectarian-related suicide attack targeted Hazara community members in Quetta causing significant casualties (21 deaths; 48 injured). Two sectarian-related attacks were reported from Ziarat in Balochistan that claimed 5 lives, and one such attack happened in DI Khan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. [...]

Most of the sectarian-related attacks in 2019 were incidents of targeted killing or firing (9 attacks). Four such attacks employed IEDs including one suicide bombing. One attack was carried out with hand grenade blast.

Balochistan suffered most from sectarian violence where 7 sectarian-related attacks killed 31 people and injured 77 others. Meanwhile, as cited earlier, 6 such attacks claimed as many lives in Karachi, provincial capital of Sindh. One sectarian attack claimed one life in DI Khan, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. [...]

❖ [South Asian Terrorism Portal, Civilian Data: Incidents of Sectarian Violence Pakistan:2019, undated \(accessed 22 September 2020\)](#)

Incidents of Sectarian Violence Pakistan:2019

#S. N	Date	Place	Outfit	Incident	Killed					Injured				
					C	S F	M	N S	Total	C	S F	M	N S	Total
1	12-Apr-2019	Hazarganji vegetable market/Quetta/Balochistan	TTP	1	19	1	1	0	21	22	4	0	0	26
2	12-Apr-201	Quetta/Balochistan/Pakistan	TTP	1	8	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0

	9													
3	07-Jun-2019	Kawas/Ziarat/Balochistan	NS	1	2	0	0	0	2	7	0	0	0	7
4	07-Jun-2019	Ziarat/Balochistan/Pakistan	NS	1	2	0	0	0	2	7	0	0	0	7
5	06-Aug-2019	Jinnah Shoe Market/Quetta/Balochistan	NS	1	1	0	0	0	1	13	0	0	0	13
6	06-Aug-2019	Quetta/Balochistan/Pakistan	NS	1	1	0	0	0	1	13	0	0	0	13
7	30-Aug-2019	Gulshan-i-Iqbal Town/Karachi/Sindh	NS	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
8	30-Aug-2019	Karachi/Sindh/Pakistan	NS	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
9	11-Dec-2019	Lakki Marwat/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa/Pakistan	NS	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

	9													
Total		9	3 6	1	1	0	38	6 2	4	0	0	0	66	

2.3.1. Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016), repeated in 2018 and 2019

Student organizations, often with ties to political parties, fostered an atmosphere of intolerance or undue influence that limited the academic freedom of fellow students in 2017

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan \(HRCP\), State of Human Rights in 2017, March 2018](#)

[...] Fundamental Freedoms

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

[...] Ahmadis

[...] An eyewitness at the scene of the shocking lynching of Mashal Khan at Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan said Mashal and Abdullah, two Mass Communication students, were attacked because they were believed to be 'promoting the Ahmadi faith on Facebook'.

[...] An anti-Ahmadi conference was organised by Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadith in Lahore with the support of the Ahle Hadith Students' Federation.

[...] Christians

[...] In August, 17-year-old Christian student Sharoon Masih was ruthlessly lynched by his classmate at Government MC Model High School for Boys in Burewala of Vehari District for daring to drink water from the same glass as him.

[...] Blasphemy laws

[...] The most gruesome example of manipulation of the blasphemy law was Mashal Khan's lynching by a mob at Abdul Wali Khan University on 13 April 2017. Mashal was killed and another student seriously injured by a vigilante mob for allegedly 'publishing blasphemous content online'. The attackers wanted to burn the body before police intervened. The 13-member Joint Investigation Team (JIT) constituted by the Supreme Court of Pakistan cleared Mashal of all blasphemy charges in its final report presented on 3 June 2017, and termed his lynching a premeditated barbaric murder conducted by certain elements in the student body and the university administration.

[...] Campaigns targeting groups and individuals

[...] Later in April, a similar show of solidarity was held outside the Karachi Press Club, where the Attan dance was performed after the IJT [Islamia Jamiat-e-Talaba] beat up students on the premises of Punjab University for cultural activities.

[...] Right to enjoyment

[...] In May, an event celebrating arts and culture at the University of Peshawar was marred by a protest by the student group Islamia Jamiat-e-Talaba (IJT). The event was to feature a session on Pashto poetry and music. The IJT general secretary on campus said the university 's rules prohibited professional musicians from performing in events on campus where boys and girls could mingle. According to him, both male and female students were performing the Attan dance together, which was 'shameful for an educational institute.' He claimed the IJT did not interfere in the function or forcibly stop it but 'just held a peaceful protest against the spread of vulgarity.' [...]

Student organizations, often with ties to political parties, fostered an atmosphere of intolerance or undue influence that limited the academic freedom of fellow students in 2018

❖ [Naya Daur, What is hindering the revival of student politics in Pakistan?, 13 October 2018](#)

[...] Nevertheless, even though private colleges and universities did not allow any form of organized student politics, new groups were allowed to enter. These groups did not operate like the conventional student political outfits. In fact they claimed to shun politics and pretended to help the students become 'better Muslims.' They claimed to be evangelical in nature.

The so-called evangelical outfits slipped into private educational institutions with a more social agenda. Instead of preaching political ideology, these groups emphasized 'good social behavior'.

But when incidents of terrorism involving educated middle-class youth saw an increase from 2013 onwards, many observers claimed that this was due to many private educational institutions allowing so-called evangelical groups to operate on their campuses and which led to some young men eventually join more hardcore militant outfits. Those now lobbying to revive conventional student politics claim that such a revival can neutralize the radicalization of alienated middle-class youth. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan \(HRCP\), State of Human Rights in 2018, 12 February 2019](#)

[...] In January, clashes erupted on the Punjab University campus after the Islami Jamiat Talaba (IJT) heckled Pashtun and Baloch students at their Culture Celebration Day. [...]

Student organizations, often with ties to political parties, fostered an atmosphere of intolerance or undue influence that limited the academic freedom of fellow students in 2019

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, HRCP condemns campus surveillance, 16 October 2019](#)

[...] HRCP's recent fact-finding mission to Quetta found an alarming level of surveillance on campus at the university. While this is in place ostensibly for reasons of security, the recent allegations show how easy it is for surveillance to become a tool of harassment, most often at women's expense. HRCP's sources claim that the surveillance system is used as a means of moral policing as well as to disrupt any potential or suspected political activism among students, allegedly at the behest of the Frontier Corps personnel who are permanently deployed at the university. [...]

❖ [The Diplomat, Pakistan's Dark History of Student Extremists, 16 November 2019](#)

[...] On October 24, the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) and the Higher Education Commission (HEC) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for prevention and awareness of "on-campus" extremism and terrorism.

This MoU did not come out of the blue. Many unaccountable incidents of intolerance and extremism at Pakistan's university campuses pushed concerned authorities to take at least theoretical steps.

[...] Violence, intolerance, and extremism at university campuses are not a new phenomenon in Pakistan. This trend has a history of decades, but it has become unbearable now.

[...] Today, many universities in Pakistan have become breeding grounds for fundamentalism, extremism, linguistic hatred, and violence.

The stories are all-too common: Students falling prey to terrorist organizations; ethnic student organizations having a deadly clash; students murdering one another; students lynching others for violating any social or religious norm in Pakistan.

[...] The seeds of extremism were sown in the 1970s, but Pakistan started reaping them after the 9/11 attacks in 2001. The violence was romanticized by terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

[...] It's not only illiterate youth who are attracted by radicalized organizations; educated Pakistani youth have also joined them. Saad Aziz, a graduate from the Institute of Business Administration IBA, one of Pakistan's top-notch private institutes in Karachi, was arrested for the gruesome shooting of a bus full of Ismaili passengers.

“Students are being used by terrorist outfits in Pakistan. It is not mainly due to the banning of student politics, but the state’s patronization of extremism,” said Khan. “Yes, the state has been patronizing violence and extremism. It can correct its previous mistakes, if it wants.”

A former student at UoK.[University of Karachi] believes local educators also bear part of the blame. “First, the state role is very important, and can’t be ruled out from this. Second, the university administration is either directly or indirectly part of this student extremism,” Jaffer F. Mirza, previously the head of a religious student organization at the University of Karachi, told The Diplomat. “Third, teachers have a huge role in this regard. Like I remember a teacher from our department would change the minds of students from critical thinking to performing Namaz (Islamic daily prayer).”

Many students and politicians we met argue that if the state does not patronize and support extremist ideology, then it should restore student unions immediately.

[...] “We demand the immediate restoration of student unions in Pakistan,” said Bizenjo. “If authorities in power want to bring back the glorious and tolerant days of 1970s, then it should revive student unions.”

The IJT [Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba] Today

After the passage of decades, the IJT is still too powerful to be countered by any other student group. Most of the time, other groups blame the IJT for the violence that occurs at campuses.

However, Abdul Ahad Talha, who heads the IJT at the UoK, denies such allegations.

He told The Diplomat, “The main objective of the IJT is to have an Islamic welfare state like that of Medina and shape the students’ lives according to the teachings of Islam.”

Talha added, “There should be separate education institutes for girls and boys. Otherwise, they must follow the Islamic teachings.”

Many students believe there is no room for dialogue and debate over certain topics — for instance atheism, secularism, and religion — without resorting to violence. But Talha says that he supports dialogues on any topic or issue.

But progressive students, who are in numbers and divided, do not agree with Talha on this point. “You never know when they will label you as a blasphemer,” Lamha Kausar, a student of sociology at the UoK, said. “So I am afraid of asking questions or taking part in any debates related to atheism, secularism, and evolution, because I don’t want to be lynched.

“In today’s Pakistan, the concept of right and left has evaporated,” said Khan. [...]

❖ [VOA News, Students in Pakistan Demand Right to Form Unions, 29 November 2019](#)

[...] Thousands of Pakistani students marched in demonstrations spanning the country Friday demanding the right to once again form student unions, which was taken away in 1984 by military dictator Zia ul-Haq.

[...] Students who want admission in Pakistani colleges and universities have to sign an affidavit, along with their parents that says the student cannot participate in any mobilization or political activity on campus.

Writing on the history and impact of the ban in the English language newspaper Dawn, political activist Ammar Lashari said it suffocated debate.

“Gradually, from the charged campus debates that had once taken place about the education system, economics, politics and governance, the sterile campus discourse that remained became limited to questions of morality and culture, fueled by narratives of civilizational clash in the age of the War on Terror and curricula filled with militarism and religious nationalism,” he wrote.

Authorities, he argued, achieved what they intended — docile student bodies and depoliticized campuses.

[...] While unions are banned in Pakistan, student wings of political parties are still allowed. Describing the difference between the two, student activist Comrade Minhaj said it was the same as the difference between a political party and a parliament.

“In a union, people belonging to different political parties, different ideologies, whether from the right or left, get elected and work together,” he said.

Friday’s march was organized by the Student Action Committee, a newfound umbrella group of left wing, progressive student groups. Students belonging to a right wing student group seemed to stay away in some cities, like the capital, Islamabad, but showed up in others, like Lahore.

A senior leader of Islami Jamiat e-Taliba, the student wing of the Islamist political party Jamaat e-Islami, said his organization was never invited. However, he expressed hope that in the future the groups could work together.

“We have ideological differences, but we can stand together for common student issues, like restoration of student unions, reduction in fees, and correcting mismanagement of universities,” Muhammad Aamir said. [...]

❖ [Dawn, If student unions are bad for education, why are our controlled campuses ranked among the worst in the world?, 29 November 2019](#)

[...] Violence and intolerance have also become a constant feature of campus life — whether in the shape of the hegemony of outfits like IJT or through the presence and continued interference of security forces on campuses, which have resulted in everything from terrorism charges to enforced disappearances of students. Between 2013-19, Scholars at Risk documented dozens of attacks at Pakistani campuses, including 14 targeted attacks on scholars, leading to over 115 deaths and hundreds of injuries.

An education system that had once produced intellectual giants like Abdus Salam and Mahbub ul Haque is now famous for campuses where mobs lynch student activists like Mashal Khan over false blasphemy allegations at the urging of vested interests.

Clearly, the ban has not produced the quality education or the peace it was claimed it would bring. What then, did it actually result in and what can be done about it? [...]

❖ [TRT News, Pakistan's trouble with accepting campus politics, 8 January 2020](#)

[...] In late November, student protests flared across 25 cities in Pakistan, demanding the restoration of student unions and a policy to tackle the growing menace of sexual harassment in colleges and universities.

As a result, there has been an ongoing debate about lifting the ban on student unions across the country. But new and concerning trends such as violent militant groups recruiting students and the culture of intolerance in universities often overshadow the real need for having democratic student bodies to reinvigorate Pakistan's predominantly dynastic and parochial political structure with young blood.

“The seeds of violence in academic institutions were sown in the 1980s after student unions were banned, but after the 9/11 attacks, transnational militant outfits such as Al Qaeda and ISIS [Daesh] focused on varsities and recruited students for militancy,” said Arshad Yousafzai, a Karachi-based journalist who has extensively written about Pakistan's academic institutions.

[...] Even today, violent clashes between student groups have become a regular characteristic of Pakistan's state-run academic institutions. Most recently, a student, who was a member Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba, was killed and dozens were injured in a violent clash on December 12 between two student groups at a government university in Islamabad.

In the absence of free and fair student politics, many generations of students in Pakistan have graduated without experiencing being part of a student union. The element of criminality associated with outlawed student unions has prompted many state-run educational institutions to submit a mandatory affidavit pledging not to partake in any political activity on campus. [...]

[In addition to public schools, there was a large network of madrassahs in 2017](#)

❖ [Dawn, Religious seminaries outnumber schools in Islamabad, 18 March 2017](#)

[...] During the last four years, the federal government did not open any new school in Islamabad but a number of madrassahs cropped up in the capital territory.

According to a latest survey, the number of seminaries in the federal capital stands at 374 and a majority of them are unregistered.

The survey conducted by the capital administration showed that the government had no influence over a majority of the seminaries as 205 of the religious institutions were unregistered.

Interestingly, the religious seminaries (374) outnumbered the capital's 348 educational institutions (191 primary, 60 middle and 97 high schools). However, 43 higher secondary schools, which are generally considered as inter-colleges, are not included in the list of schools.

[...] An official of the ICT administration said since 2013 a number of new madrassahs had been established in various parts of the capital.

“I myself know that six new madrassahs, including one unauthorised, were built during the last a few years,” said the ICT administration official.

He said religious seminaries belonging to four schools of thought were operating in Islamabad with the Deobandis topping the list followed by the Barelvis, Ahl-i-Hadis and Shias. A source said over 25,000 students were pursuing education in the 374 madrassahs having boarding facilities. The source said around 12,000 of the students belonged to Islamabad and the remaining were from other cities and towns.

The survey was carried out on the direction of Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, apparently after the recent spike in terror activities in the country. The survey is being carried out in two phases. In the first phase, the status of the seminaries was checked to conform if they were registered or not. [...]

❖ [United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 20 July 2017](#)

[...] 83. The Committee notes the contribution that madrassas have at times made to enhance access to education, particularly for disadvantaged and marginalized children, and the efforts made by the State party to close down a number of radical madrassas and to regulate the remaining ones. The Committee is, however, concerned at repeated reports that the curricula of some madrassas do not provide any education other than that based on the Qur'an and have content that may incite hatred against religious and ethnic minorities. It is also concerned that some textbooks and curricula used in Sindh and Punjab contain stereotyped images of religious and ethnic minorities (arts. 13-14). [...]

❖ [Ubair Anjum, "Assessing the Need of Modern Education in Madrassah System: A Case Study of Madaris in Lahore," Arts and Social Sciences Journal, 8:4, 28 July 2017](#)

[...] Madaris in Pakistan are divided into five categories depending on the types of sects. Each madrassah has its own board or Wafaq. Each board has its own educational system and different administrative policies. All of these madaris are a member of Ittehad Tanzeemat Madaaris Deenia (ITMD), which is an administrative organization for all madaris, established in 2003. The five types of madaris are following:

1. Tanzeem ul-Madaaris (Barelvi)
2. Wafaq ul-Madaaris al-Arabia (Deobandi)
3. Wafaq ul-Madaaris al-Shia (Shia)
4. Wafaq ul-Madaaris al-Salafia. (Ahl-e-Hadith)
5. Rabita ul-Madaaris al-Islamia (Jama'at-e-Islami).

Barelvi, Deobandi, Shia and Ahl-e-Hadith are considered to be the sects on whom these madaris are based on. While Jama'at-e-Islami do not belong to any particular sect.

Madrassas have their own curriculum which is one of the unique parts of Pakistani education systems. Madrassas in Pakistan serve to provide educational service to the most underprivileged rural communities. Because of their centuries old curriculum, their contribution to the socio-economic development of Pakistan is largely insignificant. They are teaching debilitated curriculum divided into two categories named as Uloom Aliya (sciences and Uloom Aliyya (Arts). The first category contains the Hadith, Fiqh and Quran. This first category is compulsory to study for students. The Second category which is based on Arts is quite flexible, but the method used to teach these subjects are burdensome and boring. The curriculum used for teaching Uloom Aliyya is based on the old philosophical logics which are imprecise and fuzzy. Due to which madrassa students lack modern knowledge and professional skills, which do not allow them to participate properly in various activities based on the economic development and policy. There is contemplative requirement to add subjects like Political Science, History, Economics and comparative religious studies in the curriculum of madrassa education.

[...] Government of Pakistan has initiated several mechanisms to integrate madrassas with the mainstream formal education system, since both systems are running in parallel to each other with minimal or no similarity. Religious madrassas are autonomous institutions their curricula are developed independently "in consultation with their scholars and ulemas".

[...] The faculty of each madrassa institution has different qualification and expertise. Some of them are equipped with highly qualified staff with special teaching expertise while the others do not meet these standards. The curriculum variation coupled with faculty differences may cause quality degradation. The working group on madrassas proposed the certain reforms to align educational system of madrassas with the needs of the modern society. These reforms also highlight that administration of most madrassas is not willing to support the reform efforts. Any policy action taken from government is considered as threat to their independence. [...]

❖ [UNICEF, Situation Analysis of Children in Pakistan \(SitAn\), September 2017](#)

[...] Pakistan's parallel systems of public and private education may be widening inequitable social disparities. Its elite English medium schools are attended by children from privileged backgrounds, offering high quality education that only the rich can afford. Low-cost private schools, public sector schools and *madrassas* are attended by children from more modest or impoverished socio-economic backgrounds. Most of the country's numerous *madrassas* or *deeni madaris* (faith-based religious institutions) do not teach the mainstream public curriculum, which leads to further divisions and exclusions.

[...] early 16,000 non-formal basic education (NFBE) institutions and 12,600 *madrassas* (also known as *deeni madaris*) exist in Pakistan. Among non-formal enrolments for children of primary school age, over half (1.6 million) are in *madrassas*.

[...] Of the total Alternative Learning Programmes 44% are run by the Federal Government, 19.6% by Provincial Governments, 30.9% by *madrassas* and 5.5% by NGOs. [...]

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies \(PIPS\), Pakistan Security Report 2017, Conflict and Peace Studies, Volume 10, January-June 2018, 7 January 2018](#)

[...] Securing Pakistan: Interview with Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Nasser Khan Janjua, National Security Advisor

[...] PIPS: What about "madrassah reforms"? You have also presented your findings on upgrading *madrassas*. Can you elaborate?

NSA: For *madrassah* students, it is not appropriate to use the term "madrassah reforms." They say they are teaching religion. A more appropriate term could be "educational reforms." When it comes to the issue of *madrassah* students, the goal is to mainstream them, providing them with equal opportunity. *Madrassah* administrators have agreed to teach their students English, Mathematics, General Science, and Pakistan Studies. Once they undertake examinations in these subjects, *madrassah* students will be awarded with additional degree by education boards of respective provinces.

By way of these reforms, *madrassahs* students will be able to opt for technical education and even read upto achieve M.Phil and PhD. Provinces will fund these *madrassahs* as a state responsibility and devolved subject.

Moreover, a survey of *madrassahs* has also been conducted: there are 3.5 million *madrassah* students in around 38,000 *madrassahs*. In the future, it is hoped *madrassah* students can join any profession and any field. The suggestion has been shared with *madrassah* educational boards. It will be released after consultations, in 2018. [...]

In addition to public schools, there was a large network of *madrassahs* in 2018

❖ [SPARC, 'State of Pakistan's children 2017', undated \(according to press reports, published in July 2018\)](#)

[...] *Deeni Madaris*

The discussion on inequality and inequity in access to quality education in Pakistan, of necessity requires the mention of the prevalent parallel system of education, that is of "deeni madaris" (seminaries). In order to meet the targets of the SDGs, it is important to regulate *madrassas* and streamline them into education frameworks and policies to advance favourable educational outcomes.

Traditionally *madrassas* have been responsible for providing Islamic education and teachings, often free-of-cost, to a significant proportion of the impoverished and lower-middle income earning population. In the absence of proper educational facilities, *madrassas* serve as a financially viable and attractive option for parents, oftentimes including the provision of food and shelter for students, in addition to religious education.

It is seen however, that the content and methodology of teaching in *madrassas* can, at best, be explained as lacking on certain accounts. The students are not usually trained in subjects other than religious education, which leads them to being handicapped in terms of competing with their counterparts attending formal schooling systems in terms of equal economic opportunities later in life. In addition, there is excessive emphasis on rote learning and a complete absence of critical thinking and questioning (a practice also highly prevalent in most public schools). A more pressing issue is that some of these

madrassas can also be regarded as breeding grounds for militancy of certain religious schools of thought which thus serve as a threat to the security of the society.

According to AEPAM [Academy Of Educational Planning And Management], there are currently 32,272 Deeni Madaris operational in Pakistan.

The total enrolment in these Deeni Madaris is 2.26 million, of which the total male enrolment is 1.46 million (65%), whereas the female enrolment is 0.800 million (35%). Considering a significant proportion of the population opts for this alternative means of education, whether by choice or necessity, it is thus important to ensure that these institutions are operating under the administrative and financial control of the state, and offering equal opportunity of educational success (as defined in the SDGs criterion).

Ongoing reform attempts by the government have included introduction of mainstream subjects like English and Mathematics in the madrassas, but in order to effect change at a greater and sustainable scale, there is a need to incorporate more technical and financial support for these institutions at the administrative level. Increasing the registration of madrassas, encouraging and facilitating mechanisms of accountability, building trust and providing effective forms of communication can go a long way in mainstreaming madrassas into the formal education system. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, “Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her?”, Barriers to Girls’ Education in Pakistan, 12 November 2018](#)

[...] Secondly, there has been a massive increase in the provision of religious education, ranging from formal madrasas to informal arrangements where children study the Quran in the house of a neighbor. Religious schools are often the only type of education available to poor families. They are not, however, an adequate replacement, as they generally do not teach non-religious subjects.

[...] The many poor families who cannot access a government school are left with options outside the government school system. The range of private schools, informal tuition centers, nongovernmental organization (NGO) schools, and madrasas creates a complex maze for parents and children to navigate. Many girls experience several—or all—of these forms of study without gaining any educational qualifications.

[...] There has also been a massive increase in the number of programs offering religious education, ranging from formal madrasas to informal arrangements where children study the Quran in the house of a neighbor.

[...] Madrasas are also frequently used as an alternative for girls not able to attend school.¹⁰⁵ Some children attend madrasa in addition to regular school.

Madrasas and tutoring are often closer and cheaper than school. Shumila, 12, said she and her sisters could only attend madrasa because there was no government school for girls (the closest was a 25-minute walk away) in their neighborhood in Quetta. There was a private school a 10-minute walk away that they could not afford, and six or seven madrasas, including one a two-minute walk from their home which was free.¹⁰⁶

[...] While madrasas and tutoring can provide some education for children who otherwise would go without, they are not an adequate substitute for school. They do not generally teach a full curriculum, and typically lack a path for transitioning students to the formal education system or helping them obtain formal educational qualifications. Students at madrasas often learn only religious subjects. Children attending informal tuition learn whatever the teacher chooses to teach, in whatever time the child shows up.

Najiba, 12, was unable to go to school because there is no government school in her area and her family cannot afford private school. She went to madrasa instead, six days a week for three hours a day, but studied only the Quran, which she said she has now finished.¹⁰⁸

[...] Ayesha longed to study, but her in-laws didn’t allow her to leave the house at all. After leaving her husband, she at last found a way to study, in a madrasa, studying the Quran and Urdu. [...]

105 E.g. Human Rights Watch interview with Eva, Peshawar, August 7, 2017.

106 Human Rights Watch interview with Shumila, Quetta, January 17, 2018.

[...] 108 Human Rights Watch interview with Najiba, Quetta, January 17, 2018.

In addition to public schools, there was a large network of madrassahs in 2019

- ❖ [Reuters, Pakistan plans to bring 30,000 madrasas under government control, 29 April 2019](#)
 [...] Pakistan plans to take control of a network of over 30,000 madrasas as part of a drive to “mainstream” the Islamic schools by bringing them under state control, the military’s spokesman said on Monday. Modernizing madrasa education is a thorny issue in Pakistan, a deeply conservative Muslim nation where religious schools are often blamed for radicalization of youngsters but are the only education available to millions of poor children.
 Pakistan’s new government, facing pressure from global powers to act against militant groups carrying out attacks in India and Afghanistan, has vowed major reforms and Prime Minister Imran Khan has promised the South Asian nation will no longer tolerate such outfits operating on its territory.
 Critics of the madrasa education system say children who attend such schools, where they spend most of the day memorizing the holy Quran, are often ill-equipped for the modern world and some madrasas act as breeding grounds for militant outfits.
 “The government of Pakistan ... has decided that these madrasas will be mainstreamed,” spokesman Gen. Asif Ghafoor told reporters at military headquarters in the garrison city of Rawalpindi.
 “An Islamic education will continue to be provided but there will be no hate speech,” Ghafoor added, saying that religious schools will come under the purview of the ministry of educations and incorporate other subjects into their syllabus.
 Ghafoor said Pakistan would pay for the madrasas by diverting cash to education from the cost of anti-terrorism security operations, which are less necessary because militant attacks have sharply declined in recent years.
 Pakistan has been eager to show that it has severed links with militant groups that have in the past carried out attacks in neighboring Afghanistan and India.
 Last month, the government announced it had taken control of 182 religious schools and detained more than 100 people as part of its biggest push against banned groups.
 Security services have kept a close eye on madrasas associated with radicalizing youths and feeding recruits to Islamist militant outfits that have killed tens of thousands of people in the South Asian country since 2000.
 “The benefit will be that when children grow and leave these institutions they will have the same career opportunities that those coming from a private school have,” Ghafoor said.
 “We want to end violent extremism in Pakistan and that will only happen when our children have the same education and opportunities.”
 He added that madrasa legislation would be presented in parliament in another month and that would be followed by a finalised syllabus, appointment of teachers and allocation of finances. [...]

- ❖ [Christian Solidarity Worldwide \(CSW\), Religious freedom under attack, 10 December 2019](#)
 [...] Where once there was a history of intercommunal harmony in Sindh, this has changed with the increase in madrassas [italics], some of which are known for their religious conversions. The Islamic shrine of Dargah Bharchundi Sharif near Daharki is notorious for such forced conversions. The shrine is led by Pir Abdul Haq aka Mian Mitho, a former member of the National Assembly, who has been mired in allegations of condoning and encouraging forced conversions and marriages. Mitho is known to convert and provide protection to Hindu girls who want to marry Muslim boys, and has said it is his duty to provide protection to anyone who wishes to accept Islam.¹³⁹ Similarly, the Sarhandi shrine in Umerkot district has become synonymous with religious conversions, and is led by Pir Ayub Jan Sarhandi.
 [...] The curricula and textbooks currently used in government schools and madrassas (Islamic religious schools) are rife with biases against religious minorities, and continue to emphasise Pakistan’s fundamental Islamic identity and the need for unity within the Muslim community, to the exclusion of religious minorities. [...]

139 Herald, ‘Leap of faith’, 25 March 2019 <https://herald.dawn.com/news/1152918>

Forcible of return PoR cardholders in 2017

- ❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2018: Pakistan, 18 January 2018](#)

[...] Refugees

Some of the 80,000 Afghans returning from Pakistan in the first eight months of the year reported that Pakistani police continue to extort money from registered and undocumented Afghans in Pakistan. In July, the authorities began to register some of the estimated 1 million unregistered Afghans in Pakistan, although the purpose was not clear, leading to fears authorities might deport them.

[...] According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 82,019 refugees and undocumented Afghans returned or were deported to Afghanistan between January and August 2017. [...]

❖ [Amnesty International, Report 2017/18 – Pakistan, 22 February 2018](#)

[...] REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS

The expulsion of Afghan refugees continued, albeit at a far slower rate. According to UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, 59,020 registered Afghan refugees were involuntarily returned to Afghanistan, compared to more than 380,000 in 2016 (the mass deportations triggered by escalating tensions between the Pakistani and Afghan governments). More than 2 million Afghans remained at risk of being forcibly returned as their legal residency status was due to expire at the end of the year. [...]

Forcible of return PoR cardholders in 2018

❖ [UNHCR, Protection Trends Concerning Afghan Refugees January—February 2018, March 2018](#)

[...] 2. Refoulement in Balochistan

The Frontier Corps (FC) in Quella undertook security operations that resulted the apprehension Afghans including registered Afghan refugees – at various check points in Quella and surrounding areas. These operations have already resulted in the deportation to Afghanistan of a group of PoR cardholders (unconfirmed number is 40 PoR cardholders) and undocumented Afghans from various parts of Quella on 2 January. Both undocumented Afghans and PoR cardholders were taken by the FC from Gulistan area in Qilla Abdullah district to the Chaman border and deported without due process. UNHCR requested the Ministry of SAFRON to raise the matter of refugees' refoulement urgently with all relevant authorities and expressed its grave concern that the FC and law enforcement agencies are not distinguishing between Afghan refugees registered by the government of Pakistan and other Afghan nationals. The Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees in Balochistan has been closely engaged on this matter and continued to raise awareness among the relevant officials of the rights of refugees. UNHCR and ALAC partners reinforcing their awareness sessions for FC and other law enforcement officials in Balochistan. [...] [p. 2]

❖ [UNCHR, Pakistan: Summary of Legal Assistance and Aid Programme, 28 February 2019](#)

[...] In January 2018, the Frontier Corps (FC) in Quella undertook security operations that resulted in the apprehension of Afghans including registered Afghan refugees. Among those arrested, 40 PoR cardholders were deported to Afghanistan without due process. [...]

Forcible of return of PoR cardholders in 2019

❖ [BAMF – Federal Office for Migration and Refugees \(Germany\), Brief update on recent developments \(security, politics, economy\) in selected countries: Pakistan, 17 June 2019](#)

[...] Situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan

On 17 June 2019, negotiations started in Pakistan's capital Islamabad between representatives of Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and the UNHCR on the situation of Afghan refugees in neighbouring countries including possibilities for return to their home country. Official sources say that 1.4m registered refugees from Afghanistan are currently living Pakistan. Estimates suggest that as many unregistered people can be added to this figure. According to the UN, more than half of them are second and third-generation refugees who were born in Pakistan. Although Pakistan adheres to the 'ius soli' citizenship rights, these people are not granted Pakistani citizenship but receive so-called Proof of Registration (PoR) cards

instead, allowing them a temporary stay in Pakistan and free movement in the country, but neither the acquisition of real estate or of certain sorts of movable property nor the attendance of public educational institutions. Also, these refugees face deportation to Afghanistan after the expiry of their PoR card. In general, this document ceases to be valid as soon as the individual concerned leaves the country. The document looks similar to an identity card and bears the heading 'Afghan Citizen - Proof of Registration'. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Afghanistan's refugees: forty years of dispossession, 20 June 2019](#)

[...] In a report published in June 2019, the Institute for Peace and Economics said that Afghanistan is the world's "least peaceful" country, replacing Syria.

Despite this dangerous situation, the international community continues to show a callous indifference towards Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers – who have been forcibly returned in large numbers from Europe, Iran, and Pakistan, or subject to cruel conditions in Australia's offshore detention camps on Manus Island and Nauru.

The forced returns from Europe, Pakistan and Iran add to instability in Afghanistan, according to Chaloka Beyani, the UN special rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons. [...]

❖ [Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre \(IDMC\) and German Humanitarian Assistance, Thematic Series: The Invisible Majority, A Different Kind of Pressure, The cumulative effects of displacement and return in Afghanistan, January 2020](#)

[...] VOLUNTARY OR FORCED RETURNS?

Pakistan's government cracked down on Afghan refugees and migrants in 2016, and many of the 756,000 returns that year were considered involuntary.⁴⁶ "There were almost 1,000 people every day being deported," the MoRR official interviewed for this study said. "But now there are various types of pressure on the refugees so they return."

The number of forced returns has decreased since 2016, but return journeys are rarely free of coercion.

[...] The distinction between forced and voluntary returns tends to be blurred. More than half of the returnees who participated in this study said they had not returned voluntarily. A third of them had been deported and two-thirds had left because of the threat of deportation. Among those who considered their return voluntary, more than a quarter said poor living conditions had been their main motivation. Poor treatment in their host country was the most important second reason cited. Or as one 2019 study put it, many of the nominally voluntary returns are driven "by fears of deportation and uncertain legal status in the case of Pakistan and economic difficulty and integration concerns in the case of Iran".⁴⁸

[...] Sixty-four per cent of the returnees surveyed did return to their area of origin only to leave again, predominantly because of conflict and violence (see figure 4).[...] An April 2019 study determined that many returnees "find themselves living in internal displacement ... either by being unable to return to their place of origin or by being displaced after return to their place of origin".⁵⁶ [...]

46 HRW, Pakistan coercion, UN complicity: the mass forced return of Afghan refugees, 2017; IOM, Baseline Mobility Assessment, Summary Results Round 8, March-June 2019 Afghanistan, 2019 [...]

48 Mixed Migration Centre, Distant dreams: understanding the aspirations of Afghan returnees, 2019[...] 56 EASO, Afghanistan security situation: country of origin information report, June 2019

2.3.2. Omissions in 2018 (compared to 2017), repeated in 2019

[Government intensified its surveillance of activists and journalists online resulting in disappearances of numerous social media activists in 2018](#)

❖ [Amnesty International, Pakistan: Human Rights Under Surveillance, 15 May 2018](#)

[...] Since January 2018, Amnesty International has investigated the source of these attacks as well as similar attacks against activists in Pakistan. Pakistani activists shared with Amnesty International the suspicious emails and private messages they have received in the past two years.

These emails and messages, at times extremely personalized and well crafted, included links or attachments that, when opened, would attempt to infect the victims' computers or mobile devices with

malware. In other cases, the link would connect to fake Google or Facebook login pages designed to steal the passwords of the targets.

These emails and messages are tailored to the activists' professional interests in order to appear credible as well as to lure targets to engage with the attackers. The messages included links or attachments that, when opened, would either attempt to infect their devices with malware, or direct them to fake Google or Facebook login pages designed to steal their passwords. Through the emails and messages received by activists and subsequently shared with Amnesty International, we have been able to undertake a thorough investigation involving comprehensive technical research, which exposed a sustained and sophisticated campaign of digital targeting of human rights defenders that often coincided with particular events. Amnesty International's use of digital forensic techniques and malware analysis enabled us to track the infrastructure through which attackers delivered their malicious code.

This report outlines Amnesty International's findings on the digital threats and attacks faced by human rights defenders and civil society in Pakistan. During this research, Amnesty International has uncovered extensive networks of fake social media profiles used to infiltrate civil society networks and befriend human rights defenders for the purpose of gaining social capital within activist communities and ultimately convincing specific targets to download malicious surveillance technologies and malwares.

Evidence of these threats and attacks is deeply concerning in the already perilous situation for civil society in Pakistan – a country where activists working on a myriad of issues are harassed, attacked and even subjected to enforced disappearance on a regular basis.

[...] This report highlights four different, though interconnected, kinds of digital threats and attacks against human rights defenders in Pakistan.

- A network of fake social media profiles, which use social engineering to access human rights defenders and deliver malicious surveillance technologies to them;
- Targeted phishing attacks attempting to steal Google and Facebook credentials in order to gain access to the human rights defenders' personal and professional information;
- Attacks using a malware commonly known as Crimson, a software Amnesty International believes is custom-built for the attacker. If implanted successfully on a target's computer, Crimson constitutes a significant threat to human rights defenders as they can be subjected to extensive and long-term digital surveillance;
- Lastly, Amnesty International has uncovered a custom-built Android spyware known as StealthAgent. StealthAgent – which has connections to the commercial off-the-shelf spyware known as TheOneSpy – can intercept phone calls and messages, steal pictures, and track victims' locations once installed on a victim's Android phone.

Crimson is believed to be a custom malware developed and operated by a single group. Existing literature from the private sector refers to this particular attacker variously as ProjectM, Operation Transparent Tribe, or Operation C-Major.

[...] Amnesty International therefore calls on the Government of Pakistan – in addition to the recommendations listed at the end of this report – to fully investigate the allegations made in this report; ensure the protection of Deep Saeeda and other human rights defenders being targeted in Pakistan; recognize the important and legitimate role that human rights defenders play; and carry out independent and effective investigations with a view to determining the fate and whereabouts of all people who have been forcibly disappeared.

[...] Once largely confined to restive areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Balochistan, enforced disappearances have now spread deep into the country's heartlands and its main cities. In recent years, disappearances have also taken place in rural Sindh, Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi and Quetta. The victims include bloggers, journalists, activists, students and other human rights defenders whose work is crucial to a free and just society. [...]

❖ [Al Jazeera, Pakistani activist abduction sparks fear of crackdown on dissent, 6 June 2018](#)

[...] The brief abduction of a prominent Pakistani social activist and newspaper columnist known for her strident criticism of the country's powerful military has raised fears of a renewed crackdown on dissent in the South Asian country.

Gul Bukhari, 52, was abducted by several unidentified men while she was on her way to a television news studio in the eastern city of Lahore on Tuesday night, a family member told Al Jazeera.

Several hours later, she was released, they confirmed, although they did not provide any details regarding the attack.

The abduction has heightened fears among activists and journalists, coming as it does in the wake of widespread censorship of news considered critical of the military and certain political parties, and prompted concern that a new wave of intimidation is imminent.

Bukhari, who is a vocal critic of the military and its alleged role in censoring Pakistan's media and involving itself in political processes, was abducted a day after the military warned that it was monitoring social media activity for "anti-state, anti-Pakistan and anti-army" material.

"We do have the capability to monitor social media, to see who is doing what," said Major-General Asif Ghafoor, the military's spokesperson, on Monday. [...]

❖ [Amnesty International, The Year of Shrinking Freedoms, 13 December 2018](#)

[...] Students and activists have reported surveillance and the interception of their communications and monitoring of their social media content by the law enforcement agencies.

[...] This year, activists were picked up from their homes and forcibly disappeared while families continued to spend Eid Holidays at protest camps demanding the return of their loved ones.

[...] None of the released living in Pakistan pursued legal action against their unlawful detention or spoke about their experiences for fear of retribution, including being disappeared once again.

In fact, many victims of human rights violations continue to receive warnings that has meant that silence is the only acceptable position for many of the activists. And stories of enforced disappearances are rarely covered by news outlets. [...]

[Government intensified its surveillance of activists and journalists online resulting in disappearances of numerous social media activists in 2019](#)

❖ [Reporters Sans Frontières \(RSF\), Two Pakistani Shia journalists abducted two days apart in Karachi, 9 April 2019](#)

[...] Reporters Without Borders (RSF) calls for independent investigations into the abductions of two Pakistani journalists in the space of two days in the southern city of Karachi in which members of the security forces were complicit. The journalists must be found quickly and their abductors must be prosecuted, RSF said.

The first victim was Daily Jang reporter Matloob Hussain Mosavi, who was abducted from his Karachi home at dawn on 30 March by a group of masked men in civilian dress, who came in unmarked vehicles accompanied by three police cars. The family has had no news of him since then.

"We have not been told for what crime Matloob was picked up," his brother, Minhaj, told RSF. "The way he was taken away makes it look as though he was a terrorist but he was not a terrorist."

Asked if his 27-year-old brother could have been kidnapped in connection with his work, Minhaj said he could not rule it out because the comments his brother posted on social networks might have annoyed some people.

"He is progressive young man" and he had told his father that, "something is going to happen," Minhaj said. Mosavi's family are members of Pakistan's Shia minority.

The second victim was Aab Takk News TV cameraman Syed Ali Mubashir Naqvi, who was abducted in a similar manner from the TV channel's parking lot in Karachi on the evening of 1 April, his colleagues confirmed to RSF. Disturbingly, he is also a member of the Shia minority.

"Designed to intimidate"

"We call on the Pakistani authorities to shed all possible light on these two disappearances which are disturbing, to say the least, and have the hallmarks of an operation designed to intimidate," said Daniel Bastard, the head of RSF's Asia-Pacific desk.

"The modus operandi, the proximity in time, and the identity of the abducted journalists suggest that the members of the security forces were behind these kidnappings, which violated all judicial procedures. It is up to the Pakistani government to show that the country is still governed by the rule of law."

Currently dependent on investments of Saudi origin, Prime Minister Imran Khan's government is bending over backwards to curry favour with Riyadh. As RSF reported, the interior minister ordered "investigations" last month into six Pakistani journalists who had the impertinence to repeatedly post photos of Jamal Khashoggi, the Saudi journalist who was murdered last October.

It cannot be ruled out that, in the journalists it intimidates, the Pakistani establishment is now trying to reflect Riyadh's constant anti-Shia rhetoric. [...]

❖ [Gulf News, Social networks under intense surveillance in Pakistan, 10 May 2019](#)

[...] Threats, arrests, blocked accounts and restricted posts — Big Brother is watching more closely than ever in Pakistan as authorities accelerate efforts to censor social networks, further reducing an already shrunken space for dissent.

In the past 18 months, a slew of journalists, activists, and government opponents — both at home and overseas — have faced intimidation or the threat of legal action for their online posts.

Censorship is already rife among Pakistan's mainstream media, with the Committee to Protect Journalists noting last year that the military had "quietly but effectively" imposed strict limits on the scope of general news reporting.

Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter were regarded as the last holdouts of dissenting voices, but now that has changed.

In February, authorities announced the creation of a new enforcement arm to root out social media users accused of spreading "hate speech and violence" as part of the crackdown.

Gul Bukhari, a columnist and sometime government critic who was briefly abducted by unidentified men last year, said the assault on social media was carefully organised and coordinated.

"It is the last frontier they try to conquer," Bukhari explained. [...]

The net cast by the crackdown is a wide one, with Shahzad Ahmad, director of the digital security NGO Bytes for All, pointing to the harassment of civil rights activists, the political opposition, and bloggers. [...]

Facebook restricted more content in Pakistan than in any other country in the first six months of 2018, according to its transparency figures from that time period, which are the most recently available.

The social media giant said it restricted the availability of 2,203 pieces of content in total — a seven-fold jump from the previous six months.

All but 87 of the items had been reported by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority "as allegedly violating local laws prohibiting blasphemy, anti-judiciary content, and condemnation of the country's independence," it said.

The Pakistan Telecommunications Authority did not respond to requests for comment. [...]

❖ [Amnesty International, Human Rights in Asia-Pacific: Review of 2019 – Pakistan, 30 January 2020](#)

[...] In March, two journalists from Karachi were disappeared for a month. [...]

2.3.3. Omissions in 2019 (compared to 2018)

The government generally prevented political and civil society groups of any affiliation from holding demonstrations in Islamabad's red zone in 2019

❖ [Samaa, Islamabad's Red Zone has been sealed with containers for the Azadi March protesters, 26 October 2019](#)

[...] Islamabad's Red Zone has been sealed with containers for the Azadi March protesters.

[...] Earlier today, PM Imran Khan's Special Assistant on Political Affairs Naeemul Haque said that the JUI-F marchers will not be allowed to enter Islamabad's Red Zone.

JUI-F workers will gather in different cities on October 27 and march towards Islamabad. The protest seeks to topple PM Khan's government. [...]

❖ [Associated Press, Pakistan Steps Up Security Ahead of Rally in Islamabad, 30 October 2019](#)

[...] Pakistani authorities are deploying police and putting shipping containers in the capital, Islamabad, ahead of the arrival of a massive anti-government protest caravan.

The measures Wednesday are aimed at stopping demonstrations from reaching the Red Zone, where government offices, parliament and foreign embassies are located. [...]

❖ [The Times of India, Protesters led by influential cleric gath in Islamabad, demand PM Khan's resignation, 1 November 2019](#)

[...] Barbed wires have been used as hurdles to prevent protesters if they try to move towards the Red Zone that includes key official buildings and diplomatic enclave.

Additional police and paramilitary personnel have also been deployed in Islamabad to prevent any violence. The Government deployed army personnel in sensitive places in the capital.

The Islamabad local administration requisitioned 111 Brigade in the highly secured Red Zone, which houses sensitive buildings like Parliament House, Supreme Court, Foreign Office, Pakistan Television, Radio Pakistan and Diplomatic Enclave (a cluster of dozens of foreign embassies). [...]

❖ [The Nation, The Right To Protest, 8 November 2019](#)

[...] The Sindh Police's move to apprehend 47 college professors for protesting outside the Chief Minister's office due to delays in their timescale promotions is condemnable. What is worse however, is the stated reason for the arrests; according to the police, the professors were taken into custody for the disruption they were causing to the flow of traffic as a result of their protest. Was the police responding to a complaint by those stuck in traffic, or did it unilaterally decide to take action once it decided that the protest was of no interest to the government?

The problem supposedly wasn't the protest itself, but the fact that it was being held in the 'red zone' of the city; a place where protests are banned. The fact that there is a 'red zone' in Islamabad is at least understandable if not completely agreeable; protesters are normally demonstrating against the state and need government functionaries to see it, but given Islamabad's geography and the location of all sensitive buildings in one place entails that some restrictions must be implemented. Karachi is a different case altogether; why is the Chief Minister's residence and other surrounding areas a sensitive area for protest? Where does the state think protests should be orchestrated, if not in public places where members of the government can see it? [...]

Any undocumented Afghans encountered in the country after the registration period were vulnerable to detention and deportation under the Foreigners Act in 2019

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Afghanistan's refugees: forty years of dispossession, 20 June 2019](#)

[...] Despite this dangerous situation, the international community continues to show a callous indifference towards Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers – who have been forcibly returned in large numbers from Europe, Iran, and Pakistan, or subject to cruel conditions in Australia's offshore detention camps on Manus Island and Nauru.

The forced returns from Europe, Pakistan and Iran add to instability in Afghanistan, according to Chaloka Beyani, the UN special rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons.

[...] At the height, there were more than four million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Over recent years, those numbers have dramatically fallen as the Pakistani government has coerced Afghans into returning, often leveraging their presence as a political tool in disputes with the Afghanistan government

[...] Several times, Pakistan has imposed arbitrarily and unfeasible deadlines. Each time, an extension has been granted reluctantly. Last year, Prime Minister Imran Khan announced that Afghan refugees would finally be granted citizenship, ending their decades in legal limbo. For those born in Pakistan, the Nationality Act entitles them to citizenship – but they have never been granted this right on the spurious grounds that their parents were refugees. But the move was swiftly reversed, and the current "Proof of Registration" cards have been extended to June 2020. [...]

❖ [OCHA, Pakistan: Afghan Refugees and Undocumented Afghans Repatriation \(16 - 22 June 2019\), 26 June 2019](#)

[...] Repatriation of Afghan refugees increased by 15 % compared to 171 refugees that returned between 16 to 22 June 2019. Returns of undocumented Afghans also increased, by 33%, compared to 321 individuals that returned in the preceding week. [...]

❖ [IOM, Return of Undocumented Afghans - Weekly Situation Report \(28 July-3 August 2019\), 3 August 2019](#)

[...] Highlights

282,863 total returns from Iran and Pakistan since 01 Jan 2019

[...] 13,622 total returns from Pakistan

[...] 563 undocumented Afghans returned from Pakistan with 100% of returnees from Pakistan (538 individuals) assisted including 5 individuals from previous weeks.

[...] Situation Overview

In 2019, IOM is projecting a return of over 570,000 returnees from Iran linked to ongoing economic challenges and a minimum of 50,000 returns from Pakistan, a figure that has already been endorsed by the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The remaining undocumented and Afghan Citizenship Card holding caseloads of more than 1,000,000 people may also face deportation from Pakistan in 2019. On 27 June, ACCs were extended until 31 October 2019 by the Government of Pakistan.

[...] Return from Pakistan

According to the Border Monitoring Team of the Directorate of Refugees and Repatriation (DoRR), a total of 563 undocumented Afghans spontaneously returned or were deported from Pakistan through the Turkham (Nangarhar) and Spin Boldak (Kandahar) border crossings from 28 July to 03 August 2019. All of them were spontaneous returnees. This number marks a 52% increase compared to the previous week (370). The total number of undocumented Afghan returnees from Pakistan since 01 January 2019 is now 13,622. IOM provided post-arrival assistance to 101% of undocumented returnees from Pakistan including 6 persons from previous weeks (568 individuals). [...]

❖ [IOM, Return of Undocumented Afghans - Weekly Situation Report \(10-16 November 2019\), 16 November 2019](#)

[...] Highlights

439,100 total returns from Iran and Pakistan since 01 Jan 2019

[...] 18,561 total returns from Pakistan

[...] 343 undocumented Afghans returned from Pakistan this week with 80% of returnees from Pakistan (275 individuals) assisted.

[...] Return from Pakistan

According to the Border Monitoring Team of the Directorate of Refugees and Repatriation (DoRR), a total of 328 undocumented Afghans spontaneously returned and 15 were deported from Pakistan through the Turkham and Spin Boldak border crossings between 10—16 November 2019, a 14% increase compared to the previous week (300). The total number of undocumented Afghan returnees from Pakistan in 2019 is now 18,561. IOM provided post-arrival assistance to 275 (80%) undocumented returnees from Pakistan over the past week. [...]

❖ [UNHCR, Pakistan: Legal Assistance and Aid Programme Update, 1 January—31 December 2019, December 2019](#)

[...] In addition, ALAC [Advice and Legal Aid Centres] partners represented 4 PoCs [persons of concern] in courts who had been charged under the Foreigners Act (dealing with unauthorized stay of foreigners) and other preventive laws (allowing preventive detention of person acting in a manner prejudicial to the integrity, security and defense of the country and public order) subsequently resulting in their release by the orders of the courts. [...]

3.2.2. Improvements in 2018 (compared to 2017 and 2016), repeated in 2019

Restrictions on political parties participating in elections in 2018

❖ [European Union Election Observation Mission Islamic Republic of Pakistan Final Report General Elections, 25 July 2018, October 2018](#)

[...] IX. REGISTRATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

Standards of scrutiny of parties and candidates were inconsistent. Decisions of Appellate Tribunals, which the law says are final, were at times successfully challenged in the High Courts.

a) Registration of political parties

To register with the ECP, a political party must show at least 2,000 members, pay PKR 200,000 in registration fees,⁹³ and certify various matters including non-receipt of foreign funding.⁹⁴ Any registered party is then entitled to a symbol to contest elections.⁹⁵ The law prohibits parties from activities such as promoting hatred and violence but there are certification gaps. For example, a party seeking registration must certify its holding of intra-party elections and its funding sources, but no specific certificate is sought regarding democratic conduct.⁹⁶ The Elections Act does not give a clear mechanism to prevent from contesting the elections parties with links to, for example, armed groups or those who promote violence or extremism.

Some extremist parties, which had used or advocated violence, were able to participate.⁹⁷ For example, the ECP did not allocate an electoral symbol to the Milli Muslim League (MML), a party with links to militant organisations, as the party was not cleared by the Ministry of Interior.⁹⁸ Subsequently, however, members of the MML contested under another party, the Allah-o-Akbar Tehreek (AAT), which was registered. The ECP did not decisively address these weak points.

Enhance political parties and candidates' commitment to democratic principles by establishing standard scrutiny procedures against extremist affiliation, sectarianism, hate speech and the promotion of violence.

Ninety-five of 121 registered parties participated in the elections. Seven parties did not comply with the five per cent threshold for women representation among their candidates.⁹⁹ This legal requirement was not a condition for contesting the elections, hence symbols were allotted to all political parties before the quota compliance was established. No sanctions applied for non-compliance.¹⁰⁰ [...]

93 EURO 1 = PKR 146.50 was the official exchange rate on 1 October 2018.

94 Under the Elections Act, the constitutions of political parties must regulate matters from membership fees to procedures for the selection of candidates by transparent and democratic means. Political parties formed before the Elections Act 2017 were deemed registered, provided they updated the ECP with information on their constitutions, intra-party elections and sources of funding.

95 The Elections Act, section 215. The right to a symbol applies notwithstanding anything in any other law.

96 The Elections Act, section 200, says that a party shall not promote hatred, sectarianism or violence, or propagate opinions contrary to the Constitution, indulge in terrorism or undermine public order or morality. There is no expressed sanction for any breach.

97 The AAT, the PRHP and the TLP.

98 The Ministry of Interior clearance procedure is not articulated in the Elections Act.

99 The TLP, the PRHP, the AAT, the PTI-N, the JUI-S, the PB and the PMA.

100 There is no sanction for non-compliance with the female candidate quota for either newly registered parties or those registered before the new Act. There is no legal quota for women's representation among officers within party structures.

❖ [Freedom House: Freedom in the World 2019 - Pakistan, 4 February 2019](#)

[...] B Political Pluralism and Participation

[...] Pakistan has had a thriving and competitive multiparty system. Several major parties and numerous smaller parties and independents are represented in the parliament and provincial legislatures. However, established parties maintain patronage networks and other advantages of incumbency that hamper competition in their respective provincial strongholds, and a party's electoral success is also influenced by the strength of its relationship with unelected arms of the state. [...]

Opposition parties are free to campaign and contest elections, and each of the last three national elections has resulted in an erstwhile opposition party taking power at the federal level. Opposition forces continue to hold power or significant shares of assembly seats at the provincial level. Most recent complaints of political repression have concerned alleged attempts by the military and reputedly allied groups like the PTI to weaken other parties.

Restrictions on political parties participating in elections in 2019

❖ [Freedom House: Freedom in the World 2020 - Pakistan, 4 March 2020](#)

[...] B Political Pluralism and Participation

[...] Several major parties and numerous smaller parties and independents compete in elections and are represented in the parliament and provincial legislatures. However, established parties maintain patronage networks and other advantages of incumbency that hamper competition in their respective provincial strongholds. In recent years, it has become increasingly apparent that major parties' freedom to operate is related to the strength of their relationships with unelected arms of the state, which have sought to sideline figures not to their liking through a variety of legal and extralegal means. [...]

Opposition parties campaign and contest elections, and each of the last three national elections has resulted in an erstwhile opposition party taking power at the federal level. Opposition parties also continue to hold power or significant shares of assembly seats at the provincial level. However, the military is currently considered more powerful than the elected politicians and the judiciary has shown a willingness to engage in politically targeted accountability. Therefore, opposition parties have increasingly concluded that their most plausible route to power is by winning the backing of the unelected establishment rather than through a straight electoral contest. [...]

4.3.1. Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016)

Public access to information in 2017

❖ [Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2018, 16 January 2018](#)

[...] C3 0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency? 3/4

[...] Accessing official information remains difficult, and existing provisions for obtaining public records are ineffective. At the federal level a 2002 ordinance on access to information remains in force and is widely considered to be weaker than current international standards. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan \(HRCP\), State of Human Rights in 2017, March 2018](#)

[...] Fundamental Freedoms

Freedom of expression

[...] *Every citizen shall have the right to have access to information in all matters of public importance subject to regulation and reasonable restrictions imposed by law.*

Article 19-A [Constitution Of Pakistan)

[...] Rule of Law

Laws and Law-making

[...] Federal

A total of 37 Acts were passed in 2017, a drop from 2016 when 51 laws came into effect.

[...] The Right of Access to Information Act, 2017 repeals the Freedom of Information Ordinance, 2002 and aims to improve access to records held by public authorities and to make the Government more accountable to Pakistani citizens by improving the latter's participation in public affairs.

[...] Recommendations

[...] The Right of Access to Information Act, 2017 gives too wide a remit to the state to exonerate itself from having to allow access to records under the legislation. The Act provides that information is prohibited from disclosure if it is likely to damage Pakistan's international relations, the economy, security and defence. Since even non-governmental organisations are considered to be public bodies under the Act, it is likely that such institutions will be more accountable under this Act than the government. [...]

Public access to information in 2018

❖ [Pakistan Today, Ministries not provided necessary information under federal RTI law, 27 September 2018](#)

[...] Federal ministries have not provided 39 categories of information required under the 2017 Federal Right of Access to Information Act, while 17 ministries have not set up websites and 29 have performed poorly in complying with the proactive disclosure clause, according to a report in the local media.

The statistics were revealed in a study titled *Impeding Transparency, Accountability and Access to Information: Inactive Government on Proactive Disclosure*, conducted by the Institute of Research, Advocacy and Development (IRADA), released on September 28 which also marked the International Day for Universal Access to Information.

The study said federal ministries poor compliance with the act's proactive disclosure clause has hindered transparency, accountability and access to information as a result.

The study found that of the 29 ministries with websites, most perform from poor to bad in terms of the 39 mandatory categories of information they must proactively disclose. Even the best performing ministry in this regard, the Ministry of Finance, scored below 50pc in compliance with proactive disclosure requirements.

Most federal ministries did not provide more than half the categories of information on their websites; only five of the 39 categories of information are provided by a majority – around 80pc – of the 29 ministries.

Under the federal RTI legislation, a 'public body' includes all federal ministries, courts, parliament and several incorporated and unincorporated bodies operating under federal statutes.

According to the law, each public body is required to public and upload to the internet information and records detailed in section 5 within six months of the commencement of the act.

Since the law was enacted on Oct 2, 2017, all public bodies were to proactively disclose this information by April this year. However, most public bodies are lagging behind greatly in ensuring their online presence or by providing a limited amount of information if their websites are running.

IRADA Executive Director Mohammad Aftab Alam commenting on the matter said that "allowing people to seek and receive public documents serves as a critical tool for fighting corruption, enabling citizens to more fully participate in public life, making governments more efficient, encouraging investment, and helping persons exercise their fundamental human rights."

Former senator Farhatullah Babar, who played an important part in enacting the RTI law, said that the law remains inactive for two reasons. First, he said, the information commission, which was to be set up in six months to address complaints against non-compliant bodies has not been established as yet and secondly, the law requires all public bodies to upload basic information such as their actual expenditure, revisions in budget, supplementary grants, performance and audit reports and so on. [...]

❖ [Centre for Law and Democracy, Methodology for Assessing Right to Information Implementation in Pakistan, February 2019](#)

[...] Starting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces in 2013, all of the jurisdictions in Pakistan except Baluchistan have now adopted strong laws giving citizens the right to access information held by public authorities, or the right to information (RTI). It is now over five years since this reform process – sometimes referred to as the second-generation of RTI laws in Pakistan – started and it is time to look into the issue of how well these laws are doing. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan \(HRCP\), State of Human Rights in 2018, 12 February 2019](#)

[...] Fundamental Freedoms

Freedom of expression

[...] *Every citizen shall have the right to have access to information in all matters of public importance subject to regulation and reasonable restrictions imposed by law.*

Article 19-A [Constitution Of Pakistan]

[...] The Institute of Research, Advocacy and Development (IRADA) conducted a study titled *Impeding Transparency, Accountability and Access to Information: Inactive Government on Proactive Disclosure* and released it on the occasion of the International Day for Universal Access to Information (28 September). According to the report, federal ministries had not provided 39 categories of information required under the 2017 Federal Right of Access to Information Act, 17 ministries had not set up websites, and 29 had performed poorly in complying with the proactive disclosure clause.

In releasing the report, the IRADA Executive Director said, 'The right to information empowers citizens to optimally benefit from all recognised rights and to claim others. It also makes governments and public agencies accountable and transparent. Allowing people to seek and receive public documents serves as a

critical tool for fighting corruption, enabling citizens to more fully participate in public life, making governments more efficient, encouraging investment, and helping persons exercise their fundamental human rights.’

The official reluctance for information to be freely disseminated to the public has unexpected consequences. The HRCP Annual Report is a publication on the state of human rights in the country during the year in question, based on factual accounts, news, reports, and even the government’s own published statistics. Within three days of the launch of *State of Human Rights in 2017*, an armed raid—thinly disguised as a burglary—was conducted on the home of the editor. In the hour-long visitation, her phones, laptop, and hard drives were removed and documents inspected. She was questioned on her personal and professional status, including her religion, caste, and who was paying her. Jewellery and cash were also taken. The police admitted that it was no ordinary burglary and she was advised against filing an FIR. An investigation never materialised and formal letters written to the authorities went unacknowledged.

[...] Recommendations

- Set up complete and effective information commissions in each province to implement the state’s obligations under the Right of Access to Information Acts. [...]

❖ [Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2019: Pakistan, 4 February 2019](#)

[...] C3 0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency? 3/4

Accessing official information remains difficult, and existing provisions for obtaining public records are ineffective. At the federal level, a 2002 ordinance on access to information remains in force and is widely considered to be weaker than current international standards. [...]

Public access to information in 2019

❖ [Global Forum for Media Development, Measuring The Implementation Of Access To Information \(ATI\) Laws In Pakistan, 27 June 2019](#)

[...] Together, with the [Pakistan Press Foundation \(PPF\)](#), GFMD have conducted an assessment of the implementation of Access To Information (ATI) laws (SDG 16.10.2) in Pakistan. The country has committed to submit a [Voluntary National Review \(VNR\)](#) during the [High Level Political Forum in July 2019](#).

A consultative meeting took place on February 24th, 2019 with six NGOs and UNESCO representatives in order to discuss the state of public access to information in Pakistan.

Prior to the meetings, data on the access to information was gathered and analysed via the FOIANet-methodology, a CSO-driven research tool.

Data had previously been collected by PPF to support and to facilitate the discussions (based on the [FOIANet methodology](#)). A finalized draft report was issued, with the following main outcomes:

- The **practice of corruption** in Pakistan has made institutions relatively inefficient. Freedom of expression and transparency has always been curtailed by governments. In 2002, Pakistan made its first FOI law. Nowadays, Pakistan **has five independent Right to Information (RTI) Acts**, at the federal level and in its four provinces.
- The Pakistan Right of Access to Information Bill, 2017 Act gives citizens the right to access information held by public bodies. This legal framework set aims to make the **government more accountable regarding corruption and inefficiency**. Any Pakistani citizen can make a request for seeking information regarding public offices. The country has taken several **important steps towards RTI in the shape of provincial and federal legislation**.
- However, the practical reality of implementation of these RTI laws has still to be realized. The outcomes of the shadow report demonstrate **that institutions have not performed their duties regarding the implementation of RTI laws** (poor scores for the availability of information; absence of RTI Commission to support the law; lack of answer to RTI requests).

Thanks to these findings, the following recommendations could be highlighted to improve the implementation of the ATI laws in Pakistan:

- Arrange capacity building session to raise awareness among officials regarding RTI and its benefits (improve performance & transparency as well as building trust of the general public toward institutions).
 - Public institutions should include more detailed information on their website.
 - Appoint an Information Commissioner in all Ministries.
 - Institutions should respect the requirements of the law and respond to RTI requests in a timely manner. [...]
- ❖ [UNESCO, Local action for global goals: Measuring progress on access to information in Pakistan, 18 November 2019](#)
 [...] Despite Pakistan being an early adopter in South Asia of a Right to Information (RTI) law in 2002, the use of the law by its citizens was still limited, according to a report shared by the mission. Accordingly, the KP Province then adopted its own RTI Law and appointed an independent oversight body, the RTI Information Commission (KP RTIC). Civil society and the media have since made many requests, appealed against refusals to disclose information, and used the law to promote government accountability and inform citizens. The Punjab Province also enacted its RTI law in 2013, and as of today, all the jurisdictions in Pakistan except Baluchistan have adopted RTI laws. [...]
- ❖ [Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2020: Pakistan, 4 March 2020](#)
 [...] C3 0-4 pts
 Does the government operate with openness and transparency? 3/4
 There have been some moves to boost government transparency through the passing of Right to Information laws at provincial and federal level; these have been passed in KPK, Punjab, and Sindh. However, only KPK has activated the Information Commission required by the legislation as a watchdog to ensure that government departments fulfil their obligations to respond to information requests. [...]

5.3.1. Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016) all of which continued to be omitted in 2018 and 2019

Security threats against NGO workers in 2017

- ❖ [UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan*, 20 July 2017](#)
 [...] Human rights defenders
 13. The Committee is deeply concerned at repeated reports of abduction, killings and intimidation of human rights defenders, particularly those fighting for economic, social and cultural rights, allegedly committed in some cases by State agents, including members of military intelligence services. [...]
- ❖ [Australian Government - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 1 September 2017](#)
 [...] GROUPS OF INTEREST
 Human Rights Organisations
 [...] 3.116 DFAT assesses that high profile human rights activists who are critical of the Pakistan government or the military face a moderate risk of official discrimination and harassment. NGO workers face a moderate risk of violence by militant groups, particularly those involved in polio vaccination programs. While attacks on NGO workers can occur in any part of Pakistan, these attacks tend to be more prevalent in areas where the general security situation is worse, including in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the FATA and Balochistan. [...]
- ❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2017, 6 January 2018](#)
 [...] Chapter Nine Balochistan security in 2017

[...] Various groups active in Balochistan

TTP and LJ activists have been involved in abducting foreign tourists, local notables and local workers of foreign funded NGOs and successfully extorted ransom from their countries and managements/families. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2018: Pakistan, 18 January 2018](#)

[...] Human Rights Watch received several credible reports of intimidation, harassment, and surveillance of various NGOs by government authorities. The government used the “Regulation of INGOs in Pakistan” policy to impede the registration and functioning of international humanitarian and human rights groups. In July, after its review of Pakistan, the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights said it is “deeply concerned at repeated reports of abduction, killings and intimidation of human rights defenders, particularly those fighting for economic, social and cultural rights, allegedly committed in some cases by State agents, including members of military intelligence services.” [...]

❖ [Amnesty International, Report 2017/18 – Pakistan, 22 February 2018](#)

[...] Space for civil society continued to shrink as the Interior Ministry used broad powers to undermine the ability of human rights defenders and NGOs to work independently. In November, the Ministry of the Interior ordered 29 international NGOs to halt their operations and leave the country within days. [...]

❖ [Asian Legal Resource Centre, Security threats against NGO workers in 2017, 27 February 2018](#)

[...] Due to the worsening climate of fear and intimidation in the country, many activists working for a tolerant, progressive and inclusive Pakistan have been forced into submission or have left the country. Human rights defenders are being increasingly targeted for speaking out. Branded traitors and foreign agents, these agents of change are ostracized and blacklisted. [...]

The year 2017 saw a crackdown on intellectuals and the right to freedom of expression. Five human rights activists, who were staunch critics of state policies, were disappeared within a week. All four were proactive on social media against state atrocities, particularly those meted out to the people of Balochistan. Already being a volatile place for journalists, the state is now extending its influence over digital space, the last avenue of free speech. [...]

Security threats against NGO workers in 2018

❖ [Pakistan The News on Sunday, Civil society under attack, 25 November 2018](#)

[...] The recent government crackdown on International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), when 18 of them were asked to wind up their operations in the country in October, is widely known. However, the effects — direct and indirect — of this on the NGO sector as a whole as well as other pressures that have been plaguing the local NGOs recently, have received significantly less attention.

Amongst the biggest challenges is not only lack of resources to implement projects and the resulting unemployment of project staff, but also the climate of suspicion it has engendered towards the entire sector. [...]

❖ [Amnesty International, Security threats against NGO workers in 2018, 30 December 2018](#)

[...] In 2018, the authorities escalated pressure on human rights defenders and activists peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression. They faced arrests disappearances, accusations of treason, and violent threats from hardliner groups. The government has also stepped up filing complaints with social media companies against its online critics. [...]

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019](#)

[...] Annex 11: Major Targets of Terrorism in 2018

Targets	No. of Terrorist	Attacks	Killed	Injured
[...] NGO/civil society members		1	0	0

❖ [Australian Government - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 20 February 2019](#)

[...] GROUPS OF INTEREST

Civil Society Organisations

[...] 3.181 Non-government health workers face a moderate risk of violence from militant groups, particularly those involved in polio vaccination programs (see Health; again partly due to the bin Laden raid). While attacks on health workers, NGOs, human rights activists and civil society actors can occur in any part of Pakistan, attacks are more common in areas where the security is worse, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the former FATA and Balochistan. Harassment and monitoring by security forces can occur anywhere across the country. [...]

Human Rights Organisations

3.184 DFAT assesses that human rights activists and civil society actors who criticise the government and military, or who work on topics deemed sensitive, face a moderate to high risk of official discrimination including harassment and violence by security forces. DFAT assesses human rights activists face a moderate to high risk of harassment and violence from militant groups. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Freedom of Assembly

[...] In the run-up to the elections, there were numerous reports of crackdowns on human rights defenders, activists, journalists and other members of civil society. [...]

Crackdown on civil society and NGOs

The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) cancelled the registration of 3,000 NGOs and non-profit organisations (NPOs) during 2017-18 on the pretext that their accounts were suspected of being misused for money laundering. This was done in order to comply with the 40 recommendations set by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to curb terror financing and money laundering in Pakistan. In June, the FATF had placed Pakistan on its terror financing watch list. [...]

Enforced Disappearances

[...] The scourge of enforced disappearances continued unchecked across the country in 2018. Political activists, students, human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists, members of religious groups, and various ethnic minorities have all fallen victim in recent years. No one has ever been held accountable. Whether through lack of training or lack of independence, police are powerless to investigate the cases of missing persons where either military or intelligence agencies are implicated. [...]

Security threats against NGO workers in 2019

❖ [Pak Institute for Peace Studies \(PIPS\), Pakistan Security Report 2019, Conflict and Peace Studies, Volume 12, January-June 2020, 5 January 2020](#)

[...] Table 1: Targets Hit in Terrorist Attacks in 2019

[...] NGO / civil society members

[...] No. of Attacks: 1

[...] Killed: 2

[...] Injured: 0

❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2020, 14 January 2020](#)

[...] Human Rights Watch received several credible reports of intimidation, harassment, and surveillance of various NGOs by government authorities. The government used the "[Regulation of INGOs in Pakistan](#)" policy to impede the registration and functioning of international humanitarian and human rights groups. In May, authorities registered a criminal case for inciting violence and defaming state institutions against Gulalai Ismail, a women's rights activist and Pashtun leader, following protests against the rape and murder of a 10-year-old girl in Islamabad. After months in hiding, Ismail [fled to the US](#), where she sought asylum. [...]

❖ [AFP, Pakistani Women's Day marchers hit with stones, sticks, 8 March 2020](#)

[...] Protesters marking International Women's Day in ultra-conservative Pakistan on Sunday came under attack with stones and sticks, reflecting the movement's challenge in a society where females are still put to death under ancient "honour" codes.

During a march in the capital, Islamist counter-protesters hurled sticks and stones at the women's rights demonstrators, causing some injuries and forcing a crowd of people to seek cover before the police. [...]

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Women human rights defenders

25. The Committee is concerned about reports that women human rights defenders and political activists are frequently subjected to reprisals, harassment and threats. It also notes with concern that the procedure for non-governmental organizations to obtain foreign funding lacks transparency and is cumbersome and applied in a discriminatory manner. [...]

The committees [Senate and National Assembly Standing Committees on Law, Justice, Minorities, and Human Rights] did little beyond broad oversight in 2017

❖ [Amnesty International, Pakistan: Submission the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 61st Session, 29 May – 23 June 2017, 1 June 2017](#)

[...] There are concerns that some members of the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Human Rights demand information from the Commission on its everyday operational matters thus undermining its capacity to function independently.⁵² [...]

50 "List of Issues in relation to the initial report of Pakistan", para 1.

51 According to Section 14 of the National Commission for Human Rights Act, 2012, the Commission can only seek a report from the federal government or make recommendations to it in relation to "complaints of human rights violations by members of the armed forces".

52 Amnesty's interviews with key informants, 30 March 2017.

❖ [United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 20 July 2017](#)

[...] 11. While welcoming the establishment of the National Commission for Human Rights, the Committee is concerned that it lacks independence and does not have the capacity to effectively carry out its mandate, as it is not in compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). In particular, it is concerned, despite the information provided by the State party, that a notification of the Government of 9 March 2017 has effectively brought the Commission under the supervision of the Ministry of Human Rights. It is also concerned about the letter of the Ministry of Human Rights dated 2 June 2017 denying the Commission the mandate to submit an independent report to United Nations bodies, including the treaty bodies, and about the recommendations made by the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Human Rights to the Ministry in relation to the Commission's recent engagement with a United Nations human rights treaty body. [...]

The committees [Senate and National Assembly Standing Committees on Law, Justice, Minorities, and Human Rights] did little beyond broad oversight in 2018

❖ [Dawn, Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights discusses attacks on minorities, regrets lack of progress, 4 October 2018](#)

[...] The Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights on Thursday said that all content concerning minorities in textbooks should be reviewed and suggested that any material spreading hate against should be expunged from the syllabus.

The committee, headed by Senator Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar, said these suggestions emanated from a discussion on the state of minority communities in the country.

"We lie on international forums when we say that Pakistan's government is working towards providing our minorities their rights," Khokhar said.

[...] Member of the Pakistan Broadcasters Association (PBA) Duraid Qureshi told the committee that when members of the association raise their voices against censorship, their channels are taken off-air.

"I have come to this meeting on the Human Rights' committee's insistence; now they should take the responsibility of making sure our channels are not taken off-air," Qureshi said.

[...] "The committee will write to all inspectors general of police and tell them to register FIRs against cable operators who take channels off air," the committee chairman assured. [...]

❖ [Dawn, Committee reform, 25 November 2018](#)

[...] OUR nation faces arduous challenges. To address these, the government is assisted by committees and taskforces. On the Senate's website, there are 52 committees. The issues they address affect national security, the economy and our daily lives. Sound decisions can drive Pakistan's progress exponentially; ineffective ones could continue to jeopardise the well-being of millions.

[...] One theme that emerges from such research is that high-performing teams focus on direction, team size, member skills and stability, work structure and team leadership. Our committees portray a picture of dysfunction in light of these principles.

[...] Highly effective teams have a compelling direction. Committees must have measurable goals, reasonable expectations, clear boundaries, and direction. I couldn't find such information about our Senate committees.

[...] Stability is also key to a committee's performance. As already explained, the committees' job is daunting; this places extraordinary demands of focus, time and commitment on the members. These demands warrant that a person should be a full-time member in a single committee only. It appears, however, that many Senate members belong to more than one committee. We have a senator who belongs to all of the following committees: defence, aviation, water scarcity, cause of decline in tax collection of the tobacco sector and narcotics control.

[...] Committees' work structure is another factor. The frequency of meetings and reports, follow-ups, meeting minutes and decision-making methods are all important. All of this information should also be made transparent. [...]

The committees [Senate and National Assembly Standing Committees on Law, Justice, Minorities, and Human Rights] did little beyond broad oversight in 2019

❖ [The News, Chairman slots of 10 NA standing committees still vacant, 19 February 2019](#)

[...] It is established that the standing committees play an important role of oversight and monitoring the working of the relevant ministries. It is stated that in the parliamentary democracies, the committees are regarded as eyes, ears, hands and even brain of the Parliament. Another saying about the importance of the committees is the "Congress in session is Congress in Exhibition, while Congress in its Committee Room is Congress at work".

The rules say there will be a standing committee of the National Assembly for each ministry. The committees examine bills referred to them by the House and submit its reports to it. Upon introduction, a bill other than a Finance Bill stands referred to the standing committee concerned with the subject matter of the bill.

The rules contain special provisions empowering the committees to examine the expenditures, administration, delegated legislations, public petitions and policies of the ministries concerned and their associated public bodies and may forward their findings and recommendations to the ministries, which will submit their reply to the committees. [...]

❖ [Samaa, Standing committees can only meet during NA session now, 9 July 2019](#)

[...] National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser has put a restriction on the meetings of standing committees and sub-committees.

According to a notification issued on Monday, the step has been with respect to the "ongoing austerity measures" of the PTI government. Now, the meeting of all standing committees and sub-committee, excluding the Public Accounts Committee, will be held during the session of the National Assembly.

All such meetings which were fixed before have now been cancelled. The chairperson or conveners of the committees have been asked to ask the speaker for special permission if they need to hold an urgent meeting.

The standing committees play an important role in monitoring the work of relevant ministries. They are regarded as the “eyes, ears, hands and even brain of parliament”, according to the National Assembly website. Pakistan’s assembly comprises 22 standing committees. [...]

❖ [Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development And Transparency \(PILDAT\), A Briefing Paper for Women Legislators in Pakistan Effective Role in Committees, 6 November 2019](#)

[...] In Pakistan's legislatures, while each Assembly can establish as many committees as it requires for specific issues and sometimes for a limited timespan, Standing Committees are established to maintain consistent oversight on the executive, with one Standing Committee established in each legislature to oversee each ministry or department of the federal and provincial governments.

Each committee formed in a legislature is a microcosm of the assembly, represents the political diversity in the assembly, and carries out a scrutiny or a review on a particular subject to advise the house. In addition to review of legislation or legislative amendment, standing committees formed to oversee ministries or departments of a government, also have the powers to examine budget, expenditures, administration, delegated legislation, public petitions and policies of a ministry or department, its associated public bodies, and advise ministries/departments of their recommendations. However, these powers are not available to committees across all legislatures in Pakistan.

In Pakistan's Parliament, both the National Assembly and the Senate, committees have suo moto powers. Suo motu is a Latin legal term which translates as “on its own motion.” In the case of powers of a committee, it means that a committee can act on its own cognizance in respect of a Ministry concerned and its attached Divisions and public bodies. Suo Motu powers give a committee the authority to examine policies, budgetary allocation, administration, legislation, and invite and address public petitions relating to a ministry and its attached divisions.

However, while Standing Committee across provincial legislatures have been granted the powers to 'examine a bill or any matter referred to it by the Assembly,' these do not always have the wider powers of review of a ministry's policies and functioning that are available with committees in the Parliament. In provincial legislatures, committees are often dependent on the Speaker of a House, or the Assembly, to delegate functions to a committee. Following are the key provisions regarding wider functions of committees across Pakistan's provincial legislatures:

1. According to the Rules of Procedure in the Provincial Assembly of Balochistan⁶ Standing Committees are to be elected by the Assembly within ninety days after the election of Leader of the House to “deal with legislation relating to the Department or Departments of the Provincial Government.” In addition to the powers to examine a bill, in March 2018, the Assembly rules were amended to make it mandatory for the concerned Government Department to “brief the Committee about functions, performance and challenges of the Department.” Based on these briefings by each department to each Standing Committee following the election of Committee Chair, each Standing Committee, was given the powers to “formulate a Comprehensive Report containing recommendations for improvement in functioning of said Department and lay it before the Assembly for consideration.” Standing Committees in Balochistan Assembly, therefore have been given wider powers of review over the concerned government department but are allowed to do so only once at the beginning of each term.

2. According to the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Procedure and Conduct of Business Rules, 1988 (as modified up to July 17, 2018),⁷ Select Committees can be formed to review a bill while Standing Committee are formed for each Department of the Government to 'deal with subjects assigned to the department concerned under the Rules of Business of the Government or any other matter referred to it by the Assembly.' Rule 155 states that each “Committee shall examine a Bill, subject or matter referred to it by the Assembly and shall submit its reports to the Assembly with such recommendations, including suggestions for legislation, if any, as it may deem necessary.” Standing Committees in Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, therefore, do not have suo motu powers.

3. Rule 155 of the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab states that the “Assembly may, on a motion made by a member, remit to the Committee concerned any subject or matter which may be studied by that Committee.”⁸ The rules, therefore, do not assign rights to a committee to meet on its own and examine wider matters relating to a ministry or division.

4. The Provincial Assembly of Sindh has revised its Rules of Procedures in December 2013 to grant these wider powers to its Standing Committees. Rule 167 (7) empowers Committees to “examine the expenditures, administration, delegated legislation, public petitions and policies of the Department concerned and its associated bodies, and may forward reports of findings and recommendations to the Department and the Department shall submit its reply to the Committee within a period of two weeks.”⁹ Essentially, the role of a committee is advisory in nature and its recommendations are not binding or compulsory. A committee, whether formed for a particular purpose, or to oversee a government department or ministry, is assigned by an assembly to study a subject, review or amend a law, or to make recommendations that are presented to the plenary for consideration. [...]

6.2.1.Improvements in 2017 (compared to 2016), some of which were repeated in 2018 and 2019

“Women faced significant discrimination in employment and frequently were paid less than men for similar work” in 2017

❖ [Dawn, Where are the women? 23 January 2017](#)

[...] Women face much discrimination in the labour market. The latest Mahbub ul Haq Human Development Report on women in Pakistan observes that women are over-represented in work that is often hazardous. Additionally, women on average earn 38.6pc less than men, with the pay gap persisting even if both sexes have the same level of education and are doing the same work. This gendered differential is likely driven by employers’ bias rather than productivity differences. Along with occupying low-paying jobs, women are typically less mobile in their respective professions. Harassment at the workplace and a social context in which women remain secondary workers irrespective of the nature of their occupation and earning capacity serve as disincentives to work. For highly educated women, these sticky floors and glass ceilings raise the opportunity cost of employment, especially given that working women still spend long hours engaged in housework and childcare. Such constraints of time, a stagnant career trajectory and hostile work environment may see more educated women — who may not have the same economic imperative to work as those who cannot afford further education — simply opt out of the labour market. [...]

❖ [International Labour Organization, Barriers to pay equality in Pakistan: The gender pay gap in the garment sector, 10 May 2017](#)

[...] Executive Summary
 [...] Analysis of Pakistan’s Labour Force Surveys for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 show a gender pay gap of 26 per cent across Pakistan’s workforce without taking into account differences in workers’ characteristics. However, in the garment sector, Pakistan’s largest manufacturing industry and a significant employer of women, it rises to 33 per cent. The level of women’s participation in the labour force in Pakistan is low (26 per cent).² Cultural barriers and gender stereotypes valuing men as breadwinners and women as homemakers are prevalent. While this is changing in large urban centres, major obstacles to women entering the workforce persist. A major factor is the lack of safe, affordable and accessible transport facilities; these are only provided in some of the largest exporting enterprises. The lack of suitable, affordable childcare is also a major disincentive in a society that places the burden of child-rearing almost exclusively on women. [...]

² This is a bit higher than the 22 per cent reported in the Labour Force Survey Annual Report because it only includes respondents (women) aged 15 years and over rather than aged ten years and over.

❖ [UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan*, 20 July 2017](#)

[...] 37. The Committee is concerned at the high unemployment rates among women and youth. It is also concerned that over 73 per cent of workers are in the informal economy, a majority of whom are women, without labour or social protection. While noting employment quotas in the public sector for religious minorities, persons with disabilities and women, it is concerned at the very low level of quotas allocated to these groups relative to their share of the population, as well as at the absence of information on the implementation of these quotas (arts. 2-3 and 6). [...]

39. The Committee is concerned at the increase in the gender pay gap, from 34 per cent in 2008 to 39 per cent in 2015, which is very high. It is also concerned at the large disparity between men and women in terms of labour market participation, employment and education (art. 3). [...]

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2017, 2 November 2017](#)

[...] South Asia

South Asia

With an average remaining gender gap of 34%, South Asia is the second-lowest scoring region on this year's Global Gender Gap Index, ahead of the Middle East and North Africa and behind Sub-Saharan Africa. Bangladesh and the Maldives are the top-ranked countries in the region, having closed just under 72% and 67% of their overall gender gap, respectively, while the lowest-ranked countries are Bhutan and Pakistan, having closed just under 64% and 55% of their overall gender gap, respectively. [...]

Pakistan (143) remains the region's lowest-ranked country and second-to-last ranked overall. It records some progress on closing the basic literacy gender gap, and on women's labour force participation, but this is largely outweighed by reversals on estimated earned income and a significant re-opening of the country's enrolment in tertiary education gender gap according to the latest data. [...]

Pakistan

[...] rank out of 144 countries: 143

Score: 0.546 [0.00= imparity, 1=parity]

[...] Economic participation and opportunity

Score: 0.309, rank: 143

[...] Wage equality for similar work (survey)

Rank: 115, score: 0.546, Avg: 0.634, f/m: 0.55 [...]

“Women faced significant discrimination in employment and frequently were paid less than men for similar work” in 2018

❖ [East Asia Forum, Purdah disempowers Pakistan's women and weakens its economy, 30 August 2018](#)

[...] The influence of social institutions such as purdah on women's participation in education, paid employment and public life in Bangladesh has changed much in recent times, with the direction of change being sanctioned by legislation and supported by a wide range of non-government groups. But these changes have been less pronounced in Pakistan where seclusion of women is more widespread and stringent. By world standards, both Pakistan and Bangladesh still have very low female labour force participation rates (FLFPR). Bangladesh's FLFPR was 32 per cent in 2016 — lower than the average for low- and middle-income countries (48 per cent) but substantially higher than Pakistan's (23 per cent).

Pakistan's extraordinarily low FLFPR means that it is a far less labour-rich economy than its demographic structure would suggest. The propensity for Pakistani women to join the paid labour force in response to higher wages is also very low: one study finds a FLFPR elasticity in Pakistan of just 0.16, compared with 0.31 in Bangladesh and much higher rates in other developing countries.

In urban areas, Pakistan's FLFPR is only 10 per cent. This low FLFPR has an especially strong impact on Pakistan's garment industry, which is a highly female-labour intensive industry globally, and is arguably a major reason why Pakistan attracts such low levels of foreign investment into its labour-intensive manufactures. [...]

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2018, 17 December 2018](#)

[...] South Asia

With an average remaining gender gap of 34.2%, South Asia is the second-lowest scoring region on this year's Global Gender Gap Index, ahead of the Middle East and North Africa and behind Sub-Saharan Africa. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are the top-ranked countries in the region, having closed just over 72%

and nearly 68% of their overall gender gap, respectively, while the lowest-ranked countries are Bhutan and Pakistan, having closed just under 64% and 55% of their overall gender gap, respectively. With the exception of Bangladesh and Pakistan at either end of South Asia's regional table, gender parity outcomes are somewhat homogenous across the region. [...]

Pakistan

[...] Rank of 149 countries 148

Score 0.550 [0.00 = imparity 1.00 = parity]

[...] Economic participation and opportunity

2018 rank: 146. 2018 score: 0.318

[...] Wage equality for similar work [survey]

Rank: 105. Score: 0.574. Avg: 0.645. f/m: 0.57

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Rights of the Disadvantaged: Women

[...] Women and work

Societal barriers to women's representation and advancement in the civil service persist, according to a study Gender Equality in Public Administration jointly released in March by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). The study suggested that a multi-faceted approach must be devised that accounts for socio-economic realities to increase women's access to decision-making positions in public administration. [...]

A woman's entry into the labour force in Pakistan is dependent on several socioeconomic and cultural factors—among them education levels, family and domestic restrictions, transport etc. Pakistan's labour laws do not create an enabling working environment for women and suffer from inconsistencies in the definitions of labour and labour rights, among other problems, according to a gender audit carried out by Women's Action for Better Workplaces. [...]

The Peace and Development Foundation, an organisation working on interfaith harmony and women's rights, conducted a study to evaluate the implementation of the 15 percent job quota for women and five percent job quota for minorities, especially women. The findings of its study, shared in July, revealed that most of the 327 government departments did not respond, while a large majority of the 121 departments and institutions that did respond reported that the job quota was not being met. There was evidence that, to some extent, the quota system did help rectify women's underrepresentation in the public sector but women still faced many challenges due to the work-life balance as well as cultural and religious issues.

Despite the many disadvantages faced by women in the formal sector of employment, they are still at the higher end of the spectrum as compared to the vast numbers of women working in the informal sector. [...]

“Women faced significant discrimination in employment and frequently were paid less than men for similar work” in 2019

❖ [Consolidating Democracy in Pakistan, Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls, March 2019](#)

[...] The Case of Pakistan

While Constitution guarantees equal opportunities regardless of gender, gender equality figures differ in employment status also. According to Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2017-2018¹⁷, while the overall Unemployment Rate stands at 5.8%, down from 5.9% in 2014-2015,

5.1% males are unemployed compared to 8.3% females who are unemployed. In terms of wages comparison, gender differentials in the wages indicate nexus with the gender composition of an occupational group. The more a group is masculine, the less it is likely to find females in high paid assignments and thus higher is the average wage of males as compared to that of females. Similarly, the difference in literacy rate as 51.8% females are literate compared to 72.5 males in 2017-2018. The survey suggests that over time in Pakistan, male-female disparity in literacy seems to be narrowing down.

According to the Global Gender Gap Index 2018 report released by the World Economic Forum in December 2018, Pakistan is the second worst country in the world in terms of gender parity, ranking 148 out of 149 countries.

[...] Categorised as the lowest-ranked country in South Asia, Pakistan closed 55 per cent of its overall gender gap as compared to Bangladesh and Sri Lanka which were the top-ranked countries in the region, having closed just over 72 per cent and nearly 68 per cent of their overall¹⁸ gender gap, respectively. [...]

Yet another study, released earlier in April 2018, termed that Pakistan is not meeting its economic potential, and some of that has to do with widespread gender inequality, according to a recent research conducted by the McKinsey Global Institute, which shows Pakistan at the bottom-most end of gender equality at work. MGI, the business and economics research arm of McKinsey & Co, judged 18 economies in the AsiaPacific region for gender equality in work and the society in general. India and Pakistan were judged

farthest from gender parity, whereas Singapore tops the list with highest gender parity levels in the region. According to the data collected during the research, Pakistan currently stands at the farthest end of the Index at a staggering 0.20, where 0.20 means no gender equality and 1 is gender parity.²⁰ [...]

17. Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2017-2018.

http://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files//Labour%20Force/publications/lfs2017_18/Annual%20Report%20of%20LFS%202017-18.pdf (accessed February 14, 2019).

18. Dawn.com. "Pakistan among worst performers on gender equality: WEF." <https://www.dawn.com/news/1452284> (accessed February 13, 2019). [...]

20. Pakistan Today. "Pakistan at bottom in gender equality at work index." <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/04/25/pakistan-at-bottom-in-gender-equality-at-work-index/> (accessed February 13, 2019).

❖ [World Bank, Pakistan @ 100: From Poverty to Equity, March 2019](#)

Chapter 4: Aspiration Gaps and Intergenerational

Transmission of Gender Inequality

[...] Gender equality and women's participation in all spheres of public life are enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan. Nonetheless, despite several initiatives to safeguard the interests of women by successive governments, women's empowerment indicators continue to fall short of projections. Pakistan ranks 143 out of 144 countries on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index. Female literacy is as low as 48 percent, 25 percentage points lower than male literacy.²⁰ Female labor force participation, while it almost doubled from 13.3 percent in 1992 to 25 percent in 2014, remains one of the lowest, not just in South Asia but globally (World Bank, 2018a).

Underlying these dismal statistics is the rigidity of the form of patriarchy that women and men experience in Pakistan. Scholars over the years have documented the existence of 'classic patriarchy' in South Asia (Kandiyoti, 1998). Under this form of patriarchy, men are considered not only to be superior to women in all aspects of life, but also control women throughout their life cycle: as daughters, wives, mothers, and mothers-in-law. This system provides incentives to devalue women and girls, whose agency is thereby severely limited (Solotaroff and Pande, 2014). In Pakistan, for instance, despite improvements in gender equality in socioeconomic indicators,²¹ women and girls remain severely restricted in their choices for mobility, education, marriage, and employment, and are exposed to gender-based violence (GBV).²²

Patriarchal social norms create and perpetuate gender inequality, not only in agency and outcomes but also in aspirations for the future, as evidenced by a recent study. As part of the evaluation of a participatory development program,²³ mothers and fathers were asked about aspirations for their unmarried sons and daughters in terms of education, employment, marriage, and fertility. Similar questions were also asked directly to adolescent girls and boys in the households to explore any mismatch in aspirations, and the evolution of aspirations over time and across generations. [...]

20 Based on PSLM 2014-15 data.

21 Evidence suggests that improvements in gender equality in socioeconomic indicators may, at least in the short run, exacerbate this situation of rigid patriarchal control. Klugman et al. (2014) show that when endowments (such as health and education) and economic opportunities become more equitable, social norms can be particularly hard to dislodge and can impose limitations on other gender-equitable outcomes or overburden women with increased expectations of responsibilities and labor.

22 Data on myriad forms of violence against women and girls in Pakistan are unreliable and not up to date. However, it is known that such violence is very high. For instance, one in three ever-married women (ages 15-49 years) has experienced physical and emotional spousal violence in their lives (Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2012-13); other studies estimate these figures to be much higher.

23 As part of a randomized trial of a participatory development program, the authors surveyed 139 rural villages across five districts in Pakistan (Bahawalpur, Mianwali, Hyderabad, Tando Muhammad Khan, and Nowshera). From each village,

24 households were randomly selected and interviewed at baseline in 2010, midline in 2013, and endline in 2016. The analysis presented in this note covers only control villages that did not receive the intervention (44 in total). It excludes Nowshera, where the endline survey could not be done in 2016 due to conflict. It thus looks at the status of aspirations in the absence of any intervention (Gine and Mansuri, 2018).

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2019, 16 December 2019](#)

[...] Pakistan ranks third-to-last (151st) on the 2020 Global Gender Gap Index, having closed only 56% of the gender gap. This performance represents an improvement from the previous edition (55.0), but it is insufficient to prevent Pakistan from falling in the rankings, as new countries have entered the rankings at a higher position. Pakistan ranks in the bottom 10 in three of the four main categories of the index and below the 100th mark in 12 of the 14 individual indicators composing the index. Encouragingly, however, Pakistan improves on a majority of them—sometimes markedly and is stable in the others. The gap remains cavernous in terms of economic participation and opportunities (32.7, 150th). Only one-quarter of women participate in the labour force (i.e. working or looking to work) compared with 85% of men (148th). Only 5% of senior and leadership roles are held by women (146th), twice the rate of 2016. It is estimated that only 18% of Pakistan’s labour income goes to women (148th), one of the lowest share among countries studied. While a majority of countries have bridged or nearly bridged the educational gender gap, Pakistan’s still stands at almost 20%. Less than half of women are literate, compared with 71% of men, while the share of women enrolled is systematically lower than the share of men across primary, secondary and tertiary education. The political gender gap has narrowed markedly over the past two years but remains wide (15.9, 93rd). In 2017, there was not a single female minister. As of 1 January 2019, there were three women in the

25-member cabinet. [...]

Pakistan 2020 score

Global Gender Gap Index	0.564
Economic participation and opportunity	0.327
Educational attainment	0.823
Health and survival	0.946
Political empowerment	0.159

[...]

	rank	score	avg female	male	f/m	0
Economic participation and opportunity	150	0.327	0.582			
Labour force participation rate, %	147	0.298	0.661	25.2	84.5	0.30
Wage equality for similar work, 1-7 (best)	102	0.592	0.613	—	—	4.14
Estimated earned income, int'l \$ 1,000	148	0.181	0.499	1.4	8.0	0.18
Legislators, senior officials and managers, %	146	0.052	0.356	4.9	95.1	0.05
Professional and technical workers, %	140	0.304	0.756	23.3	76.7	0.30

❖ [Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women, Forum for Dignity Initiatives, Joint NGO Shadow Report Submission to CEDAW, 13 January 2020](#)

[...] Context

[...] Standing on a very high Gender Inequality Index of 0.5 (ranking 121 out of 155 countries in the 2014 index) suggests that significant inequalities in terms of access to opportunities and services exist across genders. Moreover, in 2014, the female Human Development Index (HDI) value for Pakistan was 0.4 as compared to 0.6 for males, translating to a Gender Development Index (GDI) of 0.7, meaning that huge disparities persist between males and females when it comes to long and healthy lives, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living. [...]

❖ [Aurat Foundation and Legal Aid Society, Deeds not Words, Pakistan Civil Society’s Alternative Report on CEDAW, 2020](#)

[...] Article 11 - Employment:

(CEDAW/C/PAK/CO/4, March 2013 paras 29, 30 (CEDAW/C/PAK/5 October 2018 paras 143-178) (CEDAW/C/PAK/Q/5 July 2019 paras 14, 15)

Pakistan's Fifth Report contains vague unreferenced/unsourced claims of increased Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) in "many male-dominated spheres".

It contains serious misstatements and grandiose claims: "5% [employment] quota for women is optimally complied with"; "maternity and paternity leave", "working women hostels", "daycare facilities", "financial assistance", "female labour inspectors", among others.

The annual LFS continues to undercount/omit women's major work categories, due to: LFPR definition issues of "formal/informal" workers and "organized/unorganized" sectors of employment, thereby excluding productivity of millions of women from the GDP; biased patriarchal attitudes of male statisticians – devaluing women's work – unworthy of counting; male household-heads not reporting women's work to male surveyors, considering them "unpaid family helpers".

Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2017-18 data (see 2 GoP/LFS tables below):

LFPR: male 48.43%; female (FLFPR): 25.03%;

Employed (age above 10 years in major industries/public services): men: 78.06%; women: 21.94%;

Unemployment rate (age above 10 years): men: 76.01% women: 23.99%. [...]

Reasons for girls/women/TGIs' lack of access to employment opportunities: education, skills training; lack of mainstreaming/integration in all economic sectors include entrenched patriarchy, segregation, seclusion, gendered division of labour-role-perceptions, inadequate women's hostels/ mobility/transport constraints; GBV issues; child/forced marriage/pregnancy; modern slavery/ bonded/forced labour.

Only Sindh province has enacted the Home-Based Workers Act (2018); Sindh approved the policy (2016), as well as Punjab (2017).

Despite ratification of ILO Conventions 100 (Equal Remuneration) and 111 (Employment Discrimination), Pakistan still abdicates responsibility to enforce them via legislation, policy and strict monitoring for compliance. [...]

Articles 13 & 14 – Economic/Social Benefits; Rural Women; Food/Nutrition; Environment/Climate-Change: CEDAW/C/PAK/CO/4, March 2013, paras 30, 34) (CEDAW/C/PAK/5 October 2018, paras 165-193) (CEDAW/C/PAK/Q/5 July 2019 paras 18, 19)

Pakistan's Fifth Report gives low priority to Poverty. [...]

It omits: the situation of rural women, comprising 64% of the female population; almost all working in agriculture, livestock, dairy, forestry, fisheries/aquaculture, horticulture, local crafts; fetching fuelwood and impure non-potable water for domestic use. 75% of the female labour force (agricultural workers), remain unpaid and uncounted; women farmers are defined as "informal family helpers"; home-based workers, domestic staff, bonded/forced/enslaved labourers remain invisible.

It omits: heavily disadvantaged rural girl children, unwanted, uneducated, suffering: ill-health, child labour, early/forced marriage, repeated pregnancies; marital rape, GBV, brutal traditional customs to settle tribal feuds and prevent property inheritance. [...]

14 "Rural Women in Pakistan status Report 2018" (UNW, NCSW, CGaPS, GoCanada).

❖ [HomeNet Pakistan, Women Labour and Employment, CEDAW Shadow Report, 2020](#)

[...] 1-Women Workers and Labour Policies

[...] Pakistan has repeatedly ranked as the second worst country for gender inequality in the world. In Pakistan women and girls face lack of opportunities, discrimination and violence.

Labour force participation rate dropped from 45.70% in 2013 to 44.28% in 2018 2.

Gender wage gap worsened from 39% in 2013 to 40% in 2018

The percentage of female workers earning below minimum wage in textile sector has worsened from 89% in 2014 to 93% in 2018(LFS-2017-18)

Pakistan is doing poorly in all five: the female labour force participation rate is 22pc versus that for men at 67.8pc; women are paid 23pc less than men for similar work; women's average monthly income is Rs9, 760 compared to men's monthly earnings of Rs15, 884, and only 0.3pc women are employed as managers, 6.4pc as professionals and 0.9pc as technical workers (Labour Force Survey 2014-2015).

With the bulk of women working as unpaid employees the number of women in professional jobs and higher positions that bring better remuneration is skewed. The corporate sector does not pay a miserly sum to professional women though the number of women at the top is negligible. Government

employees' pay scale from grade one to 21 is the same for both men and women though fewer women make it to grade 22.

The economic participation of women gives two hoots for economic participation and its indicators (such as the wage gap) when there are a hundred other sordid affairs confronted by women, ranging from inequity in education, skills and health to horrific extremes of sexual violence and social degradation — unless you win the argument that poor economic participation is linked with all other aspects of gender inequality.

The gender wage gap in the textile sector has worsened from 62% in 2014 to 70% in 2018 .

Female workers without contract in textile sector were 96% in 2014 which further dropped to 97% in 2018 . The percentage of regularly paid female workers in textile sector further reduced from 6% in 2014 to 5% in 2018. LFS 2017-18 [...]

2.2 Women Wage Gap

Women are significantly under-represented in Pakistan's labour force, despite their huge contribution to daily life. Women employed face significant gender pay gap, alongside other forms of discrimination which limit their potential.

Analysis of Pakistan's Labour Force Surveys for 2013-2014 , 2014-2015, 2017-18 show a gender pay gap of 26 per cent across Pakistan's workforce without taking into account differences in workers' characteristics. However, in the garment sector, Pakistan's largest manufacturing industry and a significant employment of women rises to 33 per cent. Similarly, female labour force participation has rather decreased from already low 22.2% to 20%. The gender wage gap, has reduced from 42% in 2014 to 40% in 2018. The gender wage gap in the textile sector has worsened from 62% in 2014 to 70% in 2018.

The level of women's participation in the labour force in Pakistan is low. Cultural barriers and gender stereotypes valuing men as breadwinners and women as homemakers are prevalent. While this is changing in large urban centers, major obstacles to women entering the workforce persist. A major factor is the lack of safe, affordable and accessible transport facilities; these are only provided in some of the largest exporting enterprises. The lack of suitable, affordable childcare is also a major disincentive in a society that places the burden of child-rearing almost exclusively on women. [...]

2.3 The Gender Pay Gap in Formal Sector

[...] The gender pay gap varies across wage levels, with higher gaps at the lower end, indicating that women earning the least are the most disadvantaged by their gender.

The Labour Force Survey also demonstrates that women engaged in the garment sector are more likely to be home-based workers (94 per cent of the women compared to 7 per cent of the men) and to work as a contributing family member or on their own account (75 per cent of women compared to 38 per cent of men). [...]

Women's participation in the labour force is among the lowest in the world, No robust policy, framework, growth strategy clearly describes the GoP notion or commitment to increase the women labor force participation encouraging the girls/women to enroll into employment. The laws, policies are scattered and have skeptic views and uncoordinated implementation mechanism.

The emphasis on women's primary role as homemakers and caregivers, coupled with high levels of early marriage, discourage women from entering the workforce, particularly as employed women shoulder same burden of household-related unpaid work as do their non-employed counterparts. [...]

3. Protection of Women workers: Employment Gaps

Women make up a smaller proportion of waged or own-account workers and are over-represented as "contributing family workers", work that is often unpaid, particularly in the agriculture sector.. Where women are paid, this is likely to be on a piece-rate basis. This trend has contributed to the prevalence of women in vulnerable employment. Women are clustered in low-skilled, low-paid employment and make up only small percentages of those in professional categories and decision-making positions. [...]

❖ [Centre for Social Justice, Discrimination Lingers On... II, Shadow Report on the issues faced by Minority Women 75th CEDAW Session-Pakistan Review, 12 February 2020](#)

[...] X. Employment

[...] 45. Due to prevailing prejudices, there are significant limitations on what career options and professional choices are available for women belonging to religious minorities. According to the World Development Indicators 2015, over 50 percent of Pakistan's population is living below the poverty line ²¹. A vast majority of minority women belong to low-income group and work in the informal sector, including agriculture and domestic work. According to one estimate, only two percent join licensed professions such as in the medical or service sector.²² [...]

21 World Bank, 2015

22 Peter Jacob. "Women in the Minority". The News. March 2019. (<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/441033-women-in-the-minority>).

❖ [Rah Center for Management and Development, Thematic Report on the Issue of Financial Protection Upon Divorce: Muslim Women's Rights under Family Laws in Pakistan- Article 16 for Consideration by CEDAW Committee in its 75th session 15th-28th February 2020](#)

[...] Women's employment in Pakistan is very low at 21.9% compared to 80.3% for men, and with formal labour force participation ranging between 9–26% (wide provincial variations) and; increasing informality in women's work at 13.45%. Around 14 million women are engaged in the informal sector where working conditions are exploitative and discriminatory. Employment discrimination not only limits job opportunities but also deprives them of equal wages for equal work based on gender. Social constraints also limit women's work outside home, and also what kind of work they can engage in. Access to finance is a key to women empowerment but remains limited. Overall only 13 % women have access to any kind of loan and 87% men are getting loans. The size of the loan dispersed is higher on average for men than for women. Ownership of house or land is an essential component of economic empowerment of women. Yet only 2 % women own land.

Women occupy less than a quarter positions in the combined categories of legislators, senior officials, managers, 1% as technicians and associate professionals and 0.83% of professionals .

Further, women lag behind men in terms of registration with the local authorities e.g. birth, death, marriage, and divorce registration.

The Punjab Economic and Social Wellbeing Survey 2018 indicates that only 6% women had accounts in formal banking institutions and only 13% had access to credit.

Poverty is another issue that has a tremendous impact on divorced women. Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world, of which women constitute nearly half. Feminization of poverty is observed among the 24.3% population living in severe poverty.

The trends in employment show that women are far more vulnerable than men. 77% female and 42% male paid employed workers earned less than minimum wages of 10,000 rupees in 2013-14. [...]

16 <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.NE.ZS>

17 See National Commission on the Status of Women, Inquiry Report on the Status of Women Employment in Public Sector Organizations <http://www.ncsw.gov.pk/publicationslist#ResReport>

18 UN Women and NCSW: Women's Economic Participation and Empowerment in Pakistan. Status Report 2016, at pp.18, 42-52 available at <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/05/status-report-on-womens-economic-participation-and-empowerment>

19 Ibid

20 Punjab Commission on the Status of Women, Punjab Gender Parity Report 2018 https://pcsw.punjab.gov.pk/system/files/PGPR-2018_0.pdf

21 <https://www.census.gov/popclock/print.php?component=counter>

22 UN Women and NCSW: Women's Economic Participation and Empowerment in Pakistan. Status Report 2016

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Employment

41. While noting many positive initiatives undertaken, such as the Benazir Income Support Programme, and legislation adopted at the provincial level, the Committee notes with concern:

(a) The stark gender pay gap in the State party of 34 per cent, which is more than double the global average;

(b) The very low labour force participation rate for women (23.9 per cent);

(c) The high concentration of women in the informal economy, particularly in the agriculture sector, where they are not covered by labour law and social security programmes, including minimum wage protection, overtime compensation and maternity leave;

(d) The lack of reliable data on the number of women who are employed, including home-based women workers, women domestic workers, unpaid women care workers, women with disabilities and refugee women;

- (e) The very low level of participation of women in senior and middle management positions in 2018 (4.2 per cent);
- (f) The very low percentage of women entrepreneurs (an estimated 1 per cent of entrepreneurs). [...]

6.2.2 Improvements in 2018 (compared to 2017), repeated in 2019

Evidence of any increase in prosecutions of rapes owing to capacity buildings and campaigns in 2018

❖ [Dawn, No more pardons for rape, 9 February 2018](#)

[...] A hearing-impaired girl, she was sexually assaulted over two years ago by an accused who subsequently absconded.

It was last week that the accused finally appeared in court for interim bail — only to be pardoned by the girl’s father, despite her desperate protests.

Whilst previously claiming to have witnessed the occurrence himself, the father subsequently claimed that he filed the case by mistake.

The scene that played out in court was truly heart-wrenching; however, in a criminal justice system that fails to extend protective safeguards for survivors of sexual assault, it was hardly far from the norm.

In a country where civil society estimates that four women are raped everyday and conviction rates are next to zero in most districts, it is little surprise that a significant majority of rape cases are compromised before the trial is concluded.

The public outrage resulting from last week’s events have focused on the criminal justice system’s treatment of crime as a private dispute between two parties and therefore reconcilable at their will. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan: A meaningful democracy; Mainstreaming the rights of women and religious minorities in Pakistan, December 2018](#)

[...] Cases of rape may be suppressed or ‘resolved’ between the families concerned. The burden of guilt, therefore, as many participants pointed out, invariably falls on the woman. In instances where such crimes even enter the legal system - and many do not - long procedures, weak police investigations, poor legal counsel and powerful connections on the part of the accused, enable offenders to be acquitted. [...]

Rape victims need to go to a hospital before they can lodge an FIR. However, rampant corruption in many hospitals in southern Punjab means that women are unable to obtain the correct report they need to file a serious complaint. The lack of forensic labs in the area means that they cannot collect admissible evidence. Weak police investigations result in a weak challan and, eventually, the exercise of the trial itself proves futile. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Rights of the Disadvantaged: Women

[...] Violence against Women, Girls, and Transgender People

[...] Technical experts agree that reported cases of rape and gang rape represent a small percentage of actual incidents. The continued absence of reporting mechanisms and environments sensitive to the issue discourages women and trans people from reporting. [...]

Evidence of any increase in reported rapes owing to capacity buildings and campaigns in 2019

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Women

[...] Violence against Women, Girls, and Transgender People

Of those that did reach the police, FIRs were registered and arrests were made in a minority of cases. Very few led to convictions. [...]

- ❖ [Shirkat Gah - Women's Resource Centre, Supplementary Information for the Adoption of the List of Issues on Pakistan for Consideration by Pre-Sessional CEDAW Working Group and by the Committee in its 75th session, 10 June 2019](#)

[...] In all cases of sexual violence (rape, unnatural offences and sexual abuse) CrPC section 164-A requires medico legal officers to state precisely the reasons for each conclusion arrived at. In rape cases doctors frequently write subjective, prejudiced opinions formed on the basis of the problematic "two finger test" (i.e. whether two fingers can be inserted in the vagina), often negatively impacting the outcome of the case. Opinions can -- and do -- prejudice courts against the survivor and introduce unhelpful questions of whether the woman consented to the act.

The two-finger test is not prescribed in the medico legal guidelines and SOPs issued by provincial health departments, issued years ago in different provinces (the most recent being in Punjab in 2011), but this practice continues, giving rise to questions of the survivor's sexual conduct. As a result, the survivor's testimony is often not considered to be reliable. Furthermore, medico-legal officers are poorly trained, often appointed without any special training in the requirements of medical examination of survivors of sexual assault. They also work without the required facilities and even lack Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence (SAFE) Kits.

SOPs and guidelines require revision and updating in line with the World Health Organization 2003 Guidelines for Medico-legal Care for the Victims of Sexual Violence and in light of modern forensic tests as well as sections 164-A and B of the Criminal Procedure Code.

DNA reports are often delayed due to a scarcity of DNA testing facilities. Punjab, accounting for half the population, has a single forensic laboratory for DNA testing, which also caters to cases from the other three provinces and the capital territory. At approximately \$200 (Rs. 30000) per test, the cost for a DNA test for cases submitted from outside Punjab can be a prohibitive factor. Finally, the lack of funds for police investigation of cases of sexual violence often obstructs or causes delay in the submission of samples for DNA tests. [...]

- ❖ [The Pakistan Tribune, Of those that did reach the police, FIRs were registered and arrests, 17 June 2019](#)

[...] As violence against women, especially rape cases become more rampant, rights activists have underscored the need for support from society and state besides perseverance of victims to get justice and prevent crimes. Activists and journalists from Karachi and Hyderabad dwelt at length on the subject at a conference titled 'Rape and Sexual Assault: Myth and Reality'. The event was organised by the Women Action Forum (WAF) at the Sindhi Language Authority hall in Hyderabad on Saturday.

Speaking in the first session, Sarah Zaman of War Against Rape (WAR) said the conviction rate in rape cases in Punjab is hardly 10%. "In 74% of the cases, witnesses seem to have withdrawn out of fear," she pointed out, deploring that the lack of witness protection mechanisms was the underlying cause. [...]

Prof Arfana Mallah, a women rights activist and the president of Sindh University Teachers Association, while reading out recommendations, said separate courts should be established for rape and domestic violence cases. She said the existing percentage of conviction is hardly 2%. The enforcement of the ban on jirga and panchayats and the appointment of female medico legal officers was also demanded. The need for social education and sensitisation on violence against women besides stringent laws and their enforcement was also highlighted. [...]

- ❖ [Maryam Tanwir, Shailaja Fennell, Hafsa Rehman Lak, Salman Suf \(Journal of International Women's Studies\), Not Accepting Abuse as the Norm: Local Forms of Institutional Reform to Improve Reporting on Domestic Violence in Punjab, August 2019](#)

[...] Abstract

[...] Using a mixed-methods approach the paper introduces a new initiative of women for institutional reform undertaken by the Strategic Reforms Unit (SRU) in Pakistan, to examine the role of social norms in normalizing the practice of domestic violence. [...]

The low level of social recognition of VAW as a serious crime is a consequence of a widespread social belief structure that works against the reporting of cases and the subsequent quest for legal redress. The lack of institutional responsibility evident among all of the concerned departments is a consequence of the gendered social norms where police officers do not readily agree to register and investigate a violent crime against women and provide justice to the victims.

This lack of objectivity and biased lens has resulted in a fragmented case-flow process, delaying evidence collection, and allowing for the tampering of evidence, all of which diminish the sanctity of the evidence in the eyes of the court. [...]

❖ [Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women, Forum for Dignity Initiatives, Joint NGO Shadow Report Submission to CEDAW, 13 January 2020](#)

[...] Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Girls and transgender persons are most exposed to all kinds of violence including sexual, social, economic, psychological and physical. The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Acts have been enacted by Governments of Sindh and Balochistan in 2013 and 2014 respectively for which Rules of Business have also been notified. Despite this recent domestic violence act the situation of women has not changed much. Women, due to their economic dependence on the male members of their family, endure physical and psychological violence all their lives. A few who take a stand against such unfair behavior face social disapproval. Even the police is desensitized towards their fate and refuses to take action under the pretext that it's a domestic affair and they do not want to invade the privacy of the home. The society's main concern is with keeping the family unit intact without paying any attention to the price most women pay for it because their right to be protected from abuse is not upheld. [...]

❖ [Shirkat Gah – Women's Resource Centre, Alternative CEDAW Report 2020 on Pakistan's Fifth Periodic Report Alternative CSO Report, 2020](#)

[...] Gender-Based Violence

CEDAW Para 9 & CEDAW/C/PAK/RQ/5 Paras 69, 79, 81

Given the lack of statistics on the National Police Bureau website raises the question of how functional and effective the Gender Crime Cell is. The GCC has to request information from provinces where there is no focal collection point for such data. A new mechanism is required. [...]

❖ [Aurat Foundation and Legal Aid Society, Deeds not Words, Pakistan Civil Society's Alternative Report on CEDAW, 2020](#)

[...] Article 16 – Marriage and Family Relations

[...] Laws addressing domestic violence (DV) or spousal violence are insufficient for deterrence without effective implementation. PDHS 2017-2018 reports that 42% women and 40% men interviewees agree that wife-beating is justified under specific circumstances. [...]

The notoriously anti-women/girls Jirgas/Panchayats have long been declared illegal by the Supreme Court, yet some provinces have formalized them as a form of Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR). Such structures, with untrained, misogynist, insensitive male mediators, do not provide the neutral, gender-sensitive oversight and mediation required in family cases, as communities exert huge social pressure for pushing women to reconcile or give up rights due to unequal status.

In all provinces the protection system and supporting structures are inadequate. [...]

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Gender-based violence against women

31. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) The fact that marital rape is not recognized as a criminal offence under the Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offences relating to Rape) Act, 2016;

(b) The high prevalence of gender-based violence against women and the social acceptance of domestic violence, underreporting of gender-based violence against women and impunity for perpetrators;

(c) The lack of awareness of and training in relation to gender-based violence against women and girls among judges, prosecutors, police officers and medical personnel to enable them to respond effectively to such cases in a gender-sensitive manner;

(d) The insufficient number and capacity of shelters for women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence, and the lack of medical and psychological rehabilitation services for them;

(e) The lack of data on the number of protection orders issued and on the related rate of compliance. [...]

Police generally refused to take action on cases involving members of the LGBTI community in 2018

- ❖ [Human Rights Watch, Another Transgender Woman Killed in Pakistan, 8 May 2018](#)

[...] The latest killing of a transgender woman in northwest Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) province exemplifies the government's failure to take measures to protect the rights of its transgender citizens. On May 4, assailants fatally shot Muni, a transgender woman, after she could not provide smaller currency for a 1000 rupee note (US\$9) that could be "showered" upon transgender women invited to dance at a wedding. This was the latest of several recent attacks on transgender women in the province, the fourth killing in 2018 and the 57th since 2015, according to local activists. Central has been the K-P government's failure to ensure officials assist transgender victims of attack and hold those responsible for attacks accountable. When activists have sought police protection and medical treatment following these attacks, hospital staff have been unwilling to treat victims while police won't pursue the case. [...]

According to transgender rights groups, on occasions the police have taken transgender women to the police station, they taunted them, forcibly removed their clothing, ordered them to dance, and poured cold water on them when they refused. Those who complained were subjected to more abuse. [...]
- ❖ [Pink News, Karachi's transgender community protest rise in hate crimes, 8 December 2018](#)

[...] A transgender activist called Sarah Gill told the Express Tribune that the police in Karachi "is not taking issues concerning the transgender community seriously."
"Whenever we go to them to register our complaint of any incidence of violence, we are refused our right of lodging [a first information report (FIR)]," she said.
Gill also suggested that violence against trans people in Karachi is not even considered to be violence. "We have to post our videos on social media to draw media and police attention to highlight our plight and seek justice," she added. [...]
- ❖ [Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada: Pakistan: Treatment of sexual and gender minorities by society and authorities; state protection and support services available \(2017-January 2019\) \[PAK106219.E\], 17 January 2019](#)

[...] 5. State Protection
[...] The Director of the Neengar Society indicated that "[s]eeking police protection on the grounds of sexual orientation is not possible" in Pakistan and that "[r]elevant clauses do not exist in the Pakistani Penal Code or Code of Criminal Procedure" (Neengar Society 6 Jan. 2019). However, the same source also stated the following:
During recent years there have been reported cases of individuals who were arrested for crimes against members of sexual minorities. Although it is important to note that arrests are only made in cases of heinous offences [such as] murder, rape, physical torture, etc. Other cases like sexual harassment, homophobia, and extortion usually go unreported due to victims' fear of defamation and persecution. (Neengar Society 6 Jan. 2019) [...]
Regarding the obstacles for sexual and gender minorities to report incidents to police, the same source further stated that having one's "sexual orientation or gender identity [revealed] might increase risks and threats to safety and life of an individual" (Neengar Society 6 Jan. 2019). [...]
- ❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2019, 17 January 2019](#)

[...] Women, religious minorities, and transgender people face violent attacks, discrimination, and government persecution, with authorities failing to provide adequate protection or hold perpetrators accountable. [...]
- ❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Introduction
[...] The enthusiasm that greeted the introduction of legislation and numerous initiatives to aid the beleaguered transgender community masked some of the realities they continued to face. Proving once again that legislation and directives alone cannot bring about societal changes, reports persisted throughout the year of transgenders being attacked and killed.

[...] Administration of Justice

[...] Peshawar High Court

A single-member bench granted bail to a man suspected of being involved in murdering a transgender person and dismembering the body. The bench observed that it appeared from the records that not one iota of evidence had been collected during investigation to show the petitioner's involvement in the murder and therefore his case was arguable for the purpose of bail. [...]

Violence against Transgender Community

Despite several legislative advances and initiatives, there was continued violence directed against the transgender community.

In January, an eighteen-year-old transgender person was kidnapped and gang raped by nine people through the night only to be released the next morning in Peshawar. When the survivor filed a complaint with the police, they refused to register a First Information Report (FIR). [...]

Police generally refused to take action on cases involving members of the LGBTI community in 2019

❖ [Edge Media Network, Trans Pakistani Abducted, Assaulted; Police Allegedly 'Reluctant' to Investigate, 24 October 2019](#)

[...] A transgender Pakistani individual was allegedly abducted from their car by a gang of assailants, and was then tortured and raped, media reports say. Despite the alleged crimes having taken place in late September, police only began looking into the case after nearly a month, according to UK newspaper the Daily Mail.

The victim was traveling with several other people from the village of Kamalia to a festival where they were booked to perform, the Daily Mail article said. But their car was forcibly stopped by a group of men, who then dragged the victim out of the vehicle and to a farmhouse. A nightmare of torture and sexual assault then followed.

Local news source Dawn detailed the horrific attack:

On Sept 20, four transgender persons from Kamalia had been booked by Zulfiqar for a show at the Mai Maseet Wali Mela in village Dhoop Sari. The group was led by 'S'. After the show when the group was traveling to Jhang in a car, they were intercepted by five armed men at 2 am. They pulled 'S' out of the car and took her to a nearby farmhouse. The transperson alleged that she was tortured and raped by two men while three armed men stood guard. They kept her detained for three hours.

Dawn's report indicated that the authorities were in no hurry to investigate the matter::

The district police officer (DPO) ordered registration of a first information report (FIR) allegedly because the Harappa police were reluctant to listen to the victim.

The police responded that the victim did not report the assault in a timely manner.

But a colleague of the victim, identified as Binyamin, disputed this, saying that the victim and their friends had obtained a medical exam and a certification that sexual assault had indeed taken place. Binyamin, the Mail reported, had picked up the victim after they had been left at a town called Sahiwal, located about twelve and a half miles away from the scene of the purported crimes.

Said Binyamin: "Harappa police was reluctant to register a rape case."

Binyamin also said the police had threatened the victim and their friends with reprisals if they did not drop the matter.

Instead, they sought help from the district police, who opened an investigation. who arrested five men in connection with the alleged crimes. Two have been charged. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2020 – Pakistan, 14 January 2020](#)

[...] Women, religious minorities, and transgender people continued to face violence, discrimination, and persecution, with authorities often failing to provide adequate protection or hold perpetrators accountable. [...] Parliament passed a comprehensive transgender rights bill in 2018. However, Pakistan's penal code criminalizes same-sex sexual conduct, placing men who have sex with men and transgender women at risk of police abuse, and other violence and discrimination. [...]

❖ [Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women, Forum for Dignity Initiatives, Joint NGO Shadow Report Submission to CEDAW, 13 January 2020](#)

[...] Sexual and Gender Based Violence

[...] Due to the criminalization and social stigmatization of SGM, violence against them is rarely reported to the authorities. While the transgender populations have been recognized legally, they face routine verbal, emotional and physical abuse and violence from the society as well as law enforcement agencies. [...]

Outreach by NGOs in KP, however, improved interactions between police and the transgender community there in 2018

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Another Transgender Woman Killed in Pakistan, 8 May 2018](#)

[...] The latest killing of a transgender woman in northwest Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) province exemplifies the government's failure to take measures to protect the rights of its transgender citizens.

On May 4, assailants fatally shot Muni, a transgender woman, after she could not provide smaller currency for a 1000 rupee note (US\$9) that could be "showered" upon transgender women invited to dance at a wedding. This was the latest of several recent attacks on transgender women in the province, the fourth killing in 2018 and the 57th since 2015, according to local activists.

Central has been the K-P government's failure to ensure officials assist transgender victims of attack and hold those responsible for attacks accountable. When activists have sought police protection and medical treatment following these attacks, hospital staff have been unwilling to treat victims while police won't pursue the case. [...]

According to transgender rights groups, on occasions the police have taken transgender women to the police station, they taunted them, forcibly removed their clothing, ordered them to dance, and poured cold water on them when they refused. Those who complained were subjected to more abuse. [...]

❖ [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Transgender Pakistanis Demand Protection After Murder, Dismemberment, 20 August 2018](#)

[...] Dozens of transgender people have staged a protest in the northwestern Pakistan city of Peshawar to demand more protection after a transgender woman was shot dead and dismembered. [...]

In 2009, Pakistan became one of the first countries in the world to legally recognize a third gender, allowing transgender people to obtain identity cards and vote. Several members of the community have also run in elections.

Despite this progress, many of them continue to face rampant discrimination, are reduced to begging or prostitution, and subjected to extortion and violence.

Farzana Jan, president of the Transgender Association, said 62 transgender people had been killed since 2015 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, of which Peshawar is the capital.

She said 478 violent attacks had been reported against transgender people in the province so far in 2018. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2019, 17 January 2019](#)

[...] Violence against transgender and intersex women in Pakistan continues.

According to the local group Trans Action, 479 attacks against transgender women were reported in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province in 2018. At least four transgender women were killed there in 2018, and at least 57 have been killed there since 2015. On May 4, the fatal shooting of Muni, a transgender woman in Mansehra district, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, attracted national attention. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Women

[...] Violence against Women, Girls, and Transgender People

The most reports of assaults, rape, and murder of transgender people came out of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, the nature of violations reported from the Punjab and Sindh appear to demonstrate that it is the rising vigilance of transgender activists in that province that has brought these violations to light, rather than any marked difference in treatment in different parts of the country. Anecdotal narratives from within the community support this opinion. [...]

Outreach by NGOs in KP, however, improved interactions between police and the transgender community there in 2019

❖ [Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 20 February 2019](#)

[...] People who identify as LGBTI

[...] 3.223 [...] The transgender community claims that male rape, including rape of male children, is common in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. [...] Human rights advocacy groups, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, report many attacks on the transgender community and its property, including abuse in police custody. [...]

3.225 Transgender advocacy groups say the community is especially vulnerable to targeting by organised criminal gangs. They report that at least 44 cases currently before the courts relate to gangs specifically targeting the transgender community for extortion or murder. [...]

❖ [DPA International, 'Just a piece of paper' - Pakistan's transgender law fails to protect, 8 July 2019](#)

[...] A law passed last year promised dignity and protection to Pakistan's transgender community. But activists say ignorance and a lack of action from the state mean their lives are as dangerous as ever.

[...] More than 500 transgender people were killed in the country between 2015 and 2018, and their murderers are rarely punished, according to a report by the Legislative and Judiciary Commission. [...]

The situation should have changed when the previous Pakistani government approved a law to provide recognition and social protection to the transgender community. It came into force in May 2018. [...]

But the law has hardly been able to bring about positive change, according to Taimur Kamal, a campaigner for the rights of trans people based in Peshawar.

"Their life was miserable before the law and it is still the same," Kamal says, citing a lack of implementation as the main reason that the legislation has been ineffective.

At least a dozen transgender people have been killed in the north-western province of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa alone since the approval of the law, Kamal points out.

"And the worst part is that the killers have not been arrested in all incidents except for one," the activist says.

Legal experts say that if the law is to be successful, it must be combined with social measures like educating law enforcement agencies and the general public.

"The level of sensitivity in state institutions like the police towards issues related to the transgender community is still very low," says Rizwan Khan, a lawyer based in Islamabad.

"It will take a lot of time to change the mindset in the colonial-era structures of police and judiciary," he adds.

Victims of abuse say police have often been reluctant to follow up on their complaints and that courts don't take their cases seriously. [...]

❖ [Geo News, Transgender folks demand KP police to ensure protection from bigotry, violence, 10 June 2019](#)

[...] The Trans Action Community (TAC) on Monday put forth its demand to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police to ensure the safety and security of transgender folks in Mardan and to take strict action against elements involved in the violence against them.

Addressing a joint press conference here at the Peshawar Press Club, TAC President Farzana Jan and other transfolks spoke about the violence and torture that Shakeela, a transgender person from Mardan, was subjected to on Eid-ul-Fitr.

Three men brutally beat Shakeela and shaved off her head, they said, adding that the alleged perpetrators were absconding and have not arrested to date.

They added that the suspects were influential people and still making threats whereas the local police were just being "silent spectators" and not taking any action. According to Jan, the suspects had made an extortion demand of Rs1 million from Shakeela prior to the assault.

Mardan police, they noted, had earlier refused to register a first information report (FIR) against one of the suspects, Shahzeb, but did so only when the TAC intervened in the matter.

They said they appeal the government and the provincial administration to guarantee protection for transfolks against bigotry and violence. [...]

Anti-transgender violence is not uncommon in Pakistan. Many transfolks — who, according to the Supreme Court's definition of "hijras," include transvestites, transsexuals and eunuchs — are frequently attacked, murdered, raped or forced to work as sex workers to support themselves. Others eke out a living by begging for alms on the streets.

However, the hate crimes against transgender people in the KP province is far more concernin considering how the region — including Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan, Buner, Swabi, Swat, and Bannu — is a hotbed of anti-transgender violence. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2020 – Pakistan, 14 January 2020](#)

[...] Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

According to local groups, at least 65 transgender women have been killed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province since 2015. In January, a transgender woman was killed in Karak, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after being attacked on her way back from a music concert. In July, police in Sahiwal district, Punjab, found the bodies of two transgender women who had been tortured to death. In August, Honey, a transgender woman, was shot and killed in Manshera district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Activists allege that authorities had not brought perpetrators to account.

Parliament passed a comprehensive transgender rights bill in 2018. However, Pakistan's penal code criminalizes same-sex sexual conduct, placing men who have sex with men and transgender women at risk of police abuse, and other violence and discrimination. [...]

6.3.1. Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016) some of which continued to be omitted in 2018 and 2019

[Training of female police, cultural assumptions of male police in 2017](#)

❖ [CHR Michelsen Institute, The Criminalisation of Rape in Pakistan, 2017](#)

[...] 4 The Women's Protection Act and prevailing societal views

4.1 Perceptions of women and rape in the prevailing discourse

Some lawyers and government officials went so far as to suggest that women were partly at fault for violence against them. These respondents expressed their belief that women should not be able to get away with flaunting public morality. For example, one government official explained, "It is true that the law on sexual harassment is a positive law and if there is more knowledge about it, women will benefit. But we should not forget that the responsibility of women protecting themselves from harassment is also theirs—especially in their get-up."

[...] 4.2 Barriers to implementing the Women's Protection Act

Even though the WPA [Women's Protection Act] now provides protection for victims of rape, the cases that arise in practice often compromise the delivery of justice. A number of social, cultural, and structural barriers contribute to this, including society's view of the status of women, knowledge about the law itself, and lack of effective implementation.

4.1.1 Status of women in society

The respondents unanimously shared their opinion that women are suppressed in Pakistan and face a number of barriers in everyday life. This makes it difficult for women to benefit from women's protection laws in place. The respondents focused on the fact that in Pakistan's male dominated culture, women are suppressed and therefore vulnerable to exploitation and violence. Even after an incident, they must depend on their male relatives to seek justice, as they cannot move alone due to traditional gender roles. For example, this means that a male member of the family always accompanies a women to report a crime.

It is very rare that a woman victim comes alone to the police station to lodge an FIR [first information report filed with the police]. (Interviewee 4)

In our area, women suffer, as men do not allow them to go to police or court. If a woman goes to police or court she is considered of bad character. (Interviewee 6)

The police and other government institutions are active in helping women get justice, but society at large disapproves of women approaching these institutions in the quest for justice. (Interviewee 2) [...]

❖ [Inter Press service, Pakistan Moves to End Impunity for Rapists, 3 February 2017](#)

[...] Amina's case trained the spotlight on the plight of thousands of rape victims in Pakistan who suffer due to flaws in the criminal justice system, socio-cultural inhibitions, the negative attitudes of investigators, police failure to collect evidence and the humiliation of victims in trial courts.

According to the National Police Bureau (NPB) of Pakistan, around 3,000 cases of rape are reported every year – 3,173 cases were reported in 2012 and 3,164 in 2013. The conviction rate, however, is less than four percent, according to a report released by the NGO War Against Rape (WAR).

"One of the foremost reasons for the poor conviction rate is rape cases are mishandled from the very start," Asad Jamal, a Lahore-based lawyer who has represented several rape victims, told IPS.

He says very few police officials know how to collect scientific evidence in rape cases or record the statements of traumatised rape victims. Citing the example of a case he is fighting right now, Jamal says the police investigator concerned even forgot to preserve the clothes that the victim was wearing at the time of the sexual assault.

In the case of Amina Bibi too, it was found that police had failed to conduct timely forensic and DNA tests. Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif suspended several senior police officers and ordered the arrest of others in connection with the case.

Jamal said sometimes police insist on including the names of fake witnesses to strengthen rape cases but such practices end up benefiting the accused, especially in appellate courts. "Ideally, scientific and DNA evidence should be enough to convict an accused, but unfortunately trial courts depend a lot on eyewitnesses for primary evidence," he says. [...]

"The shameful attitude of society, police and lawyers towards rape victims is the biggest hurdle in securing justice," said Faisal Siddiqui, a Karachi-based lawyer. [...]

❖ [Asian Human Rights Commission, State sanctioned police brutality against women must stop, 6 July 2017](#)

[...] Despite recruiting more women amongst its ranks, there is no shift in attitude or gender sensitization within the police force. Perhaps it is intrinsically ingrained in the policing system of Pakistan, which sides with the deep pocketed perpetrator, leaving the victim high and dry. Feudal capitalism, a linchpin of patriarchy, and the resulting mindset ensure the continuity of systemic oppression and gender subordination of women in the society. [...]

❖ [Asian Human Rights Commission, PAKISTAN: The police personnel should be sensitised to gender based violence and other gender issues, 12 September 2017](#)

[...] The Police personnel should be sensitised to Gender Based Violence and other gender issues. It should not be forgotten that being a woman is not enough to understand the situation of women and female victims. It is also necessary to raise policewomen's consciousness on matters of violence against women and girls and GBV. Ironically, not all women are feminists and not all men are patriarchs. Therefore, mere recruitment — while being important does not, automatically empower women in police and ensure gender mainstreaming.

Throughout the world, statistics from police departments show that women are severely under-represented in senior positions. In Pakistan, 6363, is the total number of women in the police from 15 organisations and 7 regions that makes up only 1.6 percent approximately of the total force. Gilgit-Baltistan with 183 police women has the highest percentage among the seven regions. The percentages of Punjab, KP, Balochistan, Sindh, and AJK & ICT are 1.8, 1, 0.5, 1.4, 1.5 and 2.8 respectively. The FIA with 205 women constitutes the highest percentage i.e. 11.4 among the 15 organisations. While acknowledging that the police sector is under resourced and overworked and the terror torn context of Pakistan makes policing a tremendously testing task here; the importance of community-centred and genderised policing should not be disregarded. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2017, 16 April 2018](#)

[...] Rights of the Disadvantaged: Women

[...] VAWG [violence against women and girls] data issues

As previously stated, there are serious concerns about data collection, compilation, dissemination, and level of disaggregation, as well as the lack of transparency. [...]

Technical experts agree that the reported cases in 2017 were yet again simply the tip of a huge iceberg, especially in the rural areas, where VAWG remains largely unreported due to conservatism, illiteracy, fear of stigma, shame and dishonour, marriages within the clan, poverty, powerlessness of serfs in feudal, tribal and religio-political fiefdoms, politicisation of the LEAs, and an absence of means of communication in the remote inaccessible areas. Hence, even where State entities set up hotlines, how would the approximately two third rural population of segregated and secluded women access them? [...]

Training of female police, cultural assumptions of male police in 2018

❖ [Asia & the Pacific Policy Society, Ending violence against women in Pakistan, 7 February 2018](#)

[...] All these laws are valuable, yet police officials lack appropriate training, knowledge, resources and attitudes to collect evidence, conduct medical examinations and make a sound case for prosecution. They remain reluctant even to register an FIR and in many instances register such cases as an unnatural offence rather than rape, hindering any chances of convicting perpetrators.

As a result, victims' families are often forced to settle the matter with the perpetrators. In extreme cases, when doubts are raised by the police about the veracity of the rape claim or even assertions that it was a consensual sexual relationship, families face social stigma and are forced to flee their homes for fear of social exclusion. [...]

❖ [Dawn, 1,545 cases of violence against women recorded in Multan, 6 May 2018](#)

[...] The government-run Violence against Women Centre (VAWC) Multan has recorded 1,545 cases of violence against women (VAW) from March 2017 to April 2018.

According to the data provided by the Social Welfare Department, the highest number of registered cases is of domestic abuse (918 cases), followed by 165 family cases, 99 harassment cases and 89 property disputes.

Salman Sufi, heading the CM's Strategic Reforms Unit (SRU) – the authority in charge of the project – says the centre has started functioning completely and that the locals have now begun taking it seriously.

The VAWC was set up following the Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act 2016, the law that was heavily countered by hard liners. The figures point out that the pandemic of gender-based violence is highest in Punjab with most reported cases.

Meanwhile, Aurat Foundation's regional director Mumtaz Mughal lauded the centre for being a useful initiative. However, she expressed reservations about the way the VAW was being dealt with by the government.

"The intentions are in the right place, but the problem lies in a follow-up system," she says. "There should be a system where monitoring is done of women who go back outside and live their lives. Are they potential victims of violence? Or are they safe now? And this cannot be ascertained until the local government system in that area is strengthened."

Ms Mumtaz explains the local government could serve as a way of raising awareness and having a complaint and monitoring mechanism, especially with lady councilors.

"Women face a lot of difficulties in reporting crimes and they need this kind of place where everything is under one roof – especially a sensitised staff," she says.

The problem of lack of follow up is also voiced by Shazia Sarwar, AIG of Punjab Gender Crimes wing. "As someone who works on women-related cases, I know that women need such places badly, especially women who come from rural areas who do not have safe access to a police station," she says.

"Women face the most violence from home, first from their husbands and then from their brothers, especially if the case is related to property." Sarwar adds that only a few cases under Section 509 have been reported because women do not feel safe going to a local police station. [...]

❖ [National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18, January 2019](#)

[...] 16 Domestic Violence

[...] 16.8 RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE

16.8.1 Help Seeking among Women Who Have Experienced Violence

Reporting and seeking help for violence are still not common in Pakistan. Fifty-six percent of ever-married women who reported experiencing physical or sexual violence neither sought help to stop the violence nor told anyone. Thirty percent sought help, and 14% never sought help but told someone (Table 16.16). [...]

16.8.2 Sources for Help

Among women who have experienced physical or sexual violence and have sought help, the most common source is their own family (76%), followed by their husband's family (36%) and husbands/former husbands and neighbours (2% each). Very few women went to the police, lawyers, or social work organisations (1% each) (Table 16.17). [...]

16.8.4 Reasons for Not Seeking Help

The survey also assessed reasons why women who experienced violence did not seek help. Overall, 24% of women who had experienced physical or sexual violence did not think that the violence was serious enough for them to seek help. Fifteen percent of women were embarrassed or ashamed to seek help, while 12% felt it would bring a bad name to their family (Table 16.20). Nine percent feared threats, consequences, or more violence. Even though only 2% of women reported that they would not be believed or would instead be blamed for the violence themselves, this remains an important reason why women keep silent about the violence they face. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan: A meaningful democracy; Mainstreaming the rights of women and religious minorities in Pakistan, December 2018](#)

[...] Patterns of honour crimes in Southern Punjab

The incidence of honour crimes in southern Punjab is reportedly on the rise. While the media reported about 1,000 such cases in 2018, the figures do not reflect the full picture. Many cases go unreported, especially in traditionally conservative areas, as families feel they are unlikely to ever obtain justice. Legal loopholes, which the government has yet to address, have resulted in abysmally low conviction rates. Patriarchal structures, coupled with weak police investigation mechanisms and court procedures, allow perpetrators to roam free even as women continue to face violence and death in the name of so-called family honour. [...]

Where does the legal system fail women?

[...] Rape victims need to go to a hospital before they can lodge an FIR. However, rampant corruption in many hospitals in southern Punjab means that women are unable to obtain the correct report they need to file a serious complaint. The lack of forensic labs in the area means that they cannot collect admissible evidence. Weak police investigations result in a weak challan and, eventually, the exercise of the trial itself proves futile. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Rights of the Disadvantaged: Women

[...] Violence against Women, Girls, and Transgender People

[...] Technical experts agree that reported cases of rape and gang rape represent a small percentage of actual incidents. The continued absence of reporting mechanisms and environments sensitive to the issue discourages women and trans people from reporting. [...]

In February 2018, the investigation wing of Lahore Police announced they would establish a new wing/cell to curb gender-based violence and to provide protection to victims of sexual violence, acknowledging that cases involving violence against women, especially sexual assault, were heinous offences and delicate in nature, and expertise was needed to deal with them expeditiously. It was further acknowledged that the police were a male dominated force, and a comprehensive plan was needed to build the capacity of the Lahore police by giving the officers special training.

This is a long overdue measure. Committed and dedicated implementation is key to its success and that is where all such initiatives fall short. Lack of sensitisation and awareness about violence against women and gender-based issues is an ongoing problem. [...]

Training of female police, cultural assumptions of male police in 2019

❖ [Australian Government - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 20 February 2019](#)

[...] Women

3.2018 [...] Police lack capacity to process cases and handle evidence in cases of rape and domestic violence. Cultural attitudes towards acceptability of violence also affect both investigations and the willingness of victims to report. The small number of women police officers also likely contributes to under-reporting. Successful prosecutions are rare. [...]

❖ [Dawn, What are your options if you're a victim of domestic abuse in Pakistan? 28 May 2019](#)

[...] There's a difference between legislation and implementation. All institutions like the police, judiciary, even lawyers need to make a collaborative effort for this tool to be effective. And of course, in order to make use of these laws, one must have access to legal aid. Free or affordable legal aid is virtually absent in Pakistan and that's one of the many issues we face when it comes to the enforcement of our laws. [...]

"There are a number of barriers to implementing the law. It's very challenging for women and children to bring these cases before the police or court and try and involve your family members, it's very difficult. Even those who do end up reporting it they encounter obstacles like it's not taken very seriously, it's considered a domestic dispute and not a crime so the authorities are less likely to investigate or register an FIR," explained Sara.

Now, the law allows you to skip this step and directly go to the magistrate and file a petition with the court. But of course, then there are barriers to that also. You have to get a lawyer to do that and access to legal help is limited and virtually impossible for children. [...]

If we want to see a qualitative change in the dispensation of justice, our law needs more clarity for starters but we also need housing/shelter programs for victims, police authorities and the judiciary need to stop treating these cases as "private family matters" and officials must receive gender sensitivity training, not to mention, women and children need access to legal aid.

Sara also emphasised on the importance of free legal representation.

"That's something governments need to take seriously especially when you're passing pro-women legislation, you need to at least think about how women will access justice. In absence of legal aid supported and funded government, it's an uphill battle that would be very difficult."

Ab Aur Nahin is a directory for women looking for pro bono legal representation and psychological counselling regarding gender-based violence; the website links survivors to the resources that they may not have access to otherwise such as experienced lawyers and professional counsellors to combat sexual harassment, violence or abuse. [...]

❖ [Shirkat Gah - Women's Resource Centre, Supplementary Information for the Adoption of the List of Issues on Pakistan for Consideration by Pre-Sessional CEDAW Working Group and by the Committee in its 75th session, 10 June 2019](#)

[...] Unified Judicial System: (C/PAK/CO/4: Para 16 (d); CEDAW/C/PAK/5: Para 32-34)

No clear criteria/qualifications are specified for appointing people on various Alternate Dispute Resolutions forums (ADRs) for adjudication of civil and criminal cases under various laws; e.g. the Alternate Dispute Resolution Act, 2017 for Islamabad, Dispute Resolution Committees established by police in all police stations of Islamabad and several districts of KP under administrative orders without any lawful basis. Those appointed often lack capacity and are provided no legal training. In tandem, self-appointed adjudication bodies, called panchayat, jirgas etc. continue to operate freely and decide criminal and civil disputes without any lawful authority. The Supreme Court in its decision of January 16, 2019 in Writ Petition No 24 of 2012 filed by the National Commission on the Status of Women declared the functioning of any such adjudication body or individual functioning without any lawful authority, illegal. The court declared that if, as a consequence of any illegal decision, order, direction or inducement of such self-appointed adjudicatory bodies any crime is committed, the offender as well as individual or group of persons involved in aiding such jirga/panchayat etc. shall be jointly held responsible for the said offence.

The Court ordered the Police to introduce SOPs within two months to ensure compliance with the guiding principles laid down in the judgment. [...]

❖ [Maryam Tanwir, Shailaja Fennell, Hafsa Rehman Lak, Salman Suf \(Journal of International Women's Studies\), Not Accepting Abuse as the Norm: Local Forms of Institutional Reform to Improve Reporting on Domestic Violence in Punjab, August 2019](#)

[...] Abstract

[...] Using a mixed-methods approach the paper introduces a new initiative of women for institutional reform undertaken by the Strategic Reforms Unit (SRU) in Pakistan, to examine the role of social norms in normalizing the practice of domestic violence.

[...] The Impediments to Registering Cases

A major issue reported was that the registration of the FIR takes place at the discretion of the police officials. After the FIR registration, the victim has to undergo a medical examination and ensure that forensics testing is undertaken. This will then allow them allow access to the prosecutor and to the court.

The victims consistently reported that the police did not display any sympathy or concern regarding the trauma suffered by the victims. They said the officers regarded their complaints as routine and domestic violence as standard behavior rather than a serious crime. [...]

The low level of social recognition of VAW as a serious crime is a consequence of a widespread social belief structure that works against the reporting of cases and the subsequent quest for legal redress. The lack of institutional responsibility evident among all of the concerned departments is a consequence of the gendered social norms where police officers do not readily agree to register and investigate a violent crime against women and provide justice to the victims.

This lack of objectivity and biased lens has resulted in a fragmented case-flow process, delaying evidence collection, and allowing for the tampering of evidence, all of which diminish the sanctity of the evidence in the eyes of the court. [...]

The investigation of the case-flow revealed that forensic scientists were faced with medical evidence rendered "unacceptable" due to delays in the medical examination stage. In the procedure for the prosecution of VAW crimes, a medical examination needs to be conducted preferably within 24 hours of assault but before a maximum of 72 hours.⁴² The data revealed that out of a total of 9,808 cases received at the Punjab Forensic Science Agency in 2013-14, the DNA evidence did not match 84% of the cases.⁴³ This is attributed by forensic scientists to delays in medical examinations, often conducted 24 hours after the crime and contamination of clothing worn by the victim at the time of assault during that period.⁴⁴ The delays also result in a breakdown in the flow of evidence, for example the vaginal swabs and cheek swabs in some cases did not match.⁴⁵

Furthermore, the evidence received at Punjab Forensic Science Agency (PFSA) was collated inefficiently. The SRU found inaccurate collection of data, primarily due to a lack of proper training of police officials in how to collect and preserve evidence that pertains specifically to VAW crimes.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the testing of evidence can only be undertaken at the main Lahore PFSA center and samples from across the province are brought to this center for testing purposes. This creates a critical time lag between evidence collection and processing.⁴⁷ A medical examination also can only be conducted in government medical facilities.⁴⁸ There exists an extreme shortage of women medical officers,⁴⁹ with the consequence that victims of VAW incidents are not able to have a medical examination due to the either absence of women officers at the government medical facilities or too few women officers resulting in patient caseload. The very limited availability of women medical officers leads to inordinate delays in conducting medical examinations and an increase in the cases with evidence regarded as "inadmissible".

The victims reported a lack of VAW-sensitive medical staff appointed to government hospitals. Furthermore, there is a lack of financial incentives for medical examining staff as the government has a fixed rate of PKR 200 per medical examination, out of which medical examiners only receive a percentage. Further challenges exist at the prosecution stage. Information collected by the investigation undertaken by the SRU indicated that approximately 50% of the 3,6349 reported cases of crimes against women were "challaned"⁵⁰ and only half the cases reported by women actually went to court.⁵¹ This is because lack of proper investigation and evidence collection, familial pressures, societal norms, and police behavior—all identified as the major reasons for the acute reluctance to formalize the reports by VAW victims into an FIR and to move the case-flow forward for medical examination, and even to report a VAW crime in the first place. Police officers and family members appear to be enforcing social norms to ensure that women do not oppose patriarchal rules. The social norms are observed by coercing women to accept a socially

recognized form of agreement; this occurs through the signing of a “Raazi Naama,” a reconciliation pact between the victims and the perpetrators. These pressures can be particularly persuasive in situations where victims are obstructed from registering a FIR and where the medical examination procedure is subject to long delays resulting in very poor evidence. The social norm of the “Raazi Naama” is also readily resorted to as VAW cases are not regarded as crimes, but as an easy opportunity for seeking remedies for on-going family and local rivalries and feuds.

These procedural barriers to equitable justice are compounded by human resource constraints. A shortage of public prosecutors, results in overwhelming case-loads whilst the lack of specialist prosecutor training regarding gender-sensitive procedures leads to failings in the protection of the victim from social pressures to withdraw testimony. Prosecutors also remain susceptible to the prevalent social norms. This also encourages acquiescence (or even collusion) with the views of the accused, husband, or other male family or community members, rather than pursuit of justice for the female VAW victim.⁵²

The Challenges for the Police

A similar pattern is found in police procedures and individual officers’ behavior. The SRU’s stakeholder analysis of Punjab police officers highlighted numerous procedural shortcomings in the recording and processing of cases of violence.⁵³ A pervasive lack of empathy evident amongst both male and female police officials encouraged significant delays or even outright refusal to lodge a FIR at all. Officers appeared to be more likely to regard VAW victims as subordinate members of the family and community and emphasize that violence should remain within the private sphere.⁵⁴ There was a widespread attitude that VAW victims must have violated gendered social norms prior to the alleged offence. As such, police officers regarded subsequent violent acts against female victims perpetuated by males in the family or community as justified forms of punishment.⁵⁵

An Innovative Institutional Reform of the VAW laws

The Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act (PPWVA) of 2016 is the very first legislation in Pakistan to have devised its own purpose-specific implementation mechanism (Nabeel, Qamar and Malik, 2016) for providing a safe and supportive space for women. These spaces are the Violence Against Women Centres (VAWCs) and their objective is to create an institutional process that will be able to assist women in both registering their cases and ensuring prosecution. The VAWCs have been introduced in a phased manner with the pilot VAWC being established at Multan in March 2017.⁵⁶

The establishment of a VAWC in Multan provides a round-the-clock, female-run facility that aims to streamline the investigation-prosecution case-flow process by bringing all previously disconnected justice delivery services under one roof. These include first aid care, police reporting, investigation, prosecution, provision of legal aid, medical examination and treatment, collection of forensic and other evidence, psychological evaluation, counseling, and post-trauma rehabilitation. The VAWCs provide these “all-under-one-roof facilities” to close the gap between the number of incidents reported and the low conviction rate for VAW crimes. This is done by replacing the disconnected and delayed evidence collection by housing all legal steps, the reporting, and evidence collection in the same center.

The VAWCs have staff comprised of fully trained women police⁵⁷ and medical staff to ensure a safe and supportive environment and counselling services to the victims to assist in their rehabilitation. The VAWC at Multan has an all-female staff of 6558 to ensure speedy justice delivery. The VAWCs have been provided with special software designed to have real-time data integration with audio-visual recording being made available in all departments. A toll-free helpline and ambulances are in place to rescue the victims if required. The provision of a universal toll-free dial-in number to facilitate complaints without the need to make their way to the VAWC provides women with ease of access to this service.

The VAWCs have mediation centers to hold counseling sessions to address non-serious offenses (with the consent of the victim). By incorporating a mediation center operated by qualified counselors and psychologists within the VAWC building, the VAWC model ensures that families are given a real chance at reconciliation. In case families fail to reconcile and women victims of violence have to be moved to Shelter Homes, their children (if any) can accompany them so as to not completely disrupt their family lives. Furthermore, these centres are integrated with Shelter Homes where victims will be housed post-reporting of VAW offences. The goal is to instill independence in the survivors of violence by working with women’s organisations to deliver empowerment programmes. The results have been promising, with some 1,200 victims⁵⁹ having visited the VAWC in the first 6 months of its operation to use the “all-under-one-roof” facility provided to improve access to justice.⁶⁰ [...]

42 Interview with Noor Fatima, Forensic Scientist, DNA and Serology Department, PFSA, 2014

43 Punjab Forensic Science Agency (PFSA), 2014

44 Interview with Noor Fatima, Forensic Scientist, DNA and Serology Department, PFSA, 2014

45 Interview with Noor Fatima, Forensic Scientist, DNA and Serology Department, PFSA, 2014; Interview with Dr. Nasir Iqbal, Forensic Scientist, DNA and Serology Department, PFSA, 2014

46 Interview with Noor Fatima, Forensic Scientist, DNA and Serology Department, PFSA, 2014; Interview with Dr. Nasir Iqbal, Forensic Scientist, DNA and Serology Department, PFSA, 2014

47 Interview with Noor Fatima, Forensic Scientist, DNA and Serology Department, PFSA, 2014; Interview with Dr. Nasir Iqbal, Forensic Scientist, DNA and Serology Department, PFSA, 2014. Although, PFSA is now in the process of establishing satellite facilities in other districts, but they are only collection facilities as yet and evidence testing takes place in Lahore's main facility.

48 Including Rural Health Centers, Tehsil Headquarter hospitals and District Headquarter hospitals.

49 Interview with Dr. Waseem, Punjab Medico-Legal Surgeon, Primary and Secondary Health Department, Punjab, 2014

50 "Challaned" means a police report was prepared under PPC after investigation and submitted to the prosecutors/court.

51 Punjab Public Prosecution Department 2014; Punjab Police 2013-2014

52 Interview with DSP Legal, Lahore Police, 2014

53 Interview with DSP Legal, Lahore Police, 2014; Interview with SSP (Rtd) Farkhanda, 2014; Interview with CCPO Lahore, Punjab Police, 2014; Interview with DIG Investigation Lahore, Punjab Police, 2014.

54 Interview with SSP (Rtd.) Farkhanda, 2014

55 The victim focus groups also revealed that women's help desks provided at police stations were not effective in registering cases. This might be because the authority remains a man's prerogative and the women police officials remain subordinate to them.

56 The Act of 2016 is path breaking, under the category of VAW from domestic violence, sexual violence, psychological abuse, economic abuse, stalking to cybercrime. Furthermore, it includes the importance of civil remedies that can be awarded to victims as additional forms of justice to those of the existing remedies for criminal action. These forms include Protection Orders, Monetary Orders, and Residence Orders. This allows victims to initiate simultaneous proceedings for civil and criminal remedies and provides the basis for a more secure environment within which a victim can create a safe space out of the reach of an aggressor. An additional feature of the Act that has particular importance is that it recognizes the tendency of families and communities to use cases of violence as an opportunity for remedies for prior feuds rather than according to the victim with rights to access justice, by introducing explicit penalties for registering false complaints.

57 In the center, the provincial police and medical staff have to undergo gender-sensitivity training.

58 Excluding male staff comprising of software/CCTV engineers, lab technicians/radiographers, and security guards.

59 Number of victims which VAWC has provided assistance to from 25 March – 25 September 2017.

60 For details on the number and nature of VAW cases received, please contact the co-authors, Hafsa Lak and Salman Sufi at strategicreformsdev@gmail.com

61 SRU is currently in the process of setting up the Women Protection Authority and is also working on ensuring public education regarding the Act by introducing details in the educational curriculum at the secondary school level.

62 The reform can be replicated in all police stations to streamline processes there and provide solutions to issues similar to those identified earlier, which result in a justice delivery gap.

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Access to justice

19. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to increase access to justice for women and girls. It further welcomes the establishment, in 2017, of the first gender-based violence court in the Lahore High Court, which has dealt with 123 cases involving gender-based violence against women, and the establishment of 16 family courts in the District Headquarters of Punjab. The Committee notes that, in the Alternate Dispute Resolution Act of 2017, parallel legal systems and informal dispute resolution mechanisms, including jirgas and panchayats, are formally recognized, incorporated into the mainstream judicial system and subjected to judicial and administrative overview. The Committee remains concerned that these systems may discriminate against women and girls. It also remains concerned about the limited awareness among women and girls of their rights, as well as the physical and economic barriers that they face in accessing justice. [...]

[...] Gender-based violence against women

31. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) The fact that marital rape is not recognized as a criminal offence under the Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offences relating to Rape) Act, 2016;

- (b) The high prevalence of gender-based violence against women and the social acceptance of domestic violence, underreporting of gender-based violence against women and impunity for perpetrators;
- (c) The lack of awareness of and training in relation to gender-based violence against women and girls among judges, prosecutors, police officers and medical personnel to enable them to respond effectively to such cases in a gender-sensitive manner; [...]
- (e) The lack of data on the number of protection orders issued and on the related rate of compliance. [...]

Due to restrictions on women’s mobility and social pressures related to women’s appearance in public, utilization of women’s police centers was limited, but NGOs and officials reported that use was growing and more centers were needed. Many women remained unaware of the centers” in 2017

❖ [CHR Michelsen Institute, The Criminalisation of Rape in Pakistan, 2017](#)

[...] 4 The Women’s Protection Act and prevailing societal views

[...] 4.2 Barriers to implementing the Women’s Protection Act

Even though the WPA [Women’s Protection Act] now provides protection for victims of rape, the cases that arise in practice often compromise the delivery of justice. A number of social, cultural, and structural barriers contribute to this, including society’s view of the status of women, knowledge about the law itself, and lack of effective implementation.

4.1.1 Status of women in society

The respondents unanimously shared their opinion that women are suppressed in Pakistan and face a number of barriers in everyday life. This makes it difficult for women to benefit from women’s protection laws in place. The respondents focused on the fact that in Pakistan’s male dominated culture, women are suppressed and therefore vulnerable to exploitation and violence. Even after an incident, they must depend on their male relatives to seek justice, as they cannot move alone due to traditional gender roles. For example, this means that a male member of the family always accompanies a women to report a crime.

It is very rare that a woman victim comes alone to the police station to lodge an FIR [first information report filed with the police]. (Interviewee 4)

In our area, women suffer, as men do not allow them to go to police or court. If an woman goes to police or court she is considered of bad character. (Interviewee 6)

The police and other government institutions are active in helping women get justice, but society at large disapproves of women approaching these institutions in the quest for justice. (Interviewee 2) [...]

❖ [Overseas Development Institute, Understanding Intimate-Partner Violence through a Male Lens, 20 March 2017](#)

[...] 4.3. Community and social levels

[...] As can be seen from Table 4, which compiles youths’ perceptions of femininity and masculinity, their notions of femininity remain strongly traditional. Their notions of masculinity, however, mix traditional gender norms (e.g. a man meets the needs of his family) and modern constructions of manhood (e.g. men should act to stop violence against women and encourage women to do well).

Overwhelmingly, the evidence in the interviews shows that women’s freedom and movement were restricted as a result of social norms. In most households, even women who had good relationships with their husbands were not ‘allowed’ to have a job, ‘go outside anywhere, meet anyone.’ In fact, women were expected to ‘stay at home’ as soon as they reached puberty. This was found to be true across all Phase 1 sites. [...]

❖ [Overseas Development Institute, Men and Intimate Partner Violence from Research to Action Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan, March 2017](#)

[...] 7.3.2 Norms limiting girls’ and women’s freedoms, including their movement, resulting in IPV [Intimate Partner Violence] [...]

In Pakistan, it was noted that even if women had a good relationship with their husband, they were not 'allowed' to have a job, 'go outside anywhere, meet anyone', and were expected to 'stay at home' as soon as they reached puberty. [...]

8.1.2 Protection services

[...] Under-reporting of IPV/GBV

[...] Under-reporting of IPV to the police and formal justice system is a major challenge [...] Reflecting widely held beliefs that IPV is a 'private' matter, respondents emphasised that incidents seldom reach the courts. As one key informant explained, in a joint family system like Pakistan, the desire to keep incidence of IPV out of the public sphere is strong, such that 'all religious leaders also stand against complaining outside. They all say that it's a personal matter, why should the police come and break the sanctity of a house?' [...]. As a result, the overwhelming consensus across the focal countries was that formal services were not accessed until 'women's lives are in danger' [...] often leading to further violence inflicted or instigated by in-laws if the woman attempts to seek justice [...].

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2017, 16 April 2018](#)

[...] Rights of the Disadvantaged: Women

[...] VAWG [violence against women and girls] data issues

As previously stated, there are serious concerns about data collection, compilation, dissemination, and level of disaggregation, as well as the lack of transparency. [...]

Technical experts agree that the reported cases in 2017 were yet again simply the tip of a huge iceberg, especially in the rural areas, where VAWG remains largely unreported due to conservatism, illiteracy, fear of stigma, shame and dishonour, marriages within the clan, poverty, powerlessness of serfs in feudal, tribal and religio-political fiefdoms, politicisation of the LEAs, and an absence of means of communication in the remote inaccessible areas. Hence, even where State entities set up hotlines, how would the approximately two third rural population of segregated and secluded women access them? [...]

Due to restrictions on women's mobility and social pressures related to women's appearance in public, utilization of women's police centers was limited, but NGOs and officials reported that use was growing and more centers were needed. Many women remained unaware of the centers" in 2018

❖ [Dawn, 1,545 cases of violence against women recorded in Multan, 6 May 2018](#)

[...] The government-run Violence against Women Centre (VAWC) Multan has recorded 1,545 cases of violence against women (VAW) from March 2017 to April 2018.

According to the data provided by the Social Welfare Department, the highest number of registered cases is of domestic abuse (918 cases), followed by 165 family cases, 99 harassment cases and 89 property disputes.

Salman Sufi, heading the CM's Strategic Reforms Unit (SRU) – the authority in charge of the project – says the centre has started functioning completely and that the locals have now begun taking it seriously.

The VAWC was set up following the Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act 2016, the law that was heavily countered by hard liners. The figures point out that the pandemic of gender-based violence is highest in Punjab with most reported cases.

Meanwhile, Aurat Foundation's regional director Mumtaz Mughal lauded the centre for being a useful initiative. However, she expressed reservations about the way the VAW was being dealt with by the government.

"The intentions are in the right place, but the problem lies in a follow-up system," she says. "There should be a system where monitoring is done of women who go back outside and live their lives. Are they potential victims of violence? Or are they safe now? And this cannot be ascertained until the local government system in that area is strengthened."

Ms Mumtaz explains the local government could serve as a way of raising awareness and having a complaint and monitoring mechanism, especially with lady councilors.

"Women face a lot of difficulties in reporting crimes and they need this kind of place where everything is under one roof – especially a sensitised staff," she says.

The problem of lack of follow up is also voiced by Shazia Sarwar, AIG of Punjab Gender Crimes wing. "As someone who works on women-related cases, I know that women need such places badly, especially women who come from rural areas who do not have safe access to a police station," she says. "Women face the most violence from home, first from their husbands and then from their brothers, especially if the case is related to property." Sarwar adds that only a few cases under Section 509 have been reported because women do not feel safe going to a local police station. [...]

❖ [Aurat Foundation, Women's Safety Audit in Public Transport in Lahore, 28 August 2018](#)

[...] Executive Summary

[...] The data reveals an alarming situation regarding the safety of women on public transport, contributing to the existing restrictions on women's mobility, limiting their opportunities to engage in economic activity, education and other aspects of a fulfilled life. The study finds that inadequate infrastructure and security arrangements, a gender-neutral approach by administrators and policymakers, social attitudes towards women and girls, and a lack of awareness among the general population about the impacts of sexual harassment on women's and girl's lives, are some of the major reasons why dramatic levels of harassment on public transport have gone unnoticed and perhaps increased. [...]

Women and girls take limited action when they are harassed on public transport. About 98 percent of respondents are unaware of existing emergency helplines or mobile phone apps to report sexual harassment. Instead, most women commuters attempt to ignore such incidents and do not report them or take action. This is largely attributable to patriarchal sociocultural patterns and the belief that complaints will not be acted on. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Violence against Women, Girls, and Transgender People

[...] Women who exercised or attempted to exercise their own choice in partners were subjected to confinement, beatings, and life-ending violence by fathers and brothers. Rejected suitors exacted their revenge by violently attacking women, often with acid to disfigure the women they claimed to want to marry. [...]

Due to restrictions on women's mobility and social pressures related to women's appearance in public, utilization of women's police centers was limited, but NGOs and officials reported that use was growing and more centers were needed. Many women remained unaware of the centers" in 2019

❖ [Australian Government - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 20 February 2019](#)

[...] Women

[...] 3.199 [...] Observation of the purdah (literally 'curtain', a practice of segregating women from unrelated men) restricts women's personal, social and economic activities outside the home. Many women in Pakistan live separately from men, particularly from men outside their families, and face significant cultural and legal barriers to access basic rights, freedom and protection. While many women participate actively in society in large urban centres such as Lahore, Karachi or in Islamabad, conservative societies outside urban centres observe purdah rigorously.

This has practical implications for travel beyond the home, including for health services or to obtain humanitarian support during conflict. [...]

❖ [Deutsche Welle, Violence against women on the rise in Pakistan, 23 September 2019](#)

[...] Pakistani women's rights activists like Mukhtaran Mai say it's a systemic problem.

"Women police stations and other facilities are set up in cities while the majority of the violence cases take place in villages," Mai said. "In rural areas, feudal landlords call the shots; the administration and police are subservient to these feudal chieftains who view women as commodities. So how can justice be delivered in such cases?"

Farzana Bari, another prominent women's rights activist, believes the patriarchal attitudes prevalent in Pakistani society are responsible for the problem. "No government has ever tried to put an end to this mindset," she said.

"It can be done by educating women in rural areas, empowering them economically and raising their representation in the legislature. If women constitute more than 45% of the population, why should they not have the same representation in the economy, employment and government?" [...]

❖ [Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women, Forum for Dignity Initiatives, Joint NGO Shadow Report Submission to CEDAW, 13 January 2020](#)

Sexual and Gender Based Violence

[...] Men controlling all aspects of women's lives is an acceptable way of life in the society. Control over her mobility, her choice of clothing, choice of profession, choice of spouse, number of children lies with the men in their lives. [...]

❖ [Aurat Foundation and Legal Aid Society, Deeds not Words, Pakistan Civil Society's Alternative Report on CEDAW, 2020](#)

[...] General Recommendation 19 - Violence against Women (VAW):

(CEDAW/C/PAK/CO/4 March 2013 paras 16 e., 21, 22). (CEDAW/C/PAK/Q/5 July 2019 para 9,) (CEDAW/C/Pak/5 Oct 2018 paras 72-96)

[...] Focus on legislation as the prime solution to eliminating VAW/GBV is ineffective. Evidence-based research demonstrates that focusing on law without additional supporting initiatives results in lack of real, sustainable change. Crisis centres and support mentioned in Pakistan's Fifth Report only serve temporary immediate needs and are numerically inadequate; no long-term support services or options are available.

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Access to justice

19. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to increase access to justice for women and girls. It further welcomes the establishment, in 2017, of the first gender-based violence court in the Lahore High Court, which has dealt with 123 cases involving gender-based violence against women, and the establishment of 16 family courts in the District Headquarters of Punjab. The Committee notes that, in the Alternate Dispute Resolution Act of 2017, parallel legal systems and informal dispute resolution mechanisms, including jirgas and panchayats, are formally recognized, incorporated into the mainstream judicial system and subjected to judicial and administrative overview. The Committee remains concerned that these systems may discriminate against women and girls. It also remains concerned about the limited awareness among women and girls of their rights, as well as the physical and economic barriers that they face in accessing justice. [...]

Many tribes, communities, or families practiced sequestering women from all contact with men other than their relatives in 2017

❖ [Overseas Development Institute, Understanding Intimate-Partner Violence through a Male Lens, 20 March 2017](#)

[...] 4.3. Community and social levels

[...] As can be seen from Table 4, which compiles youths' perceptions of femininity and masculinity, their notions of femininity remain strongly traditional. Their notions of masculinity, however, mix traditional gender norms (e.g. a man meets the needs of his family) and modern constructions of manhood (e.g. men should act to stop violence against women and encourage women to do well).

Overwhelmingly, the evidence in the interviews shows that women's freedom and movement were restricted as a result of social norms. In most households, even women who had good relationships with their husbands were not 'allowed' to have a job, 'go outside anywhere, meet anyone.' In fact, women were expected to 'stay at home' as soon as they reached puberty. This was found to be true across all Phase 1 sites. [...]

[...] Table 4. Norms around femininity and masculinity, according to Pakistani youth

Notions of femininity

[...]

Observes purdah and dresses modestly:

Women and girls Less than 25 yrs: ✓

Women and girls 25+:

Boys and men 25 Less than 25 yrs: ✓

Boys and men 25 +:

❖ [CHR Michelsen Institute, The Criminalisation of Rape in Pakistan, 2017](#)

[...] 4.1.1 Status of women in society

The respondents unanimously shared their opinion that women are suppressed in Pakistan and face a number of barriers in everyday life. This makes it difficult for women to benefit from women's protection laws in place. The respondents focused on the fact that in Pakistan's male dominated culture, women are suppressed and therefore vulnerable to exploitation and violence. Even after an incident, they must depend on their male relatives to seek justice, as they cannot move alone due to traditional gender roles. For example, this means that a male member of the family always accompanies a women to report a crime. [...]

❖ [Ian Coxhead \(University of Wisconsin at Madison;, Hitotsubashi University\) \(Institute of Developing Economies\), Purdah, dowry and development in Pakistan, 4 December 2017](#)

[...] The practice of purdah limits women's mobility and their participation in wage employment. Dowry, a payment made at marriage by the bride's family to that of the groom, reflects (in part) differential earning power between wife and husband. In Pakistan, purdah is widely practiced; women's labor force participation rate is among the lowest in the world. Many women are limited to agricultural and household activities; in contrast to other emerging economies, they play very little role in the manufacturing economy. Dowry is also pervasive, especially among poor households. Surprisingly, economists have devoted very little formal attention to these phenomena. In this work-in-progress we explore some macroeconomic and microeconomic consequences of purdah and dowry with special reference to Pakistan. At the economy-wide level, we show that restrictions on female participation in paid employment limit the country's potential for productive participation in the global economy. Because of purdah, productive resources (including women's labor) are inefficiently allocated and returns on investments in female human capital are low; the female-male wage gap is large, and potential GDP growth is diminished. As a consequence of all these, both the incentives and the compulsion to provide dowry remain strong in spite of legal prohibitions on the practice. Using national household survey data, we find that the need to generate savings for dowry is a significant driver of male labor export, especially from poor households. [...]

Many tribes, communities, or families practiced sequestering women from all contact with men other than their relatives in 2018

❖ [East Asia Forum, Purdah disempowers Pakistan's women and weakens its economy, 30 August 2018](#)

[...] Over the past decade and a half, Bangladesh has outperformed Pakistan on key economic indicators despite Bangladesh's continuing problems of poverty, corruption and political instability.

[...] In both countries, women's access to employment is constrained by purdah — a set of practices that impose gender segregation in public spaces and the seclusion of women. Purdah constrains women's ability to work outside their home or immediate locale, which limits their labour force participation and occupational mobility. [...]

Pakistan's restrictive interpretation of purdah leads to other economic costs. Pakistani women are disproportionately employed in low-productivity, informal occupations in rural agriculture. They are systematically underpaid relative to men, have lower job security and almost no financial independence. [...]

- ❖ [Human Rights Watch, “Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her?”, Barriers to Girls’ Education in Pakistan, 12 November 2018](#)
 [...] III. Barriers to Girls’ Education Outside the School System
 Restrictions on girls’ freedom of movement due to harmful gender norms push many girls out of school, as does child marriage. [...]
- ❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)
 [...] Violence against Women, Girls, and Transgender People
 [...] Women who exercised or attempted to exercise their own choice in partners were subjected to confinement, beatings, and life-ending violence by fathers and brothers. Rejected suitors exacted their revenge by violently attacking women, often with acid to disfigure the women they claimed to want to marry. [...]

Many tribes, communities, or families practiced sequestering women from all contact with men other than their relatives in 2019

- ❖ [Australian Government - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 20 February 2019](#)
 [...] Women
 [...] 3.199 [...] Observation of the purdah (literally ‘curtain’, a practice of segregating women from unrelated men) restricts women’s personal, social and economic activities outside the home. Many women in Pakistan live separately from men, particularly from men outside their families, and face significant cultural and legal barriers to access basic rights, freedom and protection. While many women participate actively in society in large urban centres such as Lahore, Karachi or in Islamabad, conservative societies outside urban centres observe purdah rigorously.
 This has practical implications for travel beyond the home, including for health services or to obtain humanitarian support during conflict. [...]
- ❖ [Overseas Development Institute \(Author\), GLOW Consultants of Pakistan \(Author\), HPG - Humanitarian Policy Group \(Author\), IDS - Institute of Development Studies \(Author\), Valid Evaluations \(Author\): The impact of displacement on gender roles and relations, March 2019](#)
 [...] Marriage still commonly occurs at a young age and with only minimal consent, if any, from girls. Purdah remains strict. And even after the significant changes to the lives of women and girls, gender inequality remains high. [...]
- ❖ [Romanian National Council for Refugees: General Report Pakistan; Human Rights Situation, May 2019](#)
 [...] 2. Social situation
 „Throughout Pakistan, as in most agrarian societies, family organization is strongly patriarchal, and most people live with large extended families, often in the same house or family compound. The eldest male, whether he is the father, grandfather, or paternal uncle, is the family leader and makes all significant decisions regarding the family and its members. Traditionally, a woman’s place in society has been secondary to that of men, and she has been restricted to the performance of domestic chores and to fulfilling the role of a dutiful wife and mother. However, in the Punjab, cotton picking is exclusively a woman’s job, and women may keep the money thus earned for their own purposes. In wealthy peasant and landowner households and in urban middle-class families, the practice of keeping women in seclusion (purdah) is still common; when women leave their houses, they typically cover their heads. Among the rural poor, women have duties on the farm as well as in the house and do not customarily observe purdah. Houses of those who practice purdah have a men’s section (mardānah) at the front of the house, so that visitors do not disturb the women, who are secluded in the women’s section (zanānah) in the rear. [...]

- ❖ [Maryam Tanwir, Shailaja Fennell, Hafsa Rehman Lak, Salman Suf \(Journal of International Women's Studies\), Not Accepting Abuse as the Norm: Local Forms of Institutional Reform to Improve Reporting on Domestic Violence in Punjab, August 2019](#)

[...] Moreover, these patriarchal social norms that are keeping down participation rates also play a role in controlling and subjugating women in the public and private spheres. The mechanism of control operates through an institutionalization of a set of restrictive codes of behavior that promotes gender segregation and establishes an ideology that associates this segregation with female virtue that is closely intertwined with upholding family honour.¹⁴ [...]

14 For detailed information see: Hadi, Abdu, 2017 Patriarchy and Gender-Based Violence in Pakistan, European Journal of Social Sciences Education and Research

Right to decide the number, spacing and timing of children and whether this is upheld in practice. Young girls and women, particularly in rural areas, being especially vulnerable to problems related to sexual and reproductive health and rights (means and access to care, lack of awareness, spousal opposition) in 2017

- ❖ [Pakistan Alliance for Post Abortion Care Supplementary information on Pakistan, scheduled for review by the CESCR during its 61st session in May-June 2017, 28 April 2017](#)

[...] Unmet Contraceptive Need

Out of a total of approximately 9 million pregnancies in Pakistan in 2012, 4.2 million (46 percent) are unintended. Of these 4.2 million unintended pregnancies, 54 percent end in induced abortions.

An additional 34 percent of unintended pregnancies result in an estimated 1.4 million unplanned births. These abortions carry huge costs as witnessed by the large numbers of women who have postabortion complications and obtain treatment, as well as those who need but do not get treatment. Further, the unplanned births impose their own economic, social, and health costs on families, especially mothers.¹⁷ [...]

17 Sathar, Z., Singh, S., Rashida, G., Shah, Z. and Niazi, R. (2014), Induced Abortions and Unintended Pregnancies in Pakistan. Studies in Family Planning, 45: 471–491. doi:10.1111/j.1728-4465.2014.00004

- ❖ [Pakistan Alliance for Post Abortion Care Supplementary information on Pakistan, scheduled for review by the CESCR during its 61st session in May-June 2017, 28 April 2017](#)

[...] High levels of unmet need for contraception and low levels of contraception use leave many women at risk for unintended pregnancy.¹² Without access to safe abortion, many women and girls who experience unintended pregnancy risk their health and lives by resorting to unsafe abortion. Unsafe abortion accounts for at least 6% of maternal mortality in Pakistan, and this might be an underestimate given the sub regional average of 13%.¹³ [...]

Barriers to Safe Abortion in Pakistan

Ignorance of the law and stigma

Abortion is legal in Pakistan to save the life of the woman or to provide necessary treatment. The abortion law, however, does not address cases of rape, incest, and fetal abnormalities. Abortion related stigma, the narrow legal grounds for abortion, and the lack of understanding or clarity in interpreting and implementing the law by both women and healthcare providers means that women often resort to clandestine and unsafe abortion procedures that result in death or adverse health consequences. Although policy commitments and training the health work force are important steps, they are not enough to change the underlying economic, social, and cultural factors, including stigma, that lead women to seek abortion in unsafe conditions. Without attitudes grounded in respect for women, providers may refuse to provide care or provide substandard care.

Abortion like other public health concerns that are related to sex, gender and sexuality, has engendered stigma and discrimination against those advocating for, seeking and providing services. As a result, different stakeholders with personal values, beliefs and biases, influence and sometimes obstruct safe uterine evacuation/PAC service. [...]

12 National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) and Macro International, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2006–07, Islamabad, Pakistan: NIPS and Macro International, 2008.

13 World Health Organization (WHO), Unsafe Abortion: Global and Regional Estimates of the Incidence of Unsafe Abortion and Associated Mortality in 2008, sixth ed., Geneva: WHO, 2011.

❖ [The Coalition for Alternate Report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(ICECSR\) A Joint Civil Society Shadow Report, April 2017](#)

[...] Women also lack the power to decide matters related to family planning. The MDG report reflects that that there is increased awareness and use of contraceptives among women, from 28% to 30.8% in 2008-09, but socio-cultural norms in the country remain a formidable barrier to its wider adoption. Also, contraceptive failure and misuse remains a problem. Discernible change in the patriarchal mindset and socio-cultural norms that reflect gender biases will have to take place before women can be sufficiently empowered to take decisions regarding family size and family planning. Without these changes increase in availability of contraceptives will have limited impact. [...]

❖ [OHCHR news, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights hears from civil society organizations from Pakistan, 12 June 2017](#)

[...] Pakistan Alliance for Postabortion Care, a coalition of more than 40 organizations, highlighted the situation concerning restrictive abortion law and lack of access to contraceptives in Pakistan. It was estimated that in 2012-2013, contraceptive needs of 20 per cent of women had not been met; 46 per cent of an estimated nine million pregnancies in 2012 had been unintended, and of those, 54 per cent had resulted in abortions. Abortion carried a huge cost, as it was severely restricted and was legal only when there was a threat to the life of the mother. Safe and legal abortion was not easily accessible; unsafe abortion accounted for at least six per cent of maternal mortality, but this figure was likely higher. A study had found that 2.2 million abortions had been performed in Pakistan in 2012 - more than 85 per cent of which by untrained service providers, leading to life threatening complications. The Committee should address the issue of improved access to contraceptives and counselling, especially in rural areas, and urge Pakistan to bring its restrictive abortion law in compliance with international human rights standards. [...]

The negative impact of early marriages, women's illiteracy, poor access to health facilities, as well as the lack of women's empowerment and lack of birth spacing were the main causes of poor food choices underlying the widespread use of weaning diets of poor micronutrient content and bioavailability. This highlighted the need for increased efforts to educate girls. [...]

❖ [Amnesty International Submission to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 61st Session, 29 May to 23 June 2017](#)

[...] 3.3 Right to Health

[...] Women and girls in Pakistan have poor access to necessary reproductive health services. [...] The domestic legal framework on abortion continues to be restrictive. According to Section 338 of the Pakistan Penal Code, as amended in 1997 to “bring it in conformity” with Islamic teachings, “Whoever causes a woman with child whose organs have not been formed, to miscarry, if such miscarriage is not caused in good faith for the purpose of saving the life of the woman or providing necessary treatment to her, is said to cause 'Isqat-i-Haml' (abortion).¹¹⁴ The punishment is set as “is three years if the abortion is performed by the woman's consent, otherwise a maximum of ten years.”¹¹⁵ Though the law does not specify a gestational limit, Islamic scholars tend to believe that foetal organs are developed by the fourth month of gestation.¹¹⁶ Thus, abortion would be legal as “necessary treatment” if carried out in “good faith” up to the end of the fourth month of pregnancy. That marks some improvement on the previous law, which allowed for abortion only to save the life of the pregnant woman. However, abortion remains criminalized in several circumstances, including in cases of an unwanted pregnancy as a result of rape, sexual assault or incest, in case of foetal impairment, or after the fourth month of pregnancy unless there is a risk to the woman's life. Additionally, healthcare professionals lack awareness of the law. Some women, for whom the pregnancy amounts to a serious health risk, are turned away by the health facilities.¹¹⁷ This, together with poverty, leads women to

opt for unsafe abortions conducted by unskilled practitioners.¹¹⁸ At least 5.6% maternal deaths in Pakistan occur due to abortion related complications.¹¹⁹ [...]

114 Section 338 and sub-sections 338A, 338B and 338C of the penal code were initially amended in 1991 through a presidential ordinance. The parliament adopted the necessary statutory amendments in 1997. See Criminal Law (Amendment Act) 1997. Available: http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1324604341_299.pdf

115 338A, Pakistan Penal Code, 1860.

116 See Gila K. Shapiro, "Abortion law in Muslim-majority countries: an overview of the Islamic discourse with policy implications", *Health Policy and Planning* 2014;29:483–494.

117 Z A Sathar et al, *Post-Abortion Care in Pakistan: A National Study*. (Population Council, Islamabad 2013). Also see, Asma Kundi, "Resorting to unsafe abortion for family planning", *Dawn*, 25 September 2016. Available: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1285965>

118 Saima Gilani and Perveen Azeem, "Induced abortion: a clandestine affair", *Journal of Postgraduate Medical Institute*, 2005;19(4):412–415.

119 "5.6% of maternal deaths in Pakistan attributed to abortion-related complications", *Dawn*, 12 March 2015. Available: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1168938>

❖ [UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan*, 20 July 2017](#)

[...] Sexual and reproductive health

77. The Committee is concerned that abortion is criminalized in the State party except when the life of a mother is at risk, which has led to a very high incidence of unsafe clandestine abortions. This has in turn led to many women suffering from life-threatening complications that in more than 5 per cent of cases have resulted in death. It is also concerned that about half of pregnancies are not intended and that women have limited access to sexual and reproductive health services and information thereon. [...]

❖ [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 23 August 2017](#)

[...] C. Principal matters of concern and recommendations

[...] Voluntary termination of pregnancy and maternal mortality

15. The Committee is concerned that abortion remains criminalized except to save the life of the woman or provide "necessary treatment"; that the circumstances under which voluntary termination of pregnancy is allowed are not clearly defined or widely understood among medical professionals or the general public; consequently, that a very large number of women seek unsafe abortions, which may put their lives and health at risk; and that there is a high level of resulting maternal mortality. The Committee is also concerned by the very high rate of unintended pregnancy owing to limited access to information and services regarding sexual and reproductive health (arts. 2, 3, 6, 7, 17 and 26). [...]

❖ [Right Here, Right Now Alliance and Sexual Rights initiative, UPR Submission, November 2017](#)

[...] The sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of the population, particularly of young people, remain insufficiently addressed at the policy level as well as in terms of implementation. Moreover, in Pakistan, where talking about sexuality and sexual health and reproductive rights is considered taboo in society, young people's choices in this matter are restricted and their wellbeing jeopardized. The unequal power relation between men and women is also an important factor which makes it difficult for young girls and women to exercise autonomy when it comes to making informed decisions about their own bodies and negotiating their bodily rights.

[...] Female sexuality is tightly controlled, resulting in increased social restrictions on young unmarried girls. While studies show that young girls lack information on sexual and reproductive health, they themselves are shy about discussing these issues.⁴ [...]

4 Situation assessment of adolescents for life skills and HIV prevention in selected districts of Pakistan. UNICEF 2006

❖ [Shirkat Gah- Women's Resource Centre, The Influence of Religion on Family Planning Practices, 18 December 2017](#)

[...] Case Study of Pakistan

[...] Hurdles to family planning exist along with opposition to family planning practices by religious fundamentalist actors, which consist of religious leaders at the community, regional, and national levels

such as televangelists, local clerics, and pirs (spiritual leaders). [...] A Population Council study showed that 16% of men between the ages of 16-45 engaged in premarital sex (Sathar et al. 2016); this increases vulnerability to STIs/STDs, and could lead to unwanted pregnancies. Despite this knowledge, the unmarried youth is conscientiously excluded from reproductive health policies and interventions due to socio-cultural sensitivities. [...]

Abortion services are also not easily accessible for married women, despite being a common form of family planning due to lack of access to contraception. [...]

There is strong opposition to the use of contraception within the community, dictated by religion, culture and social norms, along with knowledge and awareness. There is a belief amongst the community that family planning methods, whether traditional or modern, is infanticide as it prevents pregnancy. This is exacerbated by clerics who discourage family planning practices and condemn such acts in their regular Friday sermons (Brohi and Zaman, 2016). [...]

❖ [Shirkat Gah, Strategic Plan 2014-2018, 27 December 2017](#)

[...] Thematic Area 1: Bodily Rights

Evidence collected by SG indicates that gross violations of a woman's bodily rights occur owing to a patriarchal mindset, cultural beliefs, religious extremism, the lack of quality services and accountability mechanism, the non-implementation of laws and policies that safeguard these rights and the deteriorating security environment¹⁷. Unfortunately, many women internalize the justifications for the violation of their bodily rights and the culture of prohibitions, and therefore fail to claim their rights. This calls for actions that increase awareness of bodily rights, starting with the recognition of these rights and their interconnection, existing services and legal entitlements. [...]

17 Shirkat Gah, *Rising to the Challenge* (2012); Shirkat Gah research, *The Puppet and the Puppeteers* (2012).

[Right to decide the number, spacing and timing of children and whether this is upheld in practice. Young girls and women, particularly in rural areas, being especially vulnerable to problems related to sexual and reproductive health and rights \(means and access to care, lack of awareness, spousal opposition\) in 2018](#)

❖ [Shirkat Gah- Women's Resource Centre, Strengthening Governance in Health Systems for Reproductive Health and Rights \(RHR\) in Pakistan: An Intervention Case Study, 31 January 2018](#)

[...] Significant resources are being invested to make public sector health services available for all, but crucial family and community driven obstacles to women and girls seeking health services remains largely unaddressed, especially when it comes to reproductive health matters, in particular for unmarried girls. Interventions to overcome these critical "upstream" hurdles are almost exclusively run by civil society organisations. An effective nation-wide communication strategy to drive demand and uptake is not visible. Women's lack of economic resources undermines autonomous decision-making over their own health and that of their daughters. Men, who hold the purse strings, make the decisions; societal norms dictating chaperones for women and girls visiting health facilities, multiply the economic burden in terms of transport costs and loss of income for daily wage earners. [...]

Reproductive health (RH) is not taken seriously and socio-cultural taboos keep women, and especially girls silent on RH issues. When girls have the temerity to express a problem, this is often dismissed as insignificant and a condition of being female, or treated with over-the-counter painkillers. Mothers are embarrassed to discuss RH with their daughters; parents fear that a visit to a health professional, especially gynecologists, will damage the girl's reputation and bring shame to the family. It is not uncommon to take a girl suffering from menstrual pain to see a spiritual healer rather than a doctor, or resort to homemade concoctions to alleviate pain. (Similar solutions may be adopted for terminating unwanted pregnancies, often with mortifying results.²) Should it become imperative for a girl to be taken to see a doctor, facilities near their residence are eschewed, and a distant facility selected to avoid prying eyes increasing the economic burden of seeking treatment. Taboos are so entrenched that some girls are not allowed to explain their ailments to the doctors, and must rely on mothers to be intermediaries with healthcare providers. Finally, community women commented that religious leaders play an important role

in preventing women from accessing RH services in particular contraception, by preaching that it is a sin. [...]

2 Shirkat Gah research under the Safe Abortion Action Fund, 2014-2015. Available from http://shirkatgah.org/shirkat/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/SAAF-booklet_LowRes.pdf.

❖ [National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18, January 2019](#)

[...] 6 Fertility Preferences

[...] 6.4 WANTED FERTILITY RATES

[...] Table 6.7 and Figure 6.5 show differentials in wanted fertility rates and total fertility rates among women age 15-49. The wanted fertility rate indicates what fertility would be if women had only the children they desired. The total wanted fertility rate and the actual total fertility rate in Pakistan are 2.9 and 3.6, respectively. This means that women in Pakistan want on average 0.7 children less than the current fertility rates. [...]

[...] 7 Family Planning

[...] 7 Family Planning

[...] 7.5 DEMAND FOR FAMILY PLANNING

Fifty-two percent of currently married women age 15-49 in Pakistan have a demand for family planning; 19% for spacing births, and 33% for limiting births. Only 34% of currently married women are using a contraceptive method either to space or to limit births, and therefore have fulfilled their need. However, 17% of currently married women have an unmet need for family planning: 10% want to space and 8% desire to limit births but are currently not using any contraception (Table 7.14, Figure 7.6). If all married women who want to space or limit their children were to use a family planning method, the contraceptive prevalence rate would increase from 34% to 52%. Overall, 66% of currently married women age 15-49 have their demand for family planning satisfied. Forty-nine percent of demand satisfied is by modern methods. [...] 7.5.1 Decision Making about Family Planning

The survey collected information regarding decision making about family planning from currently married women age 15-49. Table 7.15 shows that for 87% of currently married women who are using a family planning method, the decision to use was made jointly with their husband; for only 7% of these women the decision was made mainly by themselves, and for 6% the husband mainly made the decision. Among currently married women age 15-49 who are not using a family planning method, 70% made the decision not to use family planning jointly with their husband, 9% decided themselves, and for 16% the decision was mainly made by their husband. [...]

7.8 MEN'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS CONTRACEPTIVE USE

The survey also made a special effort to enquire from men age 15-49 whether they agreed with stereotypical statements about contraception. More than a quarter (27%) of men agreed to the statement that contraception is women's business (Table 7.21). Furthermore, 16% of men concurred with the statement that those women who use contraception become promiscuous. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Rights of the Disadvantaged: Women

[...] Women and family planning

[...] According to UNFPA, one in five married women who want to avoid pregnancy are unable to access effective methods to do so, despite the fact that it could reduce poverty, save the lives of mothers and babies, and provide opportunity for economic growth. [...]

Right to decide the number, spacing and timing of children and whether this is upheld in practice. Young girls and women, particularly in rural areas, being especially vulnerable to problems related to sexual and reproductive health and rights (means and access to care, lack of awareness, spousal opposition) in 2019

❖ [Shirkat Gah – Women’s Resource Centre and Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women \(ARROW\), Leaving the Youth Behind: The Missing Demographic in Pakistan’s SRHR Policies and Programmes, March 2019](#)

[...] Executive Summary

[...] 25 years since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Pakistan has made some progress in fulfilling commitments to ensure provision of contraception and family planning services to all. Health and population are now devolved subjects, with each province (Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan) responsible for setting relevant policies and programmes in accordance to the federal guidelines and visions for health policy and programmes. Within these policies and programmes, however, youth representation and recognition of their needs, is missing. Despite being a large part of the current demographic of Pakistan, youth’s access to health services, particularly those related to sexual and reproductive health (SRH), remains limited, and unsupported. While policy remains silent on their issues, social and structural barriers further exacerbate the lack of access to services, and perpetrate misinformation and myths related to SRH. Programmes rolled out for the youth focus on economic and educational development but disregard their specific SRH needs. The problem thus, remains that universal access to SRH information and services will remain unfulfilled until attention is paid to the different needs of young people, during the various life cycle stages, and the impact it has on their economic and education outcomes. The effectiveness of policies and programmes will only be seen if they are designed keeping in mind these specifications, and special consideration is paid to the impact of social and cultural practices on youth’s access to SRH services and information. [...]

FINDINGS

ADOLESCENT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN PAKISTAN

[...] While initial analysis of 2017-2018 PDHS indicates that there has been some improvement in health indicators, overall health outcomes for youth still remain poor;²¹ youth’s access to SRHR services, information, and facilities is severely restricted due to a myriad of reasons, chief of which are socio-cultural and economic barriers; a lack of inclusion of youth’s SRHR in policies and programmes, and weak implementation of existing policies and programmes.

To a large extent, it is the unmarried youth which remain the most disenfranchised; socio-cultural practices and beliefs impede unmarried youth (particularly girls) from accessing SRH facilities and services. Importantly, national indicators such as PDHS measure data such as TFR or age at first birth against married women, between the ages of 25-29. The lack of national records of SRH indicators for youth results in their exclusion in policies and programmes. Challenges confronting young people in terms of SRH which remain largely unaddressed include early marriage and pregnancy, low use of contraception, use of unsafe abortions, lack of relevant information and poor knowledge about bodily development including puberty and menstruation, sexuality, reproduction, and HIV.

A significant barrier to improving youth’s health outcomes is that SRH remains a taboo subject for youth, particularly for girls. Combined with the absence of formal sources of knowledge, this obstructs access to vital SRH information amongst unmarried youth demographic as the expectation is that sex and sexuality are issues which young people will naturally understand after marriage.²² Young people are expected to be sexually inactive before marriage, and programmes and policies thus neglect this demographic despite evidence which indicates that informing young people about their SRH such as puberty, dangers of unwanted pregnancies, FP, equality in marital relations, and communication and negotiation skills can result in improved knowledge and understanding of not just health issues, but also equal gender relations in society, and the importance of education and economic empowerment for girls.²³

FP and contraceptive use has been found to be low in married youth too, due to lack of information but also lack of permission given by husbands or mothers-in-law, and misinformation about contraceptives,²⁴ creating a high rate of unmet need.²⁵ Interestingly, youth have been found to be more enthusiastic about adopting FP methods, particularly male youth who are more knowledgeable compared to girls about the importance of FP.²⁶ This can be attributed to greater mobility and independence enjoyed by male youth as compared to girls, multiplying avenues for gaining information. It is also important to note that, more often than not, available data on contraceptive use for youth relates to married youth; reflecting the assumption that unmarried youth do not have a need for contraception or family planning services.²⁷ This data gap is highly dangerous as it ignores on-ground realities. [...]

Due to taboos surrounding RH, adolescent girls are not allowed to visit healthcare facilities alone, in many instances, even if escorted. Fear of social censure in small communities with little to no privacy is a powerful deterrent to youth seeking health services. Simultaneously, on the supply side, service providers

struggle with young patients due to cultural norms and young people's inability to adequately express their health issues.³⁶ Such regressive views of adolescent health are also reflected in service provider bias, with service providers refusing to perform abortions on unmarried girls,³⁷ or failing to provide adequate care to rape victims due to personal bias/disbelief of rape.³⁸

It is evident from field interventions across the country that unmarried youth have little to no information regarding their SRH.

An assumption could be made that male youth would have accurate information due to their relative freedom of movement in comparison to girls; however, this is not the case according to SG's research. Raw data from various qualitative researches reveals that young boys lack information about puberty and sexuality. While greater mobility and higher education level than girls does, in some cases, provide boys with more sources of information as compared to girls, general trends in research indicate poor knowledge about puberty among male youth. They feel shame and fear approaching their fathers, and in turning to peers, often create a chain of misinformation.³⁹ They receive no information in their schools and have no access to service providers who can provide accurate SRH information. [...]

Young unmarried girls are largely ignorant regarding their RH. Mothers generally do not speak to their daughters about puberty, and silence daughters if they ask questions or, in the best case scenarios, direct them towards older sisters and mid-wives. This creates a culture of shame and secrecy around RH, undermining girls' health-seeking behaviour.

Moreover, it creates severe misconceptions regarding ordinary RH topics such as menstrual health: girls report fear upon reaching menarche because they believe they are sick or dying from disease. Girls have no source of information other than peers, and occasionally local Community MidWives (CMWs). This lack of knowledge is debilitating for their emotional health, as their sense of identity and selfworth erodes due to a disconnection with their own bodies. [...]

21NIPS, PDHS 2017-18 Key Indicators, (Islamabad, Pakistan, and The DHS Program, ICF Rockville, Maryland, USA, 2018), <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/PR109/PR109.pdf>.

22 Zeba A. Sathar, Iram Kamran, Maqsood Sadiq, and Sabahat Hussain, Youth in Pakistan: Priorities, Realities and Policy Responses, (Population Council, 2016), https://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/2016PGY_YouthInPakistan.pdf

23 Aminah Jahangir and Neha Mankani, CASE STUDY: Aahung — Empowering Adolescents in Pakistan through Life Skills-based Education, (UNGEI, 2016), <https://www.goodpracticefund.org/documents/Aahung-UNGEI-Final.pdf>.

24 Noureen Aleem Nishtar, Neelofar Sami, Sabina Alim, Nousheen Pradhan, and Farid-Ul-Hasnain, "Determinants of Contraceptives Use amongst Youth:

An Exploratory Study with Family Planning Service Providers in Karachi Pakistan," Global Journal of Health Science 5, no. 3 (2013): 1-8, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4776775/>.

25 "Youth and Contraceptive Use" http://ec2-54-210-230-186.compute-1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FP2020MeasurementAnnex_2015_Youth.pdf

26 Population Council, Induced abortions and Unintended Pregnancies in Pakistan, 2012, (Population Council, 2014) http://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/2014RH_PostabortionCare_Pakistan.pdf

27 Assessing Opportunities for Family Planning Programming among Adolescents and Youth in Pakistan", Pakistan Youth Opportunity Brief, TRACK-20, accessed September, 2018, <http://www.track20.org/download/pdf/Youth%20Briefs/Pakistan%20Youth%20Opportunity%20Brief.pdf>. [...]

37 Female Doctor, IDI, Swat (KP) 2016

38 Female Doctor, IDI, Muzaffargarh (Punjab), 2016..

39 Young Boys, FGD Shahdadkot (Sindh), 2016

❖ [Young Omang Pakistan, Supplementary Information for the Adoption of the List of Issues on Pakistan for Consideration by Pre-Sessional CEDAW Working Group and by the Committee in its 75th session Joint Stakeholder Submission, 11 June 2019](#)

[...] Background- Currently Pakistan has the largest population of youth in its history (55% of the population are under the ages of 25 years) with subsequent cohorts predicted to be even larger.

The lack of awareness and information about sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) is the most significant behavior to young people's health and wellbeing, together with the need for youth friendly health services and gender (including transgender) sensitive SRHR services. The government needs to

focus in increasing access to SRHR information and services for young people. There is a dire need to establish adolescent and youth friendly health services centers throughout the country. [...]

❖ [Centre for Reproductive Rights, Supplementary information on Pakistan, scheduled for review by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in its 75th session, 20 January 2020](#)

I. REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH (Articles 1, 12 and 16)

[...] Barriers to Contraception Information and Services. The pre-session letter also noted with concern the high rates of unintended pregnancy¹¹ and the fact that the use of contraceptive methods has remained stagnant in Pakistan over the last five years.¹² The CEDAW Committee has requested the State Party to provide information regarding “access to affordable contraceptive methods.”¹³ In its reply to the List of Issues, the State Party has not provided any specific information regarding measures taken to improve access to contraception. It has noted that civil society organisations are working with the public sector to improve access to contraceptives and that Lady Health Workers are providing contraceptives¹⁴; however, no specific policies and their impact on contraceptive access have been discussed. While the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAH&N) National Vision Action Plan 2016-2025 notes that “[f]amily planning is one of the most cost-effective interventions to reduce maternal and newborn deaths”¹⁵, it does not note any specific policy reforms that the government plans to undertake to increase access to contraception. Nor does it mention any measures that it intends to take to promote the ability of women and girls to make informed choices about contraception methods. [...]

II. BARRIERS TO ACCESSING SAFE ABORTION SERVICES (ARTICLES 1, 12 and 16).

[...] Abortion is criminalized under the Pakistan Penal Code unless it is to save the life of the woman or to provide “necessary treatment” to a woman before the fetal organs have been formed.³⁰ The law does not define “necessary treatment” creating ambiguity for providers and women about when abortion is permitted. Once the organs have been formed, abortion is permitted only to save the life of the pregnant woman.³¹ Aside from these two exceptions, abortion remains criminalized, and women undergoing abortions as well as service providers are liable to criminal penalties. In its List of Issues, the CEDAW Committee asked the State Party to provide information on the measures taken to “clarify the legal grounds for abortion”, “decriminalize abortion in all cases... of rape, incest, risk to the health of the pregnant woman or severe fetal impairment” and to “ensure access to high-quality post-abortion care services ...”³²

In its Reply to the List of Issues, the State Party has unfortunately denied that the legal framework on abortion in Pakistan is inconsistent with the rights guaranteed under CEDAW. It has stated that the “abortion law in Pakistan is in compliance with our international obligations, human rights standards and our legal framework.”³³ It has further stated that the issue of abortion “has to be dealt by each country keeping in view their national, religious and other sensitivities and the best interests of the woman and child.”³⁴ The criminalization of abortion in the Pakistan Penal Code as discussed above and the ambiguities in the exception to criminalization are not consistent with the CEDAW Committee’s observations that restrictive abortion laws violate the rights guaranteed under CEDAW. The CEDAW Committee has also consistently called on states to address “social and cultural” structures that perpetuate discrimination against women and impede substantive equality.³⁵ Therefore, the State Party may not rely on tradition in order to justify restrictive abortion laws that endanger the reproductive health of women. The State Party has referred to guidelines for service providers adopted by the Ministry of Health in 2018 “for high quality safe uterine evacuation/post-abortion care.”³⁶ However the guidelines are not legally binding and do not contain provisions regarding monitoring and accountability. Nor do the guidelines propose to clarify the circumstances under which abortion is permitted under the exceptions made in the Pakistan Penal Code criminalizing abortion. The ambiguity in the law therefore persists, creating confusion and insecurity among service providers and leading to denial of abortion services.³⁷

[...] III. ADOLESCENT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (Articles 1, 10, 12 & 16)

The CEDAW Committee has recognized that adolescent pregnancy is linked to high rates of maternal mortality – particularly when girls are subjected to child, early and forced marriages – noting that complications from pregnancy are the leading cause of death for adolescent girls aged 15-19 in developing countries.³⁸ As noted in the pre-session letter, child marriage persists in Pakistan with 21% percent of girls married by the time they reach the age of 18.³⁹ The high rate of child marriage is particularly

alarming considering the lack of access to comprehensive sexuality education in Pakistan, which makes girls within child marriages vulnerable to exploitative sex and unwanted pregnancies.⁴⁰ [...]

Moreover, the reply to the List of Issues indicates that the comprehensive sexuality education has not yet been adopted in school curricula across Pakistan. While the State Party has stated that frameworks for incorporating “Life Skills Based Education” in school curricula has been developed, it does not indicate whether this has actually been adopted and is being taught in schools.⁴³ [...]

11 Sathar et. al. Induced Abortions and Unintended Pregnancies in Pakistan, *Studies in Family Planning*, 471-491, 483 (2014).

12 PDHS 2017-18, supra note 7 at 20.

13 List of Issues, supra note 4.

14 Reply to List of Issues, supra note 8.

15 RMNCAH&N supra note 9 at 20. [...]

30 Pakistan Penal Code of 1860, s. 338.

31 Pakistan Penal Code of 1860, s. 338-B.

32 List of Issues, supra note 4 para. 17.

33 Reply to List of Issues, supra note 8 para. 140.

34 Id.

35 CEDAW Committee, General Recommendation No. 25: Article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on temporary special measures (2004) para. 11 in *Compilation of General Comments and General Recommendations Adopted by Human Rights Treaty Bodies*, paras. 7-8, U.N. Doc. HRI/GEN/1/Rev.7.

36 Reply to List of Issues, supra note 8 at para. 141.

37 Diaa Hadid, Why the abortion rate in Pakistan is one of the highest, NPR, Nov. 28 2018 available at <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/11/28/661763318/why-the-abortion-rate-in-pakistan-is-one-of-the-worlds-highest>

38 CEDAW Committee & CRC Committee, Joint Gen. Recommendation No. 31 & Gen. Comment No. 18 on harmful practices, paras. 21, 22, U.N. Doc. CEDAW/C/GC/31-CRC/C/GC/18 (2014).

39 Girls Not Brides, Child Marriage: Where Does It Happen, available at <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/pakistan/> [...]

43 Reply to List of Issues, para. 100.

❖ [Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women, Forum for Dignity Initiatives, Joint NGO Shadow Report Submission to CEDAW, 13 January 2020](#)

[...] Executive Summary

The sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of the population, particularly of young girls, remain insufficiently addressed at the policy level as well as in terms of implementation. Moreover, in Pakistan, where talking about sexuality and sexual health and reproductive rights is considered a taboo in society, young people’s choices in this matter are restricted and their wellbeing jeopardized. The unequal power relation between men and women is also an important factor which makes it difficult for young girls and women to exercise autonomy when it comes to making informed decisions about their own bodies and negotiating their bodily rights. [...]

Social norms enforcing segregation between males and females restrict mobility of women, especially unmarried young girls, limiting their access to basic health care. Young participants of the consultations emphasized ‘lack of information and awareness’ as the key issue affecting young people’s sexual health, followed by ‘gender unequal attitudes’ on a second place. [...]

Sexuality among young people is little researched in Pakistan, primarily owing to cultural taboos restricting open discussions on sexuality and sexual health in general. Pakistan’s Hudood Laws⁸ and customary practices, such as karo kari⁹, make sex outside of marriage punishable by death. Female sexuality is tightly controlled, resulting in increased social restrictions on young unmarried girls. While studies show that young girls lack information on sexual and reproductive health, they themselves are shy about discussing these issues. [...]

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Article 12 of CEDAW

[...] Young Omang is working for SRHR specifically relating to people under age 30. This is one of the most neglected group in Pakistani society when it comes to SRHR. In countries like Pakistan discrimination not

just exists on the basis of gender and sex it also exists on the basis of age. Young people's sexual reproductive rights are most neglected. There is resistance in the society when comes to acknowledging SRHR of young people under the pretext that giving young people information and services in this context will promote free sex. [...]

Young Girls (Both cisgender & Transgender) Health Issues

Lack of awareness and information and services

Poor access to sexual and reproductive health services by adolescents is the most significant issue affecting young people's health and wellbeing, together with the need for youth friendly health services and gender (including transgender) sensitive SRHR services. The government needs to focus on improving access to SRHR information and services for young people. There is a dire need to establish adolescent and youth friendly health services centers throughout the country. [...]

- Young girls often drop of school on attaining puberty and at primary level the enrolment of young girls is very low which means health related information provision to out of school young girls must also be part of the government programmes. There is no mention about any youth friendly healthcare facilities providing easy and safe access to young unmarried girls and women for their sexual and reproductive healthcare information and services while provincial youth policies clearly provide for the establishment of youth centers. [...]

Sexual and Gender Based Violence

[...] Men controlling all aspects of women's lives is an acceptable way of life in the society. Control over her mobility, her choice of clothing, choice of profession, choice of spouse, number of children lies with the men in their lives. [...]

Abortion

With the social stigma attached to this aspect of SRHR, abortion remains of the most de-prioritized areas in the health and rights framework. A relatively recent study conducted by the Population Council of Pakistan on Post Abortion Care revealed that Punjab has the highest number of Post Abortion Care Cases, resulting from unsafe abortions, that are treated in various facilities. There were an estimated 2.25 million induced abortions in Pakistan in 2012¹¹. The majority of these abortions were clandestine, and placed women's health and lives at risk. In 2012, the national abortion rate was 50 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15–49. The report further says there are around 4 million unintended pregnancies per annum which roughly makes up to 46 % of total annual pregnancies. Out of these 24.9% end up in induced abortions. Unsafe abortion is one of the main contributors in the high maternal mortality rate in the country. Experts agree that the existing law that allows for an abortion only if the mother's life is in danger, is a flexible one and it is often the provider bias that leads to denial of services or poor quality of services provided to women who wish to have an abortion. [...]

8 Haddood Ordinance: The Hudood Ordinances are laws in Pakistan that were enacted in 1979 as part of then military ruler Zai-ul-Haq's Islamization process. It replaced parts of the British-era Pakistan Penal Code, adding new criminal offences of adultery and fornication, and new punishments of whipping, amputation, and stoning to death. After much controversy and criticism parts of the law were extensively revised in 2006 by the Women's Protection Bill.

The Hudood Law was intended to implement Shari'a law or bring Pakistani law into "conformity with the injunctions of Islam", by enforcing punishments mentioned in the Quran and sunnah for Zina (extramarital sex), qazf (false accusation of zina), theft, and consumption of alcohol. The system provided for two kinds of offences — hadd and tazir — with different punishments to go with them. Hadd offences (fixed punishment) require a higher standard of proof than tazir (discretionary punishment) and their punishments are more severe.

The zina provisions of the law were particularly controversial and critics alleged that there were "hundreds of incidents where a woman subjected to rape, or even gang rape, was eventually accused of zina and incarcerated. Supporters defended the Ordinances' punishments as ordained by God and the law as the victim of "extremely unjust propaganda" in the media.

The Women Protection Bill returns a number of offenses from the Zina Ordinance to the Pakistan Penal Code, where they had been before 1979; since rape, unlike zina and qazf, is not mentioned in the Quran, rape is now excluded from Islamic criminal law. reformulates and redefines the offenses of zina and qazf (the wrongful accusation of zina); no complaint of adultery or rape can be converted into one of fornication.

9 Karo Kari: Karo-Kari is a type of premeditated honour killing. The homicidal acts are primarily committed against women who are thought to have brought dishonour to their family by engaging in illicit pre-marital or extra-marital relations. In order to restore this honour, a male family member must kill the female in question. The custom exists in all provinces under different names. In Sindh it is called Karo Kari, in Balochistan Siyahkari in KP Kor Kora and in Punjab Kala Kali. [...]

11 Induced abortions and unintended pregnancies in Pakistan 2012 by Population Council Pakistan.

❖ [Aurat Foundation and Legal Aid Society, Deeds not Words, Pakistan Civil Society's Alternative Report on CEDAW, 2020](#)

[...] Article 12 - Women's and Girls' Health and Reproductive Health Rights:

(CEDAW/C/PAK/Q/5 October 2018 paras 151-164) (CEDAW/C/PAK/Q/5 July 2019 paras 16-17)

Gaps in the Fifth Report include omission of: reproductive/sexual health rights (SRHR); 2+ million annual unsafe (aka illegal) abortions; Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) data, despite CEDAW Committee's previous queries and Population Census/2017 and PDHS/2017-18. Included: maternal (Ob/Gyn-related) healthcare. [...]

❖ [Shirkat Gah – Women's Resource Centre, Alternative CEDAW Report 2020 on Pakistan's Fifth Periodic Report Alternative CSO Report, 2020](#)

[...] Abortion

CEDAW Para 17 & CEDAW/C/PAK/RQ/5 Paras 140-142

Abortion is permitted under PPC Section 338-A, B and C for saving the life of the mother or providing her necessary treatment until the organs of the child have formed, following which only the life exception applies. 'Necessary treatment' has never been defined. Rural Health Centres are mandated to provide post-abortion care. Data indicates some 2.2 million induced abortions are carried out each year²⁶ but there is no segregation of safe and unsafe abortions. Commonly, abortion is used as a means for family planning when services are unavailable or by women not permitted to access these. LHWs and Community midwives can play a critical role in befriending women at high risk to make family planning services available.

In practice women seeking abortions and post-abortion care confront the moral reservations and biases of service providers most of who are insufficiently informed about the law and assume they may be penalized or incarcerated for providing abortion services.²⁷ [...]

26 <https://www.dawn.com/news/1429517>

27 Shirkat Gah .Fighting the Stigma through Champions: Addressing Unsafe Abortion in Pakistan
<http://shirkatgah.org/shirkat/?p=13904>

❖ [The Pakistan Alliance for Postabortion Care, RE: Supplementary information on Pakistan scheduled for review by the CEDAW Committee during its 75111 session in February, 2020, 20 January 2020](#)

[...] The Legal Framework for Abortion in Pakistan

The abortion law in Pakistan provides for legal abortion in cases of threat to health and in early pregnancy for "necessary treatment." The phrase necessary treatment is not clearly defined or widely understood, and safe and legal abortion care is not widely accessible. High levels of unmet need for contraception and low levels of contraception use leave many women at risk for unintended pregnancy.⁹ Without access to safe abortion, many women and girls who experience unintended pregnancy risk their health and lives by resorting to unsafe abortion. Unsafe abortion accounts for at least 6% of maternal mortality in Pakistan, and this might be an underestimate given the sub regional average of 13%.¹⁰ [...]

The government of Pakistan has shown commitment towards eliminating maternal mortality due to unsafe abortion. National Service delivery standards and guidelines for high quality uterine evacuation and postabortion care have moved forward on quality of care with movement to implement these S&Gs in coming years. In addition, the Pakistan Nursing Council extended authorization to midwives to provide care with misoprostol and MVA, misoprostol has been included for PAC in National Essential Medicine List (NEML) and the Ministry of National Health Services Regulation and Coordination (MoNHSR&C) has endorsed a Reference manual for Women-centered PAC as the standard document for all PAC-trainings including doctors and midlevel providers. The recent research report on FP Landscape by Population Council indicates a large, untapped private sector that has prompted provincial governments to consider partnership with private players. These are all positive steps the government of Pakistan has taken to protect and fulfill women's right to health. However, much more needs to be done as women continue to experience barriers accessing otherwise legal services. [...]

Barriers to Safe Abortion in Pakistan

Ignorance of the law and stigma

Abortion is legal in Pakistan to save the life of the woman or to provide necessary treatment. The abortion law, however, does not address cases of rape, incest, and fetal abnormalities. Abortion-related stigma, the narrow legal grounds for abortion, and the lack of understanding or clarity in interpreting and implementing the law by both women and healthcare providers means that women often resort to clandestine and unsafe abortion procedures that result in death or adverse health consequences. Although policy commitments and training the health work force are important steps, they are not enough to change the underlying economic, social, and cultural factors, including stigma, that lead women to seek abortion in unsafe conditions. Without attitudes grounded in respect for women, providers may refuse to provide care or provide substandard care. Abortion like other public health concerns that are related to sex, gender and sexuality, has engendered stigma and discrimination against those advocating for, seeking and providing services. As a result, different stakeholders with personal values, beliefs and biases, influence and sometimes obstruct safe uterine evacuation/PAC service. It is in this context that one study found that in 2012 there were a reported 2.2 million abortions, performed in Pakistan, of which more than 85% women accessed untrained service providers or quacks and resorted to life threatening complications (almost 700,000 each year) due to use of outdated and unsafe approaches and methods.¹² [...]

Many factors become the barrier when a woman with postabortion complications needs treatment at a health facility. These barriers include costs, availability, distance and level of family support. However, financial barrier is the most significant of all being faced by the women and families.¹³ One of the real issues is whether women themselves take their symptoms seriously and whether their health is given value by their family. Usually women seek care only when complications have become more serious. Women usually ignore their mild or moderate symptoms and avoid seeking care due to financial pressure and household responsibilities. There is a sharp contrast in the desperation seen in women at the time of seeking abortion that is not seen for seeking care for post-abortion complications. At the time of abortion, they consider health as one of the main reasons for having an abortion but this is not seen as a priority at the

time of complications. Service providers also said that when women ignore or delay seeking treatment, the complications become more serious and women end up spending a lot more money on their treatment.

Unmet Contraceptive Need

Out of a total of approximately 9 million pregnancies in Pakistan in 2012, 4.2 million (46 percent) are unintended. Of these 4.2 million unintended pregnancies, 54 percent end in induced abortions. An additional 34 percent of unintended pregnancies result in an estimated 1.4 million unplanned births. These abortions carry huge costs as witnessed by the large numbers of women who have postabortion complications and obtain treatment, as well as those who need but do not get treatment. Further, the unplanned births impose their own economic, social, and health costs on families, especially mothers.¹⁴ Hospital based data mentions that postabortion family planning is a missed opportunity which needs to be addressed at all levels of health care delivery system both in public and private sector to reduce number of unwanted pregnancies.

9 National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) and Macro International, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2006-07, Islamabad, Pakistan: NIPS and Macro International, 2008.

10 World Health Organization (WHO), Unsafe Abortion: Global and Regional Estimates of the Incidence of Unsafe Abortion and Associated Mortality in 2008, sixth ed., Geneva: WHO, 2011. [...]

12 Sathar, Z., Singh, S., Rashida, G., Shah, Z. and Niazi, R. (2014), Induced Abortions and Unintended Pregnancies in Pakistan. *Studies in Family Planning*, 45: 471-491. doi:10.1111/j.1728-4465.2014.00004

13 Zathar S et al., Post-abortion Care in Pakistan, In Brief, New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2013, No. 4.

14 Sathar, Z., Singh, S., Rashida, G., Shah, Z. and Niazi, R. (2014), Induced Abortions and Unintended Pregnancies in Pakistan. *Studies in Family Planning*, 45: 471-491. doi:10.1111/j.1728-4465.2014.00004

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Health

43. The Committee commends the State party for the adoption of the National Vision 2016–2025 for Coordinated Priority Actions to Address Challenges of Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent Health and Nutrition and its action plan. However, it notes that the action plan fails to specify

indicators, targets and budgetary commitments for its implementation. Furthermore, the Committee notes with concern:

- (a) The high maternal mortality rate in the State party;
- (b) Women's limited access to family planning services, including modern contraceptives;
- (c) Restrictive abortion laws and the large number of women resorting to unsafe abortions, as well as the lack of adequate post-abortion care services;
- (d) The high incidence of obstetric fistula in the State party, resulting from prolonged obstructed labour in the absence of skilled birth attendance, as well as iatrogenic fistula, resulting from surgical negligence during caesarean section or hysterectomy; [...]

Access to antenatal care in 2017

❖ [Amnesty International Submission to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 61st Session, 29 May to 23 June 2017](#)

[...] 3.3 Right to Health

[...] Approximately 40% of pregnant women do not receive skilled prenatal care or full protection against tetanus.¹⁰⁹ The coverage of prenatal care varies noticeably across regions and sub-regions.¹¹⁰ Delays in seeking medical care for complications during pregnancy are common due to lack of transport, family support, and the non-availability of essential services at health facilities.¹¹¹ [...]

109 Government of Pakistan, Pakistan Living Standards Measurement Survey 2014-15 (Islamabad, 2015) pp. 258-61.

110 Pakistan Living Standards Measurement Survey 2014-15 (Islamabad, 2015) pp. 258-61.

111 For recent empirical evidence, see Rahat Najam Qureshi et al, "Healthcare seeking behaviours in pregnancy in rural Sindh, Pakistan: A qualitative study", *Reproductive Health*, 2016, Volume 13 (Supplement 1).

❖ [UNICEF, The Situation Analysis of Children in Pakistan: The state of child rights in Pakistan, September 2017](#)

[...] 3.2 Maternal, Neonatal and Child Survival

[...] Antenatal Care (ANC): Overall, 73% of women in Pakistan access antenatal care from a skilled provider, more so in urban centres (87.8%) than rural areas (66.7%). This means that one in three rural women lack access to antenatal care, one of the many signs of the entrenched geographic and gender disparities that take an especially severe toll on rural women. According to the MICS 2014, 78.8% of pregnant women in Punjab and 79.6% in Sindh received antenatal care from skilled health personnel.

However, fewer than half of overall deliveries (48.2%) are reported by health facilities. Only 14.6% take place in public health facilities, and 33.6% in private health facilities. Therefore, over 50% of deliveries occur at home.⁸⁸ Institutional deliveries take place in 60.8% of cases in Punjab, 64% in Sindh⁸⁹ and 60% in GB.⁹⁰ The lowest rates of deliveries in health facilities occur in Balochistan (16%⁹¹) followed by FATA (32%⁹²) (see Annex J). [...]

88 National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2012-13, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, 2013.

89 Bureau of Statistics, Punjab, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) Punjab 2014, Government of Punjab, Lahore, 2014; Bureau

of Statistics Sindh, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) Sindh 2014, Government of Sindh, Karachi, 2014.n

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2017, 2 November 2017](#)

[...] Pakistan

Antenatal care, at least four visits	36.60
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Access to antenatal care in 2018

❖ [UNICEF, Policy Brief - Improving quality of care around the time of birth in Pakistan Analysis of newborn and maternal health in Pakistan, May 2018](#)

[...] With increasing numbers of women accessing health care services, improving quality of care and patient safety are therefore critical if we want to accelerate reductions in maternal and newborn mortality. Nevertheless, many women and their babies die from poor care practise, even after reaching a health facility. Poor infection control, lack of maternal and newborn death review, non-functioning medical equipment, lack of qualified staff and medical supplies are common in government health facilities¹⁰. Majority of stillbirths that occurred in the third trimester of pregnancy are preventable with a better obstetrical care.¹¹

10 Technical Resource Facility. Health facility assessment-Pakistan national report. Islamabad: 2012.

11 Khan A, Kinney MV, Hazir T, Hafeez A, Wall SN, Ali N et al Newborn survival in Pakistan: a decade of change and future implications. Health Policy Plan 212: 27 (suppl 3): ii27-iii33

❖ [National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18, January 2019](#)

[...] 9 Maternal Health Care

9.1 ANTENATAL CARE COVERAGE AND CONTENT

9.1.1 Skilled Providers

[...] Antenatal care (ANC) from a skilled health care provider is important to monitor pregnancy and reduce morbidity and mortality risks for the mother and child during pregnancy, at delivery, and during the postnatal period (42 days after delivery).

The 2017-18 PDHS results show that 86% of women who gave birth in the 5 years preceding the survey received antenatal care from a skilled provider at least once for their last birth. Doctors were the major service providers (82%). Eighty-five percent of women were satisfied with the services provided. (Table 9.1).

[...] 9.1.2 Timing and Number of ANC Visits

Table 9.2 shows that 51% of women had at least four ANC visits for their most recent birth in the 5 years before the survey; however, this proportion differed between urban (71%) and rural (42%) women. Over half of women received ANC during the first trimester of pregnancy (55%), with a variation between urban (70%) and rural (47%) residence. The median length of pregnancy at the first antenatal care visit is 3.4 months (3.0 months in urban areas and 3.7 months in rural areas). [...]

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2018, 17 December 2018](#)

[...] Pakistan

Health	female	male	value ¹
Antenatal care, at least four visits			36.60

1 Age-standardized death rates per 100,000 population

Access to antenatal care in 2019

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2019, 16 December 2019](#)

[...] Health

Antenatal care, at least four visits, % women 15-49 – – 52.00 [...]

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Health

44. In line with its general recommendation No. 24 (1999) on women and health, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure the implementation of the National Vision 2016–2025 and its action plan, with clear, time-bound targets, and establish a permanent body to coordinate and monitor their achievement.

Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party:

[...] (d) Address the high incidence of obstetric fistula and the physical and economic barriers resulting in women's limited access to antenatal, delivery and postnatal care; [...]

Access to skilled birth attendants, including essential obstetric and postpartum care in 2017

❖ [Amnesty International Submission to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 61st Session, 29 May to 23 June 2017](#)

[...] 3.3 Right to Health

[...] Women often do not have access to skilled birth attendants, which leads to unsafe deliveries and health risks for women, including preventable injuries and health conditions, like obstetric fistula.¹¹²

Amnesty International is aware that women who develop obstetric fistula sometimes face isolation and stigmatization because they are abandoned by their husbands and rejected by communities. An estimated 5000 cases of fistula occur in Pakistan every year.¹¹³ [...]

112 UN General Assembly, "Supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula: Report of the Secretary General", 6 August 2008. UN Doc. A/63/222

113 "Up to 5000 fistula cases surface in Pakistan every year", Dawn, 23 May 2015. Available: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1183631>

❖ [UNICEF, The Situation Analysis of Children in Pakistan: The state of child rights in Pakistan, September 2017](#)

[...] 3.2 Maternal, Neonatal and Child Survival

[...] An estimated 8,000 women die every year of pregnancy-related causes, with wide variations between provinces. MMR is lowest in AJK (201 per 100,000 live births) and Punjab (227 per 100,000), and highest in Balochistan (785 per 100,000). Quality care is indispensable to combat key contributors to maternal mortality, including post-partum haemorrhage, puerperal sepsis and eclampsia. Antenatal care delivered by a skilled provider reduces the risk of morbidity for both mother and child during pregnancy and delivery. The main reasons for high MMR in Pakistan include the large numbers of women delivering without a Skilled Birth Attendant (SBA) (48%) and the highly limited use of family planning services. The current contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) is low, at 35%. Seven days after delivery is a critical period for both newborns and mothers. Yet, only 60% of mothers and 43% of newborns received a postnatal check-up within two days of birth. No data is available on functional WASH systems in health facilities to shed light on any links between these systems, the quality of care and maternal mortality. [...]

Antenatal Care (ANC)

[...] Differences in SBA coverage across provinces are striking. Only 17.8% of deliveries in Balochistan were attended by a skilled health provider, compared to 88.1% in ICT. Given that post-partum haemorrhage, puerperal sepsis and eclampsia are major contributors to maternal mortality, the quality of care remains an important challenge. Newborns also suffer from a lack of obstetric care provided by a qualified health professional, a critical service factor for reducing maternal and neonatal mortality. [...]

There is a need to increase access to safe delivery services during the pre-natal, natal and post-natal periods, overcoming issues of access and quality while bridging major urban/rural disparities. [...]

87 National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2012-13, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, 2013.

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2017, 2 November 2017](#)

[...] Pakistan

Births attended by skilled health personnel 52.10

[...]

❖ [United Nations Population Fund, Pakistan empowering midwives to empower women, 20 November 2017](#)

[...] Some 178 women die of pregnancy-related causes out of every 100,000 live births, a ratio far higher than the regional average. Only 55 per cent of births are attended by skilled health personnel. [...]

Access to skilled birth attendants, including essential obstetric and postpartum care in 2018

❖ [SPARC, 'State of Pakistan's children 2017', undated \(according to press reports, published in July 2018\)](#)

[...] Health

[...] Skilled Birth Attendance

According to UNICEF, a critical strategy for reducing maternal morbidity and mortality is ensuring that every baby is delivered with the assistance of a skilled birth attendant which generally includes a medical doctor, nurse, or midwife. Worldwide, about one in four births (25%) take place without the assistance of a skilled birth attendant.³⁰

In Pakistan, only 52% of births are carried out by skilled attendants³¹ with 71% of this being in urban areas and 44% in rural areas.³² The data also shows that only 29% of the births with skilled attendants occurred in the lowest wealth quintile, while 85% occurred in the highest wealth quintile. 59% of newborns in the richest households receive Postnatal Care (PNC) within 2 days after birth, compared to 27% among the poorest households³³. This suggests people belonging to the lowest income groups and in rural areas either do not have access to hospitals or there are social and cultural concerns which might be preventing the presence of skilled attendants.

Accordingly, a direct correlation is seen between a mother's education level and the likelihood of delivery by a skilled attendant; in samples of women with higher education, 92% of the births were by skilled attendants while only 38% of deliveries among mothers with no education had a skilled attendant at birth³⁴. [...]

30 UNICEF, Maternal Health, Delivery Care: <https://data.unicef.org/topc/maternal-health/delivery-care/>

31 Countdown to 2030 Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival, Country Profile-Pakistan, "Women's and Children's Nutrition": <http://profiles.countdown.2030.org/#/PAK>

32 UNICEF, Maternal and Newborn Health Disparities in Pakistan: https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Pakistan/country%20profile_PAK.pdf

33 Ibid

34 Ibid

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2018, 17 December 2018](#)

[...] Pakistan

Health	female	male	value ¹
Births attended by skilled health personnel			52.10

1 Age-standardized death rates per 100,000 population

❖ [National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18, January 2019](#)

[...] 9 Maternal Health Care

[...] 9.4.2 Skilled Assistance during Delivery

[...] In Pakistan, 69% of deliveries are conducted by a skilled provider (Table 9.7). Figure 9.6 shows that a majority of births are attended by doctors (60%), and 9% by other skilled health care providers. However, a significant proportion of births are still attended by a Dai or traditional birth attendant (24%) (Table 9.7). Trends: The proportion of births assisted by skilled birth attendants increased from 26% in 1990-91 to 69% in 2017-18. There was a substantial decline in the proportion of deliveries attended by traditional birth attendants (down to 24% in 2017-18 from 41% in 1990-91). [...]

▪ Balochistan lags behind other regions in Pakistan, with only 38% of births assisted by skilled providers. Notably, a higher proportion of births were attended by traditional birth attendants in Balochistan (52%) than in the other regions (27% or below). Deliveries assisted by a relative, friend, or others were quite high in FATA (38%) and Gilgit Baltistan (30%) as compared with the rest of the regions (17% or below).

- The proportion of births attended by skilled providers increases with increasing mother's educational attainment, from 56% among mothers with no education to 94% among mothers with a higher education (Figure 9.7).

9.5 POSTNATAL CARE

9.5.1 Postnatal Health Check for Mothers

[...] Table 9.10 shows that 62% of women age 15-49 who gave birth in the 2 years preceding the survey reported having a postnatal check in the first 2 days after the birth, with most check-ups occurring within 4 hours of delivery (53%). However, 36% of women did not receive any postnatal check during the first 2 days after delivery.

Trends: The proportion of women with a postnatal check-up within 2 days after delivery has remained largely unchanged between 2012-13 (61%) and 2017-18 (62%). [...]

9.6 PROBLEMS IN ACCESSING HEALTH CARE

[...] About two-thirds of women reported at least one problem in accessing health care for themselves (67%) (Table 9.17). About three-fifths of women reported not wanting to go alone (58%), for two-fifths distance to a health facility was a problem (42%), about one-third of women reported problems getting money for treatment (30%), and one-fifth mentioned that getting permission for accessing health care was a big problem (21%). [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Rights of the Disadvantaged: Women

[...] Women and family planning

[...] One newborn out of every 22 in Pakistan dies within the first month, according to a Unicef report released in February. Widespread poverty, and a lack of understanding about nutrition during pregnancy, leads to malnourished women giving birth to small and weak babies with a high risk of succumbing to otherwise minor illnesses. Another factor is the poor provision of available obstetric care. [...]

Access to skilled birth attendants, including essential obstetric and postpartum care in 2019

❖ [Joint submission of the Center for Reproductive Rights and Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre, 10 June 2019](#)

[...] I. HIGH PREVALENCE OF MATERNAL MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY (ARTICLES 1, 12 & 16)

[...] Pakistan's maternal mortality ratio (MMR) as of 2015 is estimated to be 178 deaths per 100,000 live births,⁶ which is a decline from the MMR in 2007-08, which stood at 276 deaths per 100,000 live births.⁷ While the State Party's efforts should be appreciated, the MMR is still unacceptably high. The World Bank has found that Pakistan remains among the top ten countries in the world accounting for the most maternal deaths, with 9,700 women dying of pregnancy-related causes in Pakistan every year.⁸ Thousands more face debilitating maternal morbidities due to non-availability of quality and affordable maternal healthcare. For example, it is estimated that 3000-5000 cases of fistula develop in Pakistan every year.⁹ These include cases of obstetric fistula, resulting from prolonged obstructed labor in the absence of skilled birth attendance, as well as iatrogenic fistula, which results from surgical negligence during a caesarian section or hysterectomy.¹⁰

Furthermore, Pakistan's data collection on maternal mortality may underestimate maternal mortality ratio as the health information systems have a number of shortcomings.¹¹ For example, the District Health Information System (DHIS) does not incorporate data collected by Lady Health Workers, a cadre of health workers trained by the government to provide primary health services.¹² The Demographic Health Surveys also have limitations as they rely on household censuses, but this source has various limitations, including underestimates of deaths and the need for a large sample size.¹³ [...]

Disparities in access to maternal healthcare and intersectional discrimination. A deeper review of the persistently high maternal mortality ratio reveals severe disparities in access to maternal healthcare. Quality obstetric care services are beyond the reach of low-income women. A study of over 1000 cases of maternal death across the country found that an overwhelming majority of women and girls who died during pregnancy and childbirth were poor.¹⁶ The study concluded that "accessibility of health services was a big hindrance to obtaining medical care."¹⁷ The Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18 (PDHS 2017-18) noted that wealth and educational status is "highly related to whether delivery is assisted by a skilled provider and whether birth is delivered in a health facility."¹⁸ It also found disparities in access

to maternal healthcare between urban and rural women: while 84% of births to urban mothers were assisted by a skilled provider, only 63% of rural women were supported by a skilled provider.¹⁹ [...]

Barriers to Contraception Information and Services. In spite of the policies and programs pertaining to the obstetric care, contraceptive prevalence rates in Pakistan remain low. This leads to high rates of unintended pregnancy, which contributes to the high MMR.³² According to a 2012 study, nearly half of all pregnancies in Pakistan were unintended.³³ It is highly concerning that the use of contraceptive methods has remained stagnant over the past 5 years.³⁴ [...]

Despite the narrow legal grounds for abortion, there were an estimated 2.2 million abortions in 2012, the last year for which figures are available, and the abortion rate was 50 abortions per 1000 women aged 15-29, which is one of the highest abortion rates in the world.⁴⁸ A majority of abortions in Pakistan are clandestine, which place the health and lives of women at risk.⁴⁹ In 2012, an estimated 623,000 women were treated for post-abortion complications, the vast majority of which were performed by unqualified providers or involved traditional methods.⁵⁰ According to a 2012 study, a majority of women treated for post-abortion complications obtained care in a private facility⁵¹, suggesting that low-income women unable to afford treatment in private facilities were less likely to receive post-abortion care. [...]

6 WORLD BANK, MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO (MODELED ESTIMATE, PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS) (2015), available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/sh.sta.mmrt>.

7 NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF POPULATION STUDIES, PAKISTAN: DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY 2006-07 177 (2008) [hereinafter PDHS 2006-07].

8 World Bank, Number of maternal deaths (2015), available at https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.MMR.DTHS?name_desc=true.

9 Victims of Obstetric Fistula Continue to Suffer in Silence, The News, May 24, 2018, available at <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/320649-victims-of-obstetric-fistula-continue-to-suffer-in-silence>.

10 Id.

11 Jasmin Anwar et al., Under-estimation of maternal and perinatal mortality revealed by an enhanced surveillance system: enumerating all births and deaths in Pakistan, 18 BMC PUBLIC HEALTH 428 (2018), available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5880001/>.

12 Jasmin Anwar et al., Under-estimation of maternal and perinatal mortality revealed by an enhanced surveillance system: enumerating all births and deaths in Pakistan, 18 BMC PUBLIC HEALTH 428 (2018), available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5880001/>.

13 Id.

14 PLANNING COMMISSION, GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN, PAKISTAN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT 2013 (2013), available at <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/pakistan/docs/MDGs/MDG2013Report/UNDP-Report13.pdf>.

15 See e.g. Government of Punjab, Punjab Health Sector Strategy 2012-20; Government of Sindh, Sindh Health Sector Strategy 2012-20.

16 PAIMAN & USAID, DEATHS OF WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE, 6 (2010).

17 Id. at 15.

18 NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF POPULATION STUDIES, PAKISTAN: DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY 2017-18 20 (2019) [hereinafter PDHS 2017-18].

19 Id. [...]

32 See e.g. WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO), THE WORLD HEALTH REPORT 2005: MAKE EVERY MOTHER AND CHILD COUNT, 48-50 (2005) available at https://www.who.int/whr/2005/whr2005_en.pdf?ua=1.

33 Sathar et. al. Induced Abortions and Unintended Pregnancies in Pakistan, STUDIES IN FAMILY PLANNING, 471-491, 483 (2014).

34 PDHS 2017-18, supra note 18 at 20. [...]

48 Sathar et. al. Induced Abortions and Unintended Pregnancies in Pakistan, STUDIES IN FAMILY PLANNING, 471-491, 471 (2014).

49 GUTTMACHER INSTITUTE, FACTSHEET: UNINTENDED PREGNANCY AND INDUCED ABORTION IN PAKISTAN (2015) available at <https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/factsheet/fb-pakistan.pdf>

50 Sathar et. al. Induced Abortions and Unintended Pregnancies in Pakistan, STUDIES IN FAMILY PLANNING, 471-491, 481 (2014).

51 Id.

❖ [Shirkat Gah - Women's Resource Centre, Supplementary Information for the Adoption of the List of Issues on Pakistan for Consideration by Pre-Sessional CEDAW Working Group and by the Committee in its 75th session, 10 June 2019](#)

[...] Health: (C/PAK/CO/4: Para 32; CEDAW/C/PAK/5: Para 153-164)

[...] A major cause of maternal deaths is the non-availability of emergency medical obstetric care (EmOC) services and the poor quality of services. Violence during pregnancy, heavy daily workloads, inadequate food, nutrition and rest all contribute to poor maternal health, contributing to maternal mortality and morbidity. To provide quality EmOC, health facilities must have an anesthesiologist and surgeon; comprehensive quality equipment and medical supplies. [...]

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2019, 16 December 2019](#)

[...] Health

[...] Births attended by skilled personnel, % live births – – 69.00 [...]

❖ [Shirkat Gah – Women’s Resource Centre, Alternative CEDAW Report 2020 on Pakistan’s Fifth Periodic Report Alternative CSO Report, 2020](#)

[...] Health

CEDAW Para 16 & CEDAW/C/PAK/RQ/5 Paras 135-138

[...] Maternal mortality rates remain high especially amongst poor women and are related to high rates of stillbirths.²³ Maternal mortality is not just a technical issue that can be resolved through services, but linked with women’s general health issues and strategic interests, including decision-making about child spacing, family planning and age at marriage. Mortality also stems from the lack of access to emergency obstetric care (EMOC) within 2 hours of emergency. [...]

23 <https://www.unicef.org/pakistan/reports/unicef-Pakistan-annual-report-2018>

❖ [Centre for Reproductive Rights, Supplementary information on Pakistan, scheduled for review by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in its 75th session, 20 January 2020](#)

[...] REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH (Articles 1, 12 and 16)

[...] In the List of Issues, the Committee has requested the state party to provide information on the measures taken to “reduce maternal mortality, and their impact.”⁴ The Center’s pre-session letter notes that Pakistan remains among the top 10 countries in the world accounting for the highest number of maternal deaths.⁵ While the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) has declined significantly from 2007-08 (276 deaths per 100,000 live births) to 2017 (140 deaths per 100,000 live births),⁶ severe disparities in access to maternal healthcare persist, with quality obstetric services remaining beyond the reach of low-income women.⁷ [...]

4CEDAW Committee, List of issues and questions in relation to the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, CEDAW/C/PAK/Q/5 (2019), para. 16.

5World Bank, Number of maternal deaths (2015), available at https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.MMR.DTHS?name_desc=true

6World Health Organisation Maternal Mortality in 2000-2017: Pakistan (2017) available at https://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/mortality/maternal_mortality_text/en/

7 See NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF POPULATION STUDIES: PAKISTAN: DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY (hereinafter PDHS 2017-18) at 26.

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Health

43. The Committee commends the State party for the adoption of the National Vision 2016–2025 for Coordinated Priority Actions to Address Challenges of Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent Health and Nutrition and its action plan. However, it notes that the action plan fails to specify indicators, targets and budgetary commitments for its implementation. Furthermore, the Committee notes with concern:

(a) The high maternal mortality rate in the State party; [...]

(d) The high incidence of obstetric fistula in the State party, resulting from prolonged obstructed labour in the absence of skilled birth attendance, as well as iatrogenic fistula, resulting from surgical negligence during caesarean section or hysterectomy; [...]

Women's awareness of legal protections and access to legal counsel in 2017

❖ [CHR Michelsen Institute, The Criminalisation of Rape in Pakistan, 2017](#)

[...] 4.2 Barriers to implementing the Women's Protection Act

[...] 4.1.2 Lack of knowledge and awareness

Respondents also identified lack of information as a barrier to women seeking justice. For example, most women who participated in the focus group discussion were not even aware of the existence of the WPA. These women observed that many Pakistani women are unable to demand even their most basic rights because they are unaware of them. Rather, women accept their position in the society as dictated by men. [...]

❖ [Overseas Development Institute, Men and Intimate Partner Violence from Research to Action Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan, March 2017](#)

[...] 8.1.2 Protection services

[...] Under-reporting of IPV/GBV

[...] While government in each country should, in principle, bear the cost of all legal expenses in cases of VAWG (KI23), financial barriers also prevent some women, especially those from the poorest households and rural areas, from accessing formal justice. [...]

It is therefore not surprising that in Pakistan, several in-depth interviewees and key informants stated that hiring a lawyer was too expensive, beyond the economic capacity of most families, and 'a waste of money', which is why 'they [survivors] prefer to solve their matters in the village'. [...]

Another major impediment to accessing services was lack of awareness of available services. The onus is largely on survivors to reach out to services (like NGOs and shelters) but women were generally unaware of the existence of such services. In almost all our interviews and in Pakistan especially, participants reported that they were unaware of any NGOs that dealt with VAWG. Moreover, in Pakistan, if a survivor did go to a shelter or NGO, under-age girls (i.e. minors) were asked to identify their legal guardian and sent back to the guardian, placing them back in the cycle of violence they were trying to escape (KII 12). Indeed, echoing Valters and Jahan (2016), our research suggests that a significant barrier for many survivors is confusion about the legal reporting process. Legal processes also complicate survivors' access to formal justice. 'Reporting violence is a very difficult process, and many people would drop back mid-way', explained a key informant from BRAC [Building Resources Across Communities]. Many key informants saw legal aid organisations as critical to compensating for the complexity of the system, and the limited capacity of local officials and providers. Moreover, an important weakness in the formal response system that may explain why women were hesitant to seek formal justice for IPV is the poor treatment they typically receive at police stations. One key informant described 'a lack of sensitivity in the police service, medical-legal staff, and the staff working at the shelter. A lot of women have told us that the women in the police service are the most verbally abusive. The in-charge of the shelter home has said to a woman that you have had a second marriage, so now we can't do anything for you except tell you to do a third marriage or die in the current marriage' [...].

❖ [Amnesty International Submission to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 61st Session, 29 May to 23 June 2017](#)

[...] Amnesty International is aware that women who seek judicial remedies for the violation of their rights face a series of challenges in Pakistan. Those without means to hire a lawyer cannot easily access legal aid.⁵⁷ Police, prosecutors and judges often lack an understanding of women's rights. Court trials are subject to long delays.⁵⁸

57 Yaseer Lateef Hamdani, "The Crisis of Legal Aid in Pakistan", Briefing Paper (Insaf Network Pakistan, 2015).

58 For a recent assessment, see Angbeen Atif Mirza, Delay in Trial: Empirical Evidence from the Magistrate's Court in Karachi (Karachi, Legal Aid Society 2016).

❖ [UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan*, 20 July 2017](#)

[...] Equality between men and women

33. The Committee is [...] also concerned that women are facing difficulties in seeking judicial remedies because law enforcement officials and judges lack awareness of women's rights, because women lack awareness of their own rights and of the judicial procedures to claim those rights, because women do not trust the justice system and because there is insufficient free legal assistance (art. 3). [...]

Women's awareness of legal protections and access to legal counsel in 2018

- ❖ [Pakistan Tribune, Jails overcapacity by 22, 000 prisoners, SC told, 31 May 2018](#)
[...] Nearly 80, 000 prisoners are languishing in almost a hundred jails across the country, having a capacity to accommodate only 56,353 inmates, says a report submitted by the Federal Ombudsman before the Supreme Court in a suo motu case regarding the miserable condition of female prisoners. [...] The report also pointed out the absence of separate barracks for hardened criminals, first offenders, juveniles and women; unnecessary detention in petty crimes; lack of free legal aid for prisoners and educational and skills training facilities. It also mentioned that lack of independent jail for every district causes overcrowding and problems related to prisoner's transportation. [...]
- ❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan: A meaningful democracy; Mainstreaming the rights of women and religious minorities in Pakistan, December 2018](#)
[...] Cases of rape may be suppressed or 'resolved' between the families concerned. The burden of guilt, therefore, as many participants pointed out, invariably falls on the woman. In instances where such crimes even enter the legal system - and many do not - long procedures, weak police investigations, poor legal counsel and powerful connections on the part of the accused, enable offenders to be acquitted. [...]
- ❖ [National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18, January 2019](#)
[...] 16 Domestic Violence
[...] 16.8 RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE
16.8.2 Sources for Help
Among women who have experienced physical or sexual violence and have sought help, the most common source is their own family (76%), followed by their husband's family (36%) and husbands/former husbands and neighbours (2% each). Very few women went to the police, lawyers, or social work organisations (1% each) (Table 16.17). [...]
- ❖ [Consolidating Democracy in Pakistan, Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls, March 2019](#)
[...] The Case of Pakistan
[...] While constitutional and legal guarantees exist, there are a number of challenges in effective implementation of these laws to facilitate gender equality. Power-centred patriarchal culture, lack of awareness of laws emanating from illiteracy, ignorance, and fear of 'bad reputation' amongst women, patriarchal bigotry in law enforcement agencies, ascendancy of socio-cultural standards, and weaknesses of the justice system all contribute as impediments in effective application and implementation of constitutional and legal regimes protecting women's rights and gender equality.¹⁶ [...]

Women's awareness of legal protections and access to legal counsel in 2019

- ❖ [Dawn, What are your options if you're a victim of domestic abuse in Pakistan? 28 May 2019](#)
[...] There's a difference between legislation and implementation. All institutions like the police, judiciary, even lawyers need to make a collaborative effort for this tool to be effective. and And of course, in order to make use of these laws, one must have access to legal aid. Free or affordable legal aid is virtually absent in Pakistan and that's one of the many issues we face when it comes to the enforcement of our laws. [...]
"There are a number of barriers to implementing the law. It's very challenging for women and children to bring these cases before the police or court and try and involve your family members, it's very difficult. Even those who do end up reporting it they encounter obstacles like it's not taken very seriously, it's

considered a domestic dispute and not a crime so the authorities are less likely to investigate or register an FIR," explained Sara.

Now, the law allows you to skip this step and directly go to the magistrate and file a petition with the court. But of course, then there are barriers to that also. You have to get a lawyer to do that and access to legal help is limited and virtually impossible for children. [...]

If we want to see a qualitative change in the dispensation of justice, our law needs more clarity for starters but we also need housing/shelter programs for victims, police authorities and the judiciary need to stop treating these cases as "private family matters" and officials must receive gender sensitivity training, not to mention, women and children need access to legal aid.

Sara also emphasised on the importance of free legal representation.

"That's something governments need to take seriously especially when you're passing pro-women legislation, you need to at least think about how women will access justice. In absence of legal aid supported and funded government, it's an uphill battle that would be very difficult."

Ab Aur Nahin is a directory for women looking for pro bono legal representation and psychological counselling regarding gender-based violence; the website links survivors to the resources that they may not have access to otherwise such as experienced lawyers and professional counsellors to combat sexual harassment, violence or abuse. [...]

❖ [Shirkat Gah – Women’s Resource Centre, Alternative CEDAW Report 2020 on Pakistan’s Fifth Periodic Report Alternative CSO Report, 2020](#)

[...] How many women have been provided free legal aid and why is free legal aid not provided automatically?

Given that none of the PKR 46 million under the Women in Distress and Detention Fund has been utilised:⁴

4 <https://www.dawn.com/news/1497350/senators-criticise-unutilised-welfare-funds-under-human-rights-ministry>

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Access to justice

19. The Committee welcomes the State party’s efforts to increase access to justice for women and girls. It further welcomes the establishment, in 2017, of the first gender-based violence court in the Lahore High Court, which has dealt with 123 cases involving gender-based violence against women, and the establishment of 16 family courts in the District Headquarters of Punjab. The Committee notes that, in the Alternate Dispute Resolution Act of 2017, parallel legal systems and informal dispute resolution mechanisms, including jirgas and panchayats, are formally recognized, incorporated into the mainstream judicial system and subjected to judicial and administrative overview. The Committee remains concerned that these systems may discriminate against women and girls. It also remains concerned about the limited awareness among women and girls of their rights, as well as the physical and economic barriers that they face in accessing justice. [...]

“Divorced women often were left with no means of support, as their families ostracized them” in 2017

❖ [Overseas Development Institute, Understanding Intimate-Partner Violence through a Male Lens, 20 March 2017](#)

[...] 6.1 Informal responses to IPV

[...] The norms around divorce also ensure that men are free to marry again while women tend to be marginalised and unable to re-marry. [...]

❖ [The Coalition for Alternate Report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(ICECSR\) A Joint Civil Society Shadow Report, April 2017](#)

[...] Overview

The institute of family in Pakistan has all the hallmarks of a patriarchy, where men are the primary authority figures and women are subordinates. The preference for sons due to their productive role often dictates the allocation of household resources in their favour.

Traditionally, male members of the family are given better education and are equipped with skills to compete for resources in the public arena while female members are imparted domestic skills to be good mothers and wives. Autonomy lies with the male members of the family, and women's access to and control over property, employment, education, health, etc, is restricted. Although the legal age of consent for marriage is 16 to 18 years and polygamy is restricted – though still legally permissible – very few repercussions exist and both are still carried out under various guises of culture and religion. [...]

“Divorced women often were left with no means of support, as their families ostracized them” in 2018

- ❖ [Shazia Ramzan¹, Saira Akhtar², Shabbir Ahmad^{3,*}, Muhammad Umar Zafar⁴, Haroon Yousaf² \(Sociology and Anthropology, Divorce Status and Its Major Reasons in Pakistan, 2018\)](#)

[...] Introduction

[...] In our public, the idea of separation is far expelled from what Islam enlightens us concerning it. Allah despises separate, says the Quran. Separation, as per Islam, isn't a demonstration of vengeance or scorn that it has moved toward becoming in our public. The delayed consequences of separation on a lady particularly, are annihilating. Separation is quite often considered lady's blame and even in the west lady is considered primarily in charge of the disappointment of a marriage. Social disgrace of being a divorced person impacts lady in all circles of life. This makes it a daunting task to lead to an existence of respect and respect. The authority of kids after separation is additionally a prickly issue (9). [...]

- ❖ [Anadolu Agency \(AA\), Suicides rising among women in northern Pakistan, 2 October 2018](#)

[...] For ethnic Pashtun -- who hail from northern Pakistan and parts of bordering Afghanistan -- arranged marriages are a custom several generations have lived with and until recently was never questioned.

In the largely tribal ethnic group, which follows its own set of customs and values called the Pashtunwali, families can make or break an individual.

In such circumstances, marriages are often decided based on tribal affiliations -- or sometimes even to settle scores.

"Most parents and family elders in Pashtun areas decide the future of their daughters or sisters without their consent, which later causes domestic disputes and unstable relationship with husbands, leading women toward suicide attempts," said Sherin Zada, a Swat-based senior journalist.

Elsewhere, women can walk out of an unhappy marriage, but in Pashtun culture divorce is a taboo.

"If a woman gets a divorce due to family issues she is ostracized. Most men won't marry her," said Najma Shah, a local woman in Dir district. [...]

- ❖ [The Nation, Divorce: A global problem, 6 November 2018](#)

[...] Divorce can result in social isolation as readjustment to a new role may prove difficult. Financial constraints often follow divorce, particularly for women who are left with children to raise and little or no support system. In our culture even the word divorce bears a stigma. [...]

A research study in Lahore showed that women who were divorced experienced more social interaction anxiety, depression and higher level of anger as compared to married women. The findings also showed that the extent of social support predicts depression and loneliness. Insomnia, loss of appetite and inability to focus on work are other effects. [...]

- ❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] The Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) announced in September 2018 that the practice of 'triple talaq' should be discouraged and men who end marriage this way should be penalised. The Council further decided to formulate a divorce deed—'talaq nama'—to be forwarded to clerics for consent. CII is a constitutional body that advises Parliament on whether or not a certain law goes against the teachings of

Islam. This discriminatory custom gives men the right to control women's lives— often no reasons are given for the verbal divorce—and frequently affects the wife's right to a share in property, inheritance, and child custody. Nevertheless, it was unclear as to whether this pronouncement by the CII would go through the due process of consultation and legislation for alternative legal mechanisms. [...]

“Divorced women often were left with no means of support, as their families ostracized them” in 2019

- ❖ [Mumtaz & Associates, Divorces and Divorce Issues, undated \[accessed 14 November 2019\]](#)
[...] The divorce rate in Pakistan is extremely low due to the social stigma attached to it. Women who seek a divorce are also often victims of honor killings. [...]
- ❖ [Al Jazeera, Why women in Pakistan struggle to get 'divorced with dignity', 7 March 2019](#)
[...] Aside from the cultural taboo surrounding divorce in Pakistan, women seeking to end their marriages face legal hurdles that men do not encounter as frequently. [...]
- ❖ [Daily Times, The divorce stigma in Pakistan, 7 January 2020](#)
[...] A society's main purpose can be defined as strengthening and participating in human development. But in the society of Pakistan, there are certain stigmas that result in the misery of its believers. Unfortunately, divorce stigma is one of them. We live in a society where getting out of a toxic marriage for women is even worse than staying in it. Where financially dependent and not prepared for the 'outer world' women, prefer to bear the abuse and not to stain the family name. This is the story of almost every social class and area of Pakistan. The marriage is the end in itself no matter what kind of mental or corporeal torture it involves. The common perception, that prevails, is that divorced women have no right to remarry and are a forever disgrace for themselves and their families. Meanwhile, men have no such thing to fear; they even use this stigma to coerce the women into staying in the abusive marriage instead of divorcing and taking their chance at a better life. [...]
- ❖ [Rah Center for Management and Development, Thematic Report on the Issue of Financial Protection Upon Divorce: Muslim Women's Rights under Family Laws in Pakistan- Article 16 for Consideration by CEDAW Committee in its 75th session 15th-28th February 2020](#)
[...] Background and Issue
[...] Structure of society in Pakistan encourages women to restrict their role to care of the family, and their activities are restricted to the confines of the house. Consequently, termination of financial support from the spouse upon breakdown of marriage leaves women from all strata of society extremely vulnerable. This constitutes a major reason behind women continuing to live in abusive relationships despite long standing neglect and suffering. Lack of State support for single women exacerbates vulnerability. There is no provision of government housing or unemployment support to financially dependent women even when leaving abusive marriages. Across Pakistan, longer term women's shelters for the destitute also restrict single women's residence, permitting widowed, divorced or destitute women who have to be accompanied by children⁶. [...]

6 Rules governing shelters restrict single women's admission-
https://swd.punjab.gov.pk/mother_and_children_homes

Women are legally free to marry without family consent, but society frequently ostracized women who did so, or they risked becoming victims of honor crimes” and the practice of “karo-kari” or “siyah kari”—a premeditated honor killing that occurs if a family, community, tribal court, or jirga determines that adultery or some other “crime of honor” occurred--continued across the country” in 2017

- ❖ [Asian Human Rights Committee, Pakistan: Honour killings continue in spite of several laws, 14 February 2017](#)
 [...] The sudden and inexplicable surge in violence against women this year has sent shivers down the collective spine of the country. Not that previous years had been any different in terms of violence against women. However, the year 2017 appears to be particularly brutal with more than a dozen honour killings occurring in the first one and half months.
 Patriarchal and exploitive- Pakistani society is mired with barbarians. Their egos cannot handle a strong, independent and motivated woman like Huma Shahnawaz, 27, from Kohat, KP province. She is the latest victim of an honour killing. Huma was daring enough to defy the advances of her cousin who wanted to marry her. He became enraged when she refused his proposal. Employed at an NGO in Islamabad, a small town girl from Kohat, Huma was the sole breadwinner of her widowed sister-in-law, her children and her divorced sister and her child. [...]

- ❖ [Committee against Torture, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 1 June 2017](#)
 [...] Violence against women and so-called “honour killings”
 30. While noting the adoption of the Anti-Rape Laws (Criminal Amendment Bill), 2016 and the Anti-Honour Killing Law (Criminal Amendment Bill) and the State party’s commitment to addressing those crimes, the Committee is concerned about the reportedly high level of violence against women in the State party, which includes murder, rape, acid crimes, kidnappings, domestic violence and “honour killings”. It is also concerned about the extremely low conviction rates for those crimes, and at reports that parallel justice systems (known as panchayats or jirgas), have sentenced women to violent punishment or even death, including stoning, and have provided lenient punishments for perpetrators of “honour crimes” and in other cases of serious gender-based violence (arts. 2, 14 and 16). [...]

- ❖ [Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2018: Pakistan, January 2018](#)
 [...] “Honor killing,” the murder of men or women accused of breaking social and especially sexual taboos, remains common, with more than 400 cases documented during 2017. Most incidents go unreported. Successive attempts to abolish the practice, most recently in a 2016 law, have not been fully implemented. [...]

- ❖ [Human Rights Watch, Pakistan, Events of 2017, 18 January 2018](#)
 [...] Women’s and Children’s Rights
 Violence against women and girls—including rape, “honor” killings, acid attacks, domestic violence, and forced marriage—remained a serious problem. Pakistani activists estimate that there are about a 1,000 “honor” killings every year.
 In June, a tribal council (jirga) in Khyber agency ordered the “honor” killing of Nagma, a 13-year-old girl, for “running away with men.” Parliament had passed in February a controversial bill giving legal cover to tribal and village councils. [...]

- ❖ [Amnesty International, 22 February 2018](#)
 [...] Violence continued against women and girls, including killings by relatives committed in the name of so-called “honour”. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa northwest province, 94 women were murdered by close family members. In several cases, there was a failure to conduct investigations and hold the perpetrators accountable. [...]

- ❖ [European Asylum Support Office: EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017; Rome, February 2018](#)
 [...] 3. Private conflicts
 Shehryar Fazli, Senior Analyst and Regional Editor, International Crisis Group
 [...] 3.11 Honour crimes
 Statistics are quite depressing. Over a thousand women killed in 2015 by close relatives; in 2016, 527 females and 162 males were killed by relatives in what we can assume to be honour killings, and have been categorized as honour killings by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCPP). Because I was told that there would be interest in interfaith marriages and what kind of risks that brings, it is worth

pointing out that 311, the highest number of these killings, were for illicit relations. The second highest, 173, is for marriage choice, who you decided to marry. FIRs have been confirmed in 412 cases, which might be a little bit over the majority of those cases. In itself, not terrible, but not terribly encouraging either, but FIRs are

just the beginning of it. Convictions are non-existent; as I said earlier, generally the story of Pakistan's criminal justice system – we do not get convictions, we lock people up, but we do not keep them there. The deterrent effect of the State is extremely limited. [...]

Women are legally free to marry without family consent, but society frequently ostracized women who did so, or they risked becoming victims of honor crimes” and the practice of “karo-kari” or “siyah kari”--a premeditated honor killing that occurs if a family, community, tribal court, or jirga determines that adultery or some other “crime of honor” occurred--continued across the country” in 2018

❖ [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Pakistan Police Make Arrest After Killing Of Activist, 8 March 2019](#)

[...] Hundreds of women are killed every year in Pakistan in honor killings for violating what Pakistani conservatives consider traditions on love, marriage, and public behavior. [...]

❖ [Deutsche Welle, Pakistan honor killings haunting young women, 22 October 2018](#)

[...] Khanzadi Mehboob lives in constant fear for her life after she married against the wishes of her family. Although honor killings are illegal, tribal customs in Pakistan often trump the rule of law.

[...] So-called "honor killings" are common in districts of Sindh bordering Pakistan's western province of Balochistan. The Sindhi term for this gruesome tradition is "Karo-Kari" and it is a decades-old practice in parts of Pakistan.

In some cases, women could be killed for simply talking to a man and even attempts at strict legislation have not stopped this tribal custom. [...]

Asad Butt of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan told DW he shares this sense of helplessness.

"There have been instances where the families of couples who married out of free will promised to the police that they would not harm the couple and hold a wedding ceremony. However, when the couple returned to the families, they were murdered in the name of honor and the matter was covered up."

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan: A meaningful democracy; Mainstreaming the rights of women and religious minorities in Pakistan, December 2018](#)

[...] Honour crimes and custom

[...] The extreme practice of karo kari refers to premeditated honour killings, which are committed primarily against women who are perceived to have brought dishonour to their family by engaging in illicit premarital or extramarital relations. To restore this honour, a male family member must kill the female in question. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Key Issues

HRCP monitoring data showed 845 incidences of sexual violence against women, and 316 crimes in the name of ‘honour’ perpetrated against both men and women. These are minimum figures.

[...] Women

[...] The outlook for women showed little signs of improvement from that reported in previous years, and the issues that confront women were illustrated in stark terms in the news throughout the year—most notably in the cases of domestic and sexual violence that prevail in such a patriarchal society. When other factors come into play—so-called ‘honour’ killings, acid attacks, extended family dynamics, social restrictions on movement and jobs, inequality and abject poverty, forced and arranged marriages—a grim picture emerges.

[...] Violence against Women, Girls, and Transgender People

[...] Across categories, women continue to suffer brutal violence. The overwhelming majority of violent deaths of women were at the hands of men known to them, most often family members. 'Honour' was cited in murders of women committed by fathers, husbands, brothers, and in-laws, although further investigations revealed much less lofty motivations.

Fathers killed their daughters for wishing to exercise greater autonomy in spousal choice. Sixteen-year-old Sara was gunned down by her father and uncle in Gujranwala in November when she asked to marry someone of her choice. The case of Sana Cheema, an Italian national, made headlines across the world in April. Her family in Gujrat said she had died from an unspecified illness. Her body was exhumed after an Italian publication reported that she had been murdered for 'honour'. An autopsy report revealed that she had been strangled to death and the police said her father and brother had confessed to her killing. [...]

Husbands killed wives for suspected infidelity, claiming in their police statements that their suspicions were adequate grounds for murder

Women who exercised or attempted to exercise their own choice in partners were subjected to confinement, beatings, and life-ending violence by fathers and brothers. Rejected suitors exacted their revenge by violently attacking women, often with acid to disfigure the women they claimed to want to marry. [...]

❖ [Freedom House: Freedom in the World 2019 - Pakistan, 4 February 2019](#)

[...] G3. Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance? 1 / 4

In some parts of urban Pakistan, men and women enjoy personal social freedoms and have recourse to the law in case of infringements. However, traditional practices in much of the country subject individuals to social control over personal behavior and especially choice of marriage partner. "Honor killing," the murder of men or women accused of breaking social and especially sexual taboos, remains common. Most incidents go unreported. Successive attempts to abolish the practice, most recently in a 2016 law, have not been fully implemented. [...]

❖ [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 20 February 2019](#)

[...] Women

[...] 3.203 [...] Family members carry out honour killings against relatives perceived to have brought dishonour on the family by refusing an arranged marriage, forming a romantic attachment not approved by the family or, in the case of girls, for dress or behaviour deemed insufficiently modest. While young men can be targets of honour killing, most victims are female. [...]

Women are legally free to marry without family consent, but society frequently ostracized women who did so, or they risked becoming victims of honor crimes" and the practice of "karo-kari" or "siyah kari"--a premeditated honor killing that occurs if a family, community, tribal court, or jirga determines that adultery or some other "crime of honor" occurred--continued across the country" in 2019

❖ [The Guardian, Pakistan authorities record a dozen cases of 'honour' killing in a fortnight, 17 May 2019](#)

[...] Every week in Pakistan brings fresh news of wives strangled, daughters shot or sisters drowned for a perceived slight to family "honour". Sometimes a single person is responsible; more often, a group of male family members is involved. The vast majority of the killers go unpunished.

Statistics from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan suggest there were 1,276 such murders over a two-year period beginning in February 2014, 400 of which were officially registered as crimes by the police.

Human rights campaigners say more than 1,500 killings occurred between 2016 and 2018, a figure anecdotally confirmed by Asad Butt, vice chair of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. [...]

But killings of people who “violate certain patriarchal codes” have continued at the same rate, said Nida Kirmani, associate professor of sociology at Lahore University. “Honour crimes are committed as a way of policing or disciplining women, girls, men and boys who are seen to be violating these rules,” Kirmani explained. [...]

Qadir Naseeb is one of the many journalists who now rarely cover “honour” killing stories. “I have been threatened by influential people and tribal heads while reporting. No matter how much one highlights this menace, government rarely arrest and punish the culprits. The disturbing part is that all the killers I interviewed never felt guilty.” [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Pakistan Should Not Again Fail ‘Honor Killing’ Victim, 22 August 2019](#)

[...] Still, “honor killings” and pressure to pardon perpetrators seem to have continued unabated since the adoption of the law. There are no credible official figures on “honor killings” because they often go unreported or are passed off as suicide or natural deaths by family members. But as an indication, in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, at least 94 women were murdered by close family members in 2017. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Human Rights Watch Submission to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women review of Pakistan’s periodic report 75th Session - December 2019](#)

[...] 4. Impunity for So-called “Honor Killings” and Violence (Article 2)

Violence against women and so-called “honor killings” are common in Pakistan, while convictions of those responsible are rare. Women are murdered, often by family members, and a loophole in the law allows the legal heirs of the victim to pardon those responsible.

Following the high-profile case in 2016 in which a well-known woman, Q.B, was murdered by her brother in an “honor killing,” there was a widespread outcry in Pakistan. This led to legislative action and the promise of prompt prosecution. Parliament passed a law imposing harsher punishments for “honor killings” and partially eliminated the pardon loophole.

However, “honor killings” and pressure to pardon perpetrators seem to have continued unabated. There are no credible official figures on the number of “honor killings” because they often go unreported or are passed off as suicides or natural deaths by family members; yet there are an estimated 1,000 “honor killings” every year.²⁴ [...]

24 Saroop Ijaz, “Pakistan Should Not Again Fail ‘Honor Killing’ Victim: End Impunity of Family Murders of Women,” Human Rights Watch Dispatch, August 22, 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/08/23/pakistan-should-not-again-fail-honor-killing-victim>.

❖ [Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women, Forum for Dignity Initiatives, Joint NGO Shadow Report Submission to CEDAW, 13 January 2020](#)

[...] Executive Summary

[...] Sexuality among young people is little researched in Pakistan, primarily owing to cultural taboos restricting open discussions on sexuality and sexual health in general. Pakistan’s Hudood Laws⁸ and customary practices, such as karo kari⁹, make sex outside of marriage punishable by death. Female sexuality is tightly controlled, resulting in increased social restrictions on young unmarried girls. While studies show that young girls lack information on sexual and reproductive health, they themselves are shy about discussing these issues. [...]

9 Karo Kari: Karo-Kari is a type of premeditated honour killing. The homicidal acts are primarily committed against women who are thought to have brought dishonour to their family by engaging in illicit pre-marital or extra-marital relations. In order to restore this honour, a male family member must kill the female in question. The custom exists in all provinces under different names. In Sindh it is called Karo Kari, in Balochistan Siyahkari in KP Kor Kora and in Punjab Kala Kali.

❖ [Musawah, Thematic report on Article 16, Muslim and Muslim Women’s Rights in Pakistan, for 75th CEDAW Session Geneva, Switzerland February 2020](#)

[...] 1.2. FORCED MARRIAGE

Despite legal provisions in place penalising forced marriages, the practice continues to occur across Pakistan. In rural areas in particular, the practice is exacerbated by poverty, insecurity and lack of access to support services.²⁴ Activists report that most of the marriages in Pakistan are arranged by families, and in many instances some degree of coercion is involved. In recent years, there has been a surge of reporting of young women living abroad in countries like the UK²⁵ and Scotland²⁶ who are brought to Pakistan and forced or coerced into marriage. So called ‘honor-based’ violence and killings have also been reported of women and men who have chosen to marry against family wishes.²⁷ [...]

24 VOA News, July 28, 2019. Access here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEHv0InkVws> and here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xPpxokogPY>

25 Wilkinson, Bard. May 23, 2018. CNN ‘UK mother jailed for forcing daughter to marry in Pakistan’. Access here: <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/05/23/asia/forced-marriage-uk-pakistan-intl/index.html>

26 BBC News Scotland. 12 July 2019. ‘I was forced to marry my cousin’. Access here: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-48949483>

27 Baloch, Meer Shah. May 17, 2019. The Guardian. ‘Pakistan authorities record a dozen cases of ‘honour’ killing in a fortnight’. Access here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/may/17/pakistan-authorities-record-a-dozen-cases-of-honour-killing-in-a-fortnight>

❖ [Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2020 - Pakistan, 4 March 2020](#)

[...] Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance? 1 / 4

In some parts of urban Pakistan, men and women enjoy personal social freedoms and have recourse to the law in case of infringements. However, traditional practices in much of the country subject individuals to social control over personal behavior, and especially choice of marriage partner. Despite successive attempts to abolish the practice, “honor killing,” the murder of men or women accused of breaking social and especially sexual taboos, remains common, and most incidents go unreported. [...]

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Stereotypes and harmful practices

29. The Committee is concerned about persistent discriminatory stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, exacerbated by the religious divisions in the State party, which perpetuate women’s subordination to men. In particular, it is deeply concerned about the persistence of harmful practices that discriminate against women, such as child marriage and forced marriage, and crimes committed in the name of so-called “honour” (“karo-kari”). [...]

Reporting of births in 2017

❖ [UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan*, 20 July 2017](#)

[...] Birth registration

61. The Committee is concerned at the very low level of birth registration and often delayed registration, particularly in Balochistan, which seriously limits the ability of those persons without birth certificates to enjoy their economic, social and cultural rights (art. 10). [...]

❖ [UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 23 August 2017](#)

[...] C. Principal matters of concern and recommendations

[...] Protection of children

43. The Committee is concerned, despite the efforts made by the State party, by the low level of birth registration, which has adverse consequences for children. [...]

❖ [UNICEF, The Situation Analysis of Children in Pakistan: The state of child rights in Pakistan, September 2017](#)

[...] Executive Summary

[...] The country's low levels of birth registration (34%) are a hurdle for child protection, as are high levels of violence and exploitation experienced by children – the focus of SDG target 16.2. While significant disparities do not appear to exist between girls and boys, birth registration rates in urban centers are far higher than rural areas (59% vs. 23%). Disparities are also clear across wealth quintiles. To protect all children from violence and exploitation, it is necessary to spearhead birth registration while addressing corporal punishment, violent discipline by caregivers, violence against girls and women, sexual violence, child labour, child marriage, child trafficking and the neglect of vulnerable children, such as those with disabilities. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2017, 16 April 2018](#)

[...] Rights of the Disadvantaged: Children

Birth registration

The birth registration rate in Pakistan has remained alarmingly low in Pakistan while the birth rate in the country is one of the highest in the world.

According to available statistics, only 34% of children under five are registered in the country whereas the latest national census has calculated the annual birth rate at 22 births per thousand persons. An efficient birth registration system is the first step towards ensuring that a child is able to fully exercise all fundamental rights and the process needs to be urgently facilitated to reduce the extreme vulnerability that results from nonregistration. [...]

Reporting of births in 2018

❖ [National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18, January 2019](#)

[...] 2 HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS AND HOUSEHOLD POPULATION

[...] 2.8 BIRTH REGISTRATION

[...] Table 2.11 presents the percentage of the de jure population under age 5 whose births are registered with the civil authorities, according to background characteristics. The results show that more than 4 in 10 children (42%) under age 5 have been registered, and 36% have a birth certificate. Although the government's vital data registration system requires that a newborn be registered within the shortest possible time after birth, Table 2.11 indicates that children under age 2 are less likely to be registered (39%) than children age 2-4 (44%). The registration of older children is primarily driven by the practice of asking parents to produce a child's birth certificate for school admission. [...]

Patterns by background characteristics

- Birth registration is considerably higher in urban (60%) than in rural (34%) areas.
- There is no difference in the extent of birth registration between male and female children.
- Only 2% of children in FATA and 19% of children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are registered as compared with 82% of children in ICT Islamabad.
- Children from the highest wealth quintile are more likely to have their births registered (76%) than children from the lowest wealth quintile (9%) (Figure 2.5).

Trends: There has been improvement in formal registering of births in the past 5 years. The remarkable improvements in birth registration of children under age 5 have been observed in Balochistan (8% to 38%) followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (10% to 19%), ICT (74% to 82%), and Sindh (25% to 28%) in the last 5 years. [...]

Reporting of births in 2019

❖ [UNICEF, Digital Birth Registration helps make Pakistan a safer place for children, 29 March 2019](#)

[...] Working with people and convincing them to change their behavior for the best can sometimes be more difficult than it seems,” says Rubina Kausar, the Union Council (UC) Secretary in Bahawalpur District, as she sifts through a pile of birth certificates lying on her table.

“People in my community did not even know the purpose of birth registration, let alone its benefits. But together with the help of Nikkah Registrars (NRs), the local clerics, we are now informing the communities about why it is so important, while ensuring that every child is registered in the system.”

Rubina is the only female in a team of 115 male UC secretaries in her district. A UC Secretary is a local government officer who acts as a focal person to register births, deaths, marriages and divorces in a community.

[...] In Pakistan, approximately 60 million children remain unregistered, out of which 25 million are living in the province of Punjab. Bahawalpur, the 11th largest district of the country, hosts an estimated 761,000 unregistered children, and this number is increasing every day.

[...] To ensure that every child in Pakistan is registered and remains protected, UNICEF is helping build the capacity of local authorities and communities on digital birth registration in seven districts of Punjab. The project is being implemented thanks to funding from the United Kingdom’s Department of International Development and Telenor, the second largest cellular and digital services provider in Pakistan.

Under this project, UNICEF is training the UC Secretaries and NRs on the use of android-based mobile phones and tablets for birth registration. The NRs visit families in their communities, using digital devices to enter data into the dashboard, which is verified by the UC secretary, who then issues a registration number to the child.

The digital system enables quick and cost-free birth registration, saving parents the time and money they previously required in purchasing forms and submitting them to several offices after waiting in long lines. The form fee costed about five US dollars, a substantial sum of money for underprivileged families.

[...] Birth registration of children in Punjab through digital and hybrid models has been a big success so far, says Muqaddisa Mehreen, UNICEF Child Protection Specialist in Islamabad.

“The strategy is to link health, education and birth registration services to register as many children as possible, with a focus on those who are under five years of age. The system is promoting transparency, ease of access and provision of services at the doorstep of families, maximizing the impact of resources to improve the lives of the most vulnerable families,” she adds.

Since July 2017, more than 100,000 children have been registered in the district of Bahawalpur. Together with the government of Pakistan, UNICEF aims to register all children aged between 0 to five years by the year 2022. [...]

❖ [UNICEF USA, How UNICEF Is Leveraging Mobile Tech to Get Results for Children, 8 April 2019](#)

[...] It is estimated that 5 million babies are born each year in Pakistan — but only about 1.5 million of them are registered at birth. The other 3.5 million? As far as the local government and the legal system are concerned, these children do not exist.

This is a problem. Birth registration is a prerequisite for obtaining a birth certificate, which is proof of legal identity for a child. Without a legal identity, children risk being overlooked by health and education systems. They are more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Those studying the issue attribute the country's 34% registration rate to poverty, lack of information and tedious birth registration processes. [...]

❖ [UNHCR, Pakistan: Legal Assistance and Aid Programme Update, 1 January—31 December 2019, December 2019](#)

[...] Birth registration, police harassment, information on repatriation, PoR card modifications and asylum applications were the issues of greatest concern observed during the reporting period. [...]

Parents of lower economic means sent children to madrassahs in 2017

❖ [UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan*, 20 July 2017](#)

[...] Human rights education

83. The Committee notes the contribution that madrassas have at times made to enhance access to education, particularly for disadvantaged and marginalized children, and the efforts made by the State party to close down a number of radical madrassas and to regulate the remaining ones. [...]

❖ [UNICEF, Situation Analysis of Children in Pakistan \(SitAn\), September 2017](#)

[...] Pakistan's parallel systems of public and private education may be widening inequitable social disparities. Its elite English medium schools are attended by children from privileged backgrounds, offering high quality education that only the rich can afford. Low-cost private schools, public sector schools and *madrassas* are attended by children from more modest or impoverished socio-economic backgrounds. Most of the country's numerous *madrassas* or *deeni madaris* (faith-based religious institutions) do not teach the mainstream public curriculum, which leads to further divisions and exclusions.

[...] early 16,000 non-formal basic education (NFBE) institutions and 12,600 madrassas (also known as *deeni madaris*) exist in Pakistan. Among non-formal enrolments for children of primary school age, over half (1.6 million) are in *madrassas*.

[...] Of the total Alternative Learning Programmes 44% are run by the Federal Government, 19.6% by Provincial Governments, 30.9% by madrassas and 5.5% by NGOs. [...]

Parents of lower economic means sent children to madrassahs in 2018

❖ [SPARC, 'State of Pakistan's children 2017', undated \(according to press reports, published in July 2018\)](#)

[...] Deeni Madaris

The discussion on inequality and inequity in access to quality education in Pakistan, of necessity requires the mention of the prevalent parallel system of education, that is of "deeni madaris" (seminaries). In order to meet the targets of the SDGs, it is important to regulate madrassas and streamline them into education frameworks and policies to advance favourable educational outcomes.

Traditionally madrassas have been responsible for providing Islamic education and teachings, often free-of-cost, to a significant proportion of the impoverished and lower-middle income earning population. In the absence of proper educational facilities, madrassas serve as a financially viable and attractive option for parents, oftentimes including the provision of food and shelter for students, in addition to religious education.

❖ [Human Rights Watch, "Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her?" 12 November 2018](#)

[...] Madrasa and Informal Tuition as Alternatives to School

Tutoring is sometimes seen as a more affordable option for parents who cannot afford the cost of school.¹⁰⁴ Madrasas are also frequently used as an alternative for girls not able to attend school.¹⁰⁵ Some children attend madrasa in addition to regular school. [...]

Madrasas and tutoring are often closer and cheaper than school. [...]

Low cost tutoring is often available. Some madrasas charge fees, but many are free. Both tutoring and madrasas are generally free of associated costs that come with government and private schools. They are also typically easier for children to join, often accepting children on a rolling basis without administrative requirements such as identification and birth certificates. [...]

104 E.g. Human Rights Watch interview with Nazneen, Karachi, July 29, 2017.

105 E.g. Human Rights Watch interview with Eva, Peshawar, August 7, 2017.

Parents of lower economic means sent children to madrassahs in 2019

❖ [Reuters, Pakistan plans to bring 30,000 madrasas under government control, 29 April 2019](#)

[...] Pakistan plans to take control of a network of over 30,000 madrasas as part of a drive to “mainstream” the Islamic schools by bringing them under state control, the military’s spokesman said on Monday. Modernizing madrasa education is a thorny issue in Pakistan, a deeply conservative Muslim nation where religious schools are often blamed for radicalization of youngsters but are the only education available to millions of poor children.

❖ [Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child \(SPARC\), The State of Pakistan’s Children 2018, October 2019](#)

[...] Poverty is a major factor in driving parents to send their children to Madrassas, which provide them with their basic minimum needs of free shelter, food, clothing, tuition and books. Hence, in order to resolve the issues of Madrassa children, it is critical to address the causes of the rampant - and increasing - poverty rates on an urgent basis. [...]

❖ [The Express Tribune, Why are we silent about the sexual abuse at madrassas?, 26 October 2019](#)

[...] Lastly, many madrassas in Pakistan provide food, a place to stay and basic education to thousands of children. Due to these additional facilities and the provision of these amenities, several poorer households choose to enroll their children in madrassas. [...]

Barriers to girls’ access to education and related attendance rates in 2017

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Dreams Turned into Nightmares, Attacks on Students, Teachers, and Schools in Pakistan, 27 March 2017](#)

[...] Summary

[...] Pakistan already faces major challenges to education because of factors such as poor access, low enrollment rates, gender bias, lack of trained teachers, and poor physical infrastructure. Islamist militant violence has further exacerbated those challenges, however, and disrupted the education of hundreds of thousands of children. [...]

Militant groups have damaged and destroyed school buildings, attacked teachers and students, and terrorized parents into keeping their children out of school. They have also targeted colleges and other higher-education institutions. Such attacks and threats of attack on education not only harm the students and families directly affected, they have an incalculable long-term effect on Pakistani society. [...]

In addition, in some areas, government security forces have used educational institutions, including schools and college hostels or dormitories, as temporary or permanent barracks or military bases. When an educational facility is used for military purposes, it disrupts the school’s functioning, places it at increased risk of attack, and often frightens parents into keeping their children—especially girls—at home. Criminal gangs, often operating with political patronage, have also occupied schools.

Pakistan’s militant Islamist groups use attacks on schools and universities to foster intolerance and exclusion, to target symbols of the government, and particularly to enforce gender discrimination, notably by preventing the education of girls. [...]

Disproportionate Impact on Girls

[...] At least 53 percent of girls are out of school as compared to 43 percent of boys.[65]

Discriminatory policies and conservative cultural and social practices contribute to impeding equal access to education for women and girls. Parents often have a lower threshold for pulling their daughters out of school than boys, given greater social restrictions on girls’ movements and concerns about sexual harassment and violence. This exacerbates an already dire situation where only 35 percent of schools accept girls.[66]

In addition, women and girls in Pakistan bear the brunt of the attacks on education, exacerbating other barriers that keep girls from going to school.

65 Ailf Ailaan, “Distribution of out of school children (5 to 16 years of age) by gender at national level,” undated, <https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/alifailaan/pages/545/attachments/original/1448612337/fep-6.jpg?1448612337>, (accessed January 30, 2017).

66 Alif Ailaan, “Female education in Pakistan,” undated, <https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/alifailaan/pages/545/>

attachments/original/1448612367/fep-18.jpg?1448612367, (accessed January 30, 2017).

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2017, 2 November 2017](#)

[...] Pakistan

Education and Skills	female	male	value
Out-of-school children	32.1	20.6	1.56
Primary education attainment, adults	36.5	62.5	0.58
Primary education attainment, 25-54	49.1	71.7	0.68
Primary education attainment, 65+	13.3	45.6	0.29
Out-of-school youth	68.1	58.1	1.17
Secondary education attainment, adults	21.0	34.2	0.61
Secondary education attainment, 25-54	34.7	54.3	0.64
Secondary education attainment, 65+	8.1	28.8	0.28
Tertiary education attainment, adults	6.1	11.3	0.54
Tertiary education attainment, age 25-54	7.4	12.6	0.59
Tertiary education attainment, age 65+	1.4	6.9	0.20
PhD graduates	0.1	1.0	0.06
Individuals using the internet	-	-	-

❖ [UNICEF, The Situation Analysis of Children in Pakistan: The state of child rights in Pakistan, September 2017](#)

[...] Executive Summary

[...] • Gender matters. Girls are less likely than boys to access basic services and have, on average, consistently lower development outcomes. Young women and girls are disproportionately burdened by gender norms which impact their opportunities, mobility, pursuit of education, nutritional status and their right to be protected from violence and harmful practices, such as child marriage. Girls represent a higher proportion of out-of-school children aged 5-16, are more likely to marry before the age of 18, have lower rates of full immunization coverage and are less likely to receive treatment for illnesses, such as acute respiratory infections or diarrhoea. Nevertheless, boys are also disadvantaged by prevailing gender norms and equity-related inequalities. For instance, boys under the age of two are more likely than girls to be stunted and wasted. Gender norms also lead to boys being pulled out of school and pushed into the job market at a young age. [...]

Pakistan has the unfortunate distinction of being second on the global ranking of out-of-school children. An estimated 22.6 million children between the ages of 5 and 16 are out-of-school at the primary, middle and secondary levels – 44% of the country’s children (40% boys vs. 49% girls, a significant gender gap). Pakistan’s Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) for primary schools at the national level is very low (59.9% - male 62.9% and female 56.5%) and its primary school completion rate is even lower (52%). The NAR for middle schools and secondary education level is only 37% (male 39.7% and female 34%). Low attendance and completion rates are evident nationwide, as is a shrinkage in student learning in public schools – all serious concerns if the country is to meet the targets of SDG 4 (‘quality education’). To ensure that all children learn, Pakistan will need to focus on getting out-of-school children into school, keeping students in school (especially girls in rural areas) and strengthening all aspects of its education sector, looking beyond issues of access alone to considerations of equity and the quality of education. [...]

[Barriers to girls’ access to education and related attendance rates in 2018](#)

❖ [Asia Legal Resource Centre, Pakistan: Rising violence against children, 27 February 2018](#)

[...] According to data from the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training , as many as 44 percent of children between the ages of five and 16 are out of school. Of these, the majority are girls as

the family deems girls' education a waste of money and a burden on the already precarious financial condition. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, "Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her?" 12 November 2018](#)

[...] Summary

[...] The new government, elected in July 2018, stated in their manifesto that nearly 22.5 million children are out of school. Girls are particularly affected. Thirty-two percent of primary school age girls are out of school in Pakistan, compared to 21 percent of boys. By grade six, 59 percent of girls are out of school, versus 49 percent of boys. Only 13 percent of girls are still in school by ninth grade. Both boys and girls are missing out on education in unacceptable numbers, but girls are worst affected. [...]

There are high numbers of out-of-school children, and significant gender disparities in education, across the entire country, but some areas are much worse than others. In Balochistan, the province with the lowest percentage of educated women, as of 2014-15, 81 percent of women had not completed primary school, compared to 52 percent of men. Seventy-five percent of women had never attended school at all, compared to 40 percent of men. According to this data, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had higher rates of education but similarly huge gender disparities. Sindh and Punjab had higher rates of education and somewhat lower gender disparities, but the gender disparities were still 14 to 21 percent.

Across all provinces generation after generation of children, especially girls, are locked out of education—and into poverty. [...]

Barriers to Girls' Education Within the School System

Many of the barriers to girls' education are within the school system itself. The Pakistan government simply has not established an education system adequate to meet the needs of the country's children, especially girls. While handing off responsibility to private school operators and religious schools might seem like a solution, nothing can absolve the state of its obligation, under international and domestic law, to ensure that all children receive a decent education—something that simply is not happening in Pakistan today. Moreover, despite all the barriers, many people interviewed for this report described a growing demand for girls' education, including in marginalized communities. [...]

[...] Lack of Investment

The government does not adequately invest in schools. [...]

One result is that there are not enough government schools for all children to have access to one. Government schools are in such short supply that even in Pakistan's major cities many children cannot reach a school on foot safely and in a reasonable amount of time. The situation is far worse in rural areas, where schools are even more scarce, and it is less likely that private schools will fill the gap. Families that can access a government school often find that it is overcrowded.

An "upward bottleneck" exists as children, especially girls, get older.

[...] High Cost of Education

Poor families struggle to meet the costs of sending their children to school.

[...] Poor Quality of Education

Many families expressed frustration about the quality of education available to them. Some said it was so poor that there was no point sending children to school. In government schools, parents and students complained of teachers not showing up, overcrowding, and poor facilities. At private schools, particularly low-cost private schools, concerns related to teachers being badly educated and unqualified, and the instruction being patchy and unregulated. Teachers in both government and private schools pressure parents to pay for out-of-school tutoring, an additional expense. In both government and private schools, use of corporal punishment and abusive behavior by teachers was widely reported.

[...] No Enforcement of Compulsory Education

One reason so many children in Pakistan do not go to school is that there is no enforced government expectation that children should study. [...]

Corruption

Corruption is a major issue in the government school system and exists in several forms. One of the most pervasive is nepotism or bribery in the recruitment of teachers and principals. Some people simply purchase teaching positions, and others obtain their jobs through political connections. When people obtain teaching positions illicitly, they may not be qualified or motivated to teach, and they may not be expected to. Especially in rural areas, some schools sit empty because corruption has redirected the teacher's salary to someone who does not teach, according to education experts.

Barriers to Girls' Education Outside the School System

Aside from the barriers to education within the school system, girls also face barriers in their homes and in the community. These include poverty, child labor, gender discrimination and harmful social norms, and insecurity and dangers on the way to school. [...]

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2018, 17 December 2018](#)

[...] Pakistan

Education and Skills	female	male	value
Out-of-school children	32.1	20.6	1.56
Primary education attainment, adults	38.5	62.5	0.58
Primary education attainment, 25-54	49.1	71.7	0.68
Primary education attainment, 65+	13.3	45.6	0.29
Out-of-school youth	68.1	58.1	1.17
Secondary education attainment, adults	21.0	34.2	0.61
Secondary education attainment, 25-54	34.7	54.3	0.64
Secondary education attainment, 65+	8.1	28.8	0.28
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Tertiary education attainment, age 65+	1.4	6.9	0.20
PhD graduates	0.1	1.0	0.06
Individuals using the internet	-	-	-

❖ [National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18, January 2019](#)

[...] 2 HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS AND HOUSEHOLD POPULATION

[...] 2.9 EDUCATION

[...] 2.9.2 School Attendance

Table 2.14 shows that the net attendance ratio (NAR) for primary school children (age 5-9) is 59% whereas for secondary school children (age 10-14) it is 38%. The NAR for primary and secondary school is slightly higher among boys (61% and 40%, respectively) than among girls (55% and 36%, respectively). [...]

Data on the gross attendance ratio (GAR) and the gender parity index (GPI) is presented in Table 2.14. The primary school GAR is 87%, and the secondary school GAR is 56%.

A gender parity index (GPI) of 1 indicates parity or equality between school participation ratios. A GPI lower than 1 indicates a gender disparity in favour of males, with a higher proportion of males than females attending that level of schooling. A GPI higher than 1 indicates a gender disparity in favour of females.

The GPI for NAR is 0.90 at the primary school, indicating that more boys are attending school than girls; however, the GPI for NAR is 0.89 at the middle/secondary school level, indicating that girls are dropping out. (Table 2.14). [...]

Reasons for school drop outs

The 2017-18 PDHS asked the reason for dropping out of school for de facto households members age 5-24. The most common reasons cited for women are getting married and thinking further education was not necessary (18% each) followed by not being interested in education (17%), costing too much (13%), and school being too far (9%) (Table 2.15). [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Education

[...] Education statistics released in 2018 highlight several important areas where policy makers will need to work to ensure universal schooling for children aged 5-16 years.

Firstly, the overwhelming majority of out-of-school children, around 17 million, are in the age bracket for middle (grades 6-8), secondary (grades 9 and 10), and higher-secondary (10-11) levels.

Secondly, girls constitute the majority of the out-of-school children. The gender-wise breakdown of the 22.84 million figure showed that around 12 million of these are girls and around 10 million boys. Thirdly, more than half of the out-of-school children (57 percent) come from the poorest households, according to Alif Ailaan, an education advocacy campaign. The more recent Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2018 released by the NGO Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi says that 54% of the poorest girls are out-of-school compared to 17% of the richest girls not going to school, and highlights a 21% enrolment gap between poorest girls and poorest boys. [...]

Barriers to girls' access to education and related attendance rates in 2019

- ❖ [CEDAW Shadow Report; Prepared on the CEDAW Committee's Seventy-fifth session, List of issues and questions in relation to Pakistan's fifth periodic report \(31 July 2019 19-13088 \(E\) 070819 *1913088*\), 31 July 2019](#)

[...] 2.2 Women Wage Gap

Women are significantly under-represented in Pakistan's labour force, despite their huge contribution to daily life. Women employed face significant gender pay gap, alongside other forms of discrimination which limit their potential.

Analysis of Pakistan's Labour Force Surveys for 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2017-18 show a gender pay gap of 26 per cent across Pakistan's workforce without taking into account differences in workers' characteristics. However, in the garment sector, Pakistan's largest manufacturing industry and a significant employment of women rises to 33 per cent. Similarly, female labour force participation has rather decreased from already low 22.2% to 20%. The gender wage gap, has reduced from 42% in 2014 to 40% in 2018. The gender wage gap in the textile sector has worsened from 62% in 2014 to 70% in 2018.

The level of women's participation in the labour force in Pakistan is low. Cultural barriers and gender stereotypes valuing men as breadwinners and women as homemakers are prevalent. While this is changing in large urban centers, major obstacles to women entering the workforce persist. A major factor is the lack of safe, affordable and accessible transport facilities; these are only provided in some of the largest exporting enterprises. The lack of suitable, affordable childcare is also a major disincentive in a society that places the burden of child-rearing almost exclusively on women.

Pakistan's legislative and policy framework contains no general prohibition on pay inequality, save for in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where recent legislation has introduced the concept of equal pay for work of equal value. Additionally, some legislative measures designed to protect women from excessive hours and night work have the unintended consequence of making women less attractive to employers, who require a flexible workforce in an order-driven industry. [...]

- ❖ [FES – Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung: On the Margins - Women Workers and the Future of Work, August 2019](#)

[...] Pakistan's economy and female labour force participation

[...] Women are employed in all the major sectors, although a gender gap is quite evident. According to the 2017–2018 Labour Force Survey findings,⁶ the refined activity rate of female labour force participation was 20.1 per cent, down from 22 per cent in 2014–2015. Female labour force participation was higher in rural areas (at 25.6 per cent) than in urban areas (at 11.1 per cent). Among the distribution of women by major sector divisions, the majority, at 67.2 per cent, worked in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing, followed by manufacturing, at 16 per cent, and community, social and personal services, at 14.6 per cent. Based on those figures, there was a decrease in the women's share in agriculture since the 2014–2015 survey (from 72.2 per cent) but a gain in manufacturing (from 14.1 per cent). [...]

Women and work debates in Pakistan centre around the development model in which women's inclusion in the labour force is seen as crucial not only to the country's development but also for their individual well-being.

Within this framework, the low female labour force participation is treated as a set of challenges faced by Pakistani women that can be improved through policy measures. These policy measures range from investment in education and the health of women to passing laws against sexual harassment in the workplace to promoting entrepreneurship through microcredit finance provision.

The emphasis is on economic empowerment of women by increasing economic opportunities available to them and improving the magnitude of their participation in those opportunities.⁸

There is not much discussion around the quality of work that is made available to them, however. Even the feminist debates have focused on the fight for constitutional rights, legislative rights (right to own property, etc.), women's political representation, changes in the laws on marriage, divorce and custody of children, the fight against military dictatorship and rising Islamization. [...]

As the paper highlights, women are predominantly employed in agriculture, followed by manufacturing and

then the service sector in Pakistan. However, the debates involving the impact of digitalization and automation, if any, focus only on the service sector. Even within this sector, urban women are favoured, although they are fewer in number than rural women workers. Research must be encouraged on how women already are incorporated into the agricultural processes and what will happen if these agricultural processes are automated.

Within manufacturing, the garment industry is being encouraged to adopt technology. Because this debate is in its initial stages, pushing for a women-centred approach is recommended. Most importantly, a dialogue

must be set in motion between policy-makers, employers and women (workers, feminist researchers, activists and labour activists), whereby they look into how increased digitalization and automation may impact women.

We already know that liberalization, globalization and privatization have worsened the gender gap and increased inequalities globally. An early stake in the future of work debates can push for a women-friendly agenda that will not only help reverse the damages of the informalized global economy but also create a better future for women workers. [...]

6. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Labour Force Survey 2017–2018 (Islamabad: Government of Pakistan, 2018).

[...]

8. For discussions on empowerment of women, see Rubina Saigol, *Women's Empowerment in Pakistan: A Scoping Study* (Lahore: Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation, 2011); Yasmin Zaidi et al, *Women's Economic Participation and Empowerment in Pakistan – Status Report 2016* (Islamabad: UN Women Pakistan, 2016); and Aisha A. Malik, "Women's Economic Empowerment Sans Labour Rights: Inadvertent Oversight or Tacit Omission," *Strategic Studies* 38, no. 1: 85-99.

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Human Rights Watch Submission to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women review of Pakistan's periodic report 75th Session - December 2019](#)

[...] 1. Girl's Education (Article 10)

The Pakistan government is failing to educate a huge proportion of the country's girls. Many girls simply have no access to education, including because of a shortage of government schools – especially for girls. According to United Nations statistics, thirty-two percent of primary school age girls are out of school in Pakistan, compared with 21 percent of boys.¹

Human Rights Watch documented barriers to education for girls in all four of Pakistan's provinces.² Among the factors keeping girls out of school are the government's under-investment in schools, lack of schools, prohibitive school fees and related costs, corporal punishment, and a failure to enforce compulsory education. Further issues include the poor quality of education in both government and low-cost private schools, a lack of government regulation of private schools, and corruption. In addition to these factors within the education system, girls are also blocked from attending school by external factors including child labor, gender discrimination, child marriage, sexual harassment, insecurity, and attacks on students, teachers, and schools.

Pakistan's government has over many years invested far less in education than is recommended by international standards. In 2017, Pakistan was spending less than 2.8 percent of its gross domestic product on education—far below the 4 to 6 percent recommended by UNESCO - leaving the government's education system severely under-funded.³ Government schools are in such short supply that even in major cities, many children cannot reach a school on foot safely in a reasonable amount of time. The situation is far worse in rural areas. And there are many more schools for boys than for girls.

The situation worsens as children, especially girls, get older. Secondary schools are in shorter supply than primary schools, and colleges have even less capacity, especially for girls. Many girls who complete the top level at one school cannot attend a school where they could go on to the next level. In the absence of an

adequate system of government schools, there has been a massive growth in the number of private schools, many of them low-cost. But poor families often cannot afford any tuition fees and the government's near-total failure to regulate and monitor these schools means that many are of poor quality.⁴ [...]

1 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "State of the World's Children data," December 2017.

2 Human Rights Watch, "'Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her': Barriers to Girls' Education in Pakistan," November 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/11/12/shall-i-feed-my-daughter-or-educate-her/barriers-girls-education-pakistan>.

3 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) et al., "Education 2030: 4Framework for Action," December 2015, art. 105. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002456/245656e.pdf> (accessed September 12, 2018).

4 Human Rights Watch, "'Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her': Barriers to Girls' Education in Pakistan."

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2019, 16 December 2019](#)

[...] Pakistan

[...]	rank	score	avg	female	male	f/m	0
Educational attainment	143	0.823	0.954				
Literacy rate, %	143	0.653	0.899	46.5	71.1	0.65	
Enrolment in primary education, %	143	0.840	0.757	61.6	73.4	0.84	
Enrolment in secondary education, %	135	0.898	0.954	36.4	40.5	0.90	
Enrolment in tertiary education, %	111	0.880	0.931	8.5	9.6	0.88	

[...]

❖ [Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women, Forum for Dignity Initiatives, Joint NGO Shadow Report Submission to CEDAW, 13 January 2020](#)

[...] Context

Due to prevailing socio-cultural norms, young girls, after entering puberty, face greater challenges in accessing education opportunities and health care than young boys⁷. Most of the schools in the rural areas do not have a toilet which makes it nearly impossible for girls to attend school once they start menstruating, hence increasing the drop out ratio. [...]

6 http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/khan_2000__reproductive_healed.pdf

7 Ibid.

❖ [Shirkat Gah – Women's Resource Centre, Alternative CEDAW Report 2020 on Pakistan's Fifth Periodic Report Alternative CSO Report, 2020](#)

[...] Stereotypes, Harmful Practices & Education

CEDAW Paras 7, 13 & CEDAW/C/PAK/RQ/5 paras 58, 63-66 & 94-107

[...] Girls' enrolment has increased and the gender parity gap reduced through free education up to Class X and textbooks for economically under-privileged children, and some girls' schools benefit from clean and safe toilets to ensure menstrual hygiene etc. However drop out remains high, exacerbated by the lack of toilets and free and safe transport. There is an urgent need to enhance middle and secondary schools, particularly in rural areas, ensure safe and affordable transport to enable girls' access to schools not in their immediate vicinity and ensure all schools have toilets and Life-Skills Based Education (LSBE). There is no evidence of teacher training on gender or human rights. [...]

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] Education

39. The Committee commends the State party for its efforts to increase access by women and girls to all levels of education. It is, however, concerned that:

(a) According to government statistics, an estimated 22.8 million children aged between 5 and 16 years are out of school, including 12.6 million girls;

(b) Girls with disabilities and girls living in rural areas have only limited access to education owing to insufficient investments in education, lack of accessible facilities and parents' preference to enrol their

daughters in girls-only schools, especially at the secondary level, which are often not available in rural areas;

(c) The primary-to-secondary retention rate of girls is 52 per cent. [...]

Numbers of street children in 2017

❖ [Pakistan Tribune, Over 1.5m children consigned to the streets, 24 November 2017](#)

[...] SPARC, State of Street Children in Pakistan, 2017

[...] Executive Summary

[...] A 2010 SPARC survey estimated the number of street children in urban centers to be between 1.2 to 1.5 million¹, a figure that has likely increased by now. [...]

Numbers of street children in 2018

❖ [SPARC, 'State of Pakistan's children 2017', undated \(according to press reports, published in July 2018\)](#)

[...] Violence Against Children

SPARC's Research on Street Children (2017)

Street children is a term used for children for whom the street has become a habitual abode. The abundance of street children across all major cities of Pakistan is a worrying sign, however, they seem to have become the visibly invisible segment of our society. A 2010 SPARC survey estimated the number of street children in urban centres to be between 1.2 to 1.5 million³⁹; a figure that has likely increased by now. [...]

39 Surviving the Streets: <http://www.sparcpk.org/2015/images/Surviving%20the%20streets.pdf>

❖ [The Guardian, 'I've never been to school': child waste pickers living on Pakistan's streets, 20 March 2018](#)

[...] The number of street children in Pakistan is on the rise, according to a recent study, with an estimated 1.5 million under 18s sleeping rough in the country's urban centres.

A report from the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (Sparc), a thinktank working on the rights of children in Pakistan, states: "Street children are vulnerable to all kinds of hazards including: sexual abuse, street violence, psychological trauma, drug addiction, and falling victim to communicable diseases."

[...] The government has responded by opening child protection offices in 12 districts but Rana Asif Habib, of the NGO Initiator Human Development Foundation, in the southern port city of Karachi, says the issue is linked to the Afghan refugee crisis and to Pakistan's rising inflation rates.

"We are providing free education to street children, in mobile schools, but the problem with the Afghan children is that they don't have their birth certificates and they are suffering a lot," says Asif.

He believes that around half of all Pakistan's street children are Afghan refugees.

He also believes nearly 70% of them are runaways. [...]

❖ [SPARC, State of Street Children in Pakistan, 2018](#)

[...] Executive Summary

[...] A 2010 SPARC survey estimated the number of street children in urban centers to be between 1.2 to 1.5 million¹, a figure that has likely increased by now. [...]

Numbers of street children in 2019

❖ [Daily Times, The children of the streets, 3 April 2019](#)

[...] According to a survey, the number of street children in Pakistan has reached 1.2 million. From this, Karachi is called the city of street children where more than 30,000 street children are present. After Karachi, Quetta is the second city where a large number of street children are available. Around 20,000 street children are present in Quetta, and they are called garbage collectors, carpenter or working in automobile shops. [...]

Children, including trafficking victims forced to beg and experienced sexual and physical abuse in 2017

❖ [Dawn, SPARC, Plight of street children, 14 April 2017](#)

THEY constitute, perhaps, the most abused section of society — certainly the most vulnerable. To most they are an ubiquitous yet invisible part of the urban landscape. Their suffering is writ large on their faces, until brutish experience hardens their features into a carapace. This is the fate of the uncounted thousands of children living and working on streets across the country. Some have been abandoned by their families because of abject poverty. Others are runaways, escaping violence and abuse. Many are still connected with persons they call family, but must help in eking out a living through begging, manual labour or selling flummeries. Once on the street, they are almost certain to be subjected to further abuse, driven by virtue of their young age to the very bottom of the pyramid of power. [...]

❖ [SPARC, 'State of Pakistan's children 2016', May 2017](#)

[...] Child Sexual Abuse

[...] There are many forms of child sexual abuse (CSA) including but not limited to rape, fondling, sexual assault, exposure, voyeurism and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. [...]

Cases of CSA are hard to identify and are rarely reported in a country like Pakistan. [...]

❖ [United Nations Committee Against Torture, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 1 June 2017](#)

[...] 28. The Committee is deeply concerned about reports that cases of death in custody as a result of torture and allegations of sexual abuse of minors by prisoners and prison staff have not been subject to effective investigation and the perpetrators of such acts have not been punished.

[...] The Committee is concerned that, despite the efforts made by the Government, consistent reports refer to high levels of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation and forced or bonded labour, including exploitation of children as domestic workers in slave- like conditions (arts. 2, 12, 14 and 16). [...]

❖ [United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 20 July 2017](#)

[...] It is also concerned about the hardships faced by those living in camps for internally displaced persons, particularly those in situations of protracted displacement; the high risk of women and girls being exposed to sexual abuse, harassment and trafficking; and the slow resettlement process (arts. 2 and 11). [...]

❖ [United Nations General Assembly, Human Rights Council, Summary of Stakeholders' submissions on Pakistan, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 23 August 2017](#)

[...] 94. JS2 [Joint submission 2 submitted by: ECPAT International and Pakistan Paediatric Association] reported that children working in small hotels, restaurants and in the deep-sea fishing and transport

industries were among the most susceptible to sexual exploitation. Unlike female prostitution, the sexual exploitation of boys was more visible. More freedom of movement allowed to boys put them at higher risk. Boys were reported to be sexually abused also in schools or madrassas. Transgendered children were also at heightened risk.¹⁷⁴ [...]

174 2, paras. 8-12.

- ❖ [Geo News, New video emerges of bus conductor torturing special needs children, 17 October 2017](#)
[...] A new video footage was obtained by Geo News on Tuesday which shows a bus conductor torturing special needs children on a school bus, in what appears to be a sequel of the previous clip that started making rounds on social media last week.
A conductor, wearing a dark blue shalwar kameez, can be seen hitting and terrorising special needs children in the latest footage. He has not yet been identified by the authorities, who are likely to register a case against the man in question after the footage emerged.
The children can clearly be seen cowering in fear as the conductor repeatedly hits and slaps them, all the while hurling abusive words at them.
Last week, two conductors were caught on camera torturing children with disabilities on what is believed to be the same school bus. The accused were arrested and produced before the court, where both the parties informed the judge that they had reached an understanding.
The accused, identified as Hafiz Usman and Akram, were arrested on Friday after the Ghalib Market police registered an FIR against them following the surfacing of their torture video. They were booked under sections on child protection and threatening.
Their victims, as well as their colleagues, are students at Gung Mahal School for the Deaf & Dumb — a government institute in Gulberg. [...]
- ❖ [Associated Press, Sexual abuse rampant at Pakistan's Islamic schools, 21 November 2017](#)
[...] Sexual abuse is a pervasive and longstanding problem at madrassas in Pakistan, an Associated Press investigation has found. But in a culture where clerics are powerful, it is seldom discussed or even acknowledged in public.
It is even more seldom prosecuted, according to the investigation, based on police documents and dozens of interviews with victims, families, officials and aid groups. Police are often paid off not to pursue justice against clerics, victims' families say. And cases rarely make it past the courts, because Pakistan's legal system allows the victim's family to "forgive" the offender and accept what is often referred to as "blood money."
[...] Two officials familiar with the madrassas said sexual abuse there happens all the time. They asked to remain anonymous for fear of retribution from militant groups. One compared the situation to the abuse of children by priests in the Catholic Church.
[...] When offending mullahs pay police off, they refuse to even register a case, according to the victims' families. The families involved are often poor and powerless.
[...] Victims and their families can also choose to "forgive" an assailant because Pakistan's legal system is a mix of British Common Law and Islamic Shariah law. A similar legal provision was changed last year to prevent forgiveness of "honor" killings, where victims are murdered because they are thought to have brought shame on their families. Honor killings now carry a mandatory sentence of life in prison, but clerics in sexual abuse cases can still be forgiven.
Victims and their families often come under intense pressure to "forgive" the crime, or essentially settle for money. Many do, partly because they don't believe they have the power to do anything else. [...]

Children, including trafficking victims forced to beg and experienced sexual and physical abuse in 2018

- ❖ [Human Rights Watch, Pakistan Needs to Protect Children from Sexual Abuse, 12 January 2018](#)
[...] Yesterday, Pakistani news anchor Kiran Naz went on the air with her young daughter to protest on camera the rape and killing of Zainab Ansari, a 7-year-old girl, whose body was dumped in a pile of garbage.

“It is true when they say that the smallest coffins are the heaviest,” Naz said, her daughter sitting on her lap. “And all of Pakistan is burdened by the weight of her coffin.”

Zainab went missing on January 4 and her brutalized corpse was discovered five days later, leading to widespread protests in Pakistan.

The cruel indifference of some crimes can shake a nation. But too often, incidents of child sex abuse remain hidden.

According to the Islamabad-based nongovernmental organization Sahil, an average of 11 cases of child sexual abuse are reported daily across Pakistan. Zainab was among the dozen children to be murdered in Kasur district in Punjab province in the past year. In 2015, police identified a gang of child sex abusers in the same district. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2019: Events of 2017 – Pakistan, 18 January 2018](#)

[...] Violence against women and girls—including rape, “honor” killings, acid attacks, domestic violence, and forced marriage—remained a serious problem. Pakistani activists estimate that there are about a 1,000 “honor” killings every year.

In June, a tribal council (jirga) in Khyber agency ordered the “honor” killing of Naghma, a 13-year-old girl, for “running away with men.” Parliament had passed in February a controversial bill giving legal cover to tribal and village councils.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa draft domestic violence bill received wide public criticism for exempting parents and spouses when they use “corrective measures” against female family members, raising the concern that it will legitimize some forms of domestic violence. At least 180 cases of domestic violence were reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in 2017, including 94 women murdered by close family members. [...]

❖ [SPARC, ‘State of Pakistan’s children 2017’, undated \(according to press reports, published in July 2018\)](#)

[...] Violence Against Children

[...] Child Trafficking and Abduction

[...] It is argued that beggars and street children are the most vulnerable to intercity or inter-provincial trafficking and there are no cohesive coordination mechanisms in place among the provincial authorities to tackle this problem holistically. [...]

❖ [SPARC, ‘State of Pakistan’s children 2017’, undated \(according to press reports, published in July 2018\)](#)

[...] Violence Against Children

SPARC’s Research on Street Children (2017)

[...] Street children are vulnerable to all kinds of hazards including; sexual abused, street violence, psychological trauma, drug addition, and falling victim to communicable diseases.[...]

❖ [Pakistan Today, Mardan’s five-year-old girl was raped, confirms medico-legal report, 9 August 2018](#)

[...] A 5-year-old girl, whose body was recovered on August 8 from the fields in Dhandu Pathu village of Takhtbai tehsil, was raped before being brutally murdered, Mardan police on Thursday confirmed after the issuance of medico-legal report.

[...] Thousands of child abuse incidents take place in Pakistan every year. Earlier in 2018, the menace used to be under-reported but that changed with the brutal rape and murder of Zainab Ansari in Kasur.

Zainab’s death became a watershed moment and forced the law enforcement authorities as well as the media to pay more attention to cases of violence against children. [...]

❖ [Daily Pakistan, Child Labor in Pakistan: What Imran Khan must do?, 29 August 2018](#)

[...] Child labor has been controlled to some extent by legislation in the sophisticated areas but the conditions are not ideal. Even today, most of the domestic servants in formal sectors are children. Many before the age of 6 are sold as domestic workers only for sixty to eighty thousand rupees for one year. These home servants are dealt as slaves who don’t have any rights. Working 24/7 becomes their fate since the buyers take them as a purchasable item instead of a human being. They wash cars outside the houses

during scorching hot summer days. They face barbaric behavior of the buyer and his family. They are frequently sexually abused by masters and even by people living in surrounding like shopkeepers and fellow grownup servants.

[...] A majority of youth under 14 years of age works as conductors where they are not only abused linguistically but sexually as well, likewise is the condition of children working at roadside-hotels. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2019: Events of 2018 – Pakistan, 17 January 2019](#)

[...] Child sexual abuse remains disturbingly common in Pakistan with 141 cases reported in just Lahore, Punjab, in the first six months of 2018. At least 77 girls and 79 boys were raped or sexually assaulted in the first half of 2018, according to police reports, but none of the suspects had been convicted at time of writing and all had been released on bail.

In January, the rape and murder of 7-year-old Zainab Ansari in Kasur, Punjab, led to nationwide outrage and prompted the government to promise action. On June 12, the Supreme Court upheld the convictions of Imran Ali for the rape and murder of Zainab Ansari and at least eight other girls. Imran Ali was executed on October 17. On August 8, the body of a 5-year-old girl who was raped and murdered was found in Mardan district, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. The rape of a 6-year-old girl in Sukkur district, Sindh, was confirmed by a medical report on August 10.

According to the organization Sahil, an average of 11 cases of child sexual abuse are reported daily across Pakistan. Zainab Ansari was among the dozen children to be murdered in Kasur district, Punjab in 2018. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Violence against Children

National attention was focused on the issue of child abuse and victimisation of children with the case of Zainab in early January 2018.

Six-year-old Zainab was found dead in Kasur after being sexually abused. This turned out to be the tip of the iceberg as Zainab's murder was reportedly the twelfth such incident to occur within a 10-kilometre radius in the city over a 12-month period.

The mid-year statistics on child sexual abuse, compiled and released by the NGO Sahil, showed that child sexual abuse incidents increased by 32 percent in the first six months of 2018 compared to the same period the previous year. In the first six months 2,322 cases were reported while 1,764 cases were recorded in the first half of 2017. The report also showed that the number of cases involving boys had drastically increased by 47 percent since 2017. Another disturbing finding of the report was the 75 percent rise in sexual violence against children in the age group of 0-5 years. In this age group, 79 cases were recorded in the first six months of 2017 whereas in 2018 the figure had reached 321.

Quoting newspaper articles, the report stated that the major crime categories of the reported cases from the first half of 2018 were abduction (542), sodomy (381), rape (360), missing children (236), attempt of rape (224), gang sodomy (167), attempt of sodomy (112), gang rape (92), and 53 cases of child marriages.

Provincial statistics showed that 65% cases were from the Punjab, 25% cases from Sindh, 3% cases from Islamabad, 3% cases from KP, 2% cases from Balochistan. Twenty-one cases were reported from AJK, and two cases from G-B. Out of the total reported cases, 74% were from rural areas and 26% cases reported from urban areas.

According to statistics reported by a TV channel (9 January 2019) and collected from government departments, 1,214 children were raped in the Punjab in 2018. The number of girl victims was 400 and the number of boy victims was 789, almost double that of girls. In another news report in November 2018, 1,109 cases of sexual abuse of children of less than ten years of age were reported to the Punjab police up to September.

The rate of conviction remained very low in child abuse cases. The Ministry of Interior informed the Senate in August 2018 that a total of 79 cases of child abuse had been registered in the federal capital from January 2014 to June 2018 but only four perpetrators had been convicted during that period. The Sahil report statistics also showed that 89% of cases were registered with the police. In 32 cases the police refused to register a case, 17 cases were unregistered with the police, and the registration status of 196 cases were not mentioned in newspapers. [...]

Children, including trafficking victims forced to beg and experienced sexual and physical abuse in 2019

❖ [Daily Times, The children of the streets, 3 April 2019](#)

[...] Thousands of street children are sexually abused in only Quetta, but the children fear to share their stories. [...] The young, poor, illiterate and defenseless, children are abused and exploited, sexually, verbally, emotionally and psychologically. Violence could range anything between harassment to pedophilia, sexual abuse to sodomy, coerced to join groups of criminals and used as drug traffickers or turned into beggars by the beggars' mafia. The police is totally failed to protect the children from such violence so police is called among the leading enemies of street children as no fear of reprisal from the law or the society against the indiscriminate violence. [...]

Some other survey have been conducted which have proved that 80 to 90 percent of the street children are victims of sodomy, sexual and physical abuse, not only by elders but older children within their own gangs. [...]

❖ [UNICEF, UNICEF condemns killing of nine-year-old boy in Kabirwala, 30 January 2019](#)

[...] UNICEF expresses its deep concern at the brutal killing of a nine-year-old Pakistani boy in Kabirwala, a town of Khanewal District in the Punjab province of Pakistan.

According to several media reports, the boy went to a madrassa on Monday evening and never returned. His body was found in fields; the police has since arrested a neighbor on charge of raping and killing him. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commissions of Pakistan \(HRCP\), State of Human Rights in 2018: A meaningful democracy, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Child sex abuse incidents are on the rise. One report showed an increase of 32 percent in the first six months of 2018 compared to the same period the previous year, a 47 percent increase in cases involving boys, and a 75 percent rise in sexual violence against children in the age group of 0-5 years.

[...] There has been a sharp increase in child sexual abuse, involving both boys and girls, and reports of abuse appear with shocking regularity.

Despite legislation on the employment of minors, this practice persists in industries and homes and the cases of abuse of child domestic workers continue to surface.

[...] Violence against children saw no respite in 2018, encompassing a broad spectrum of physically and sexually exploitative acts. Despite each province boasting of having dedicated child protection legislations, very few victims received protection, counselling, and legal services.

The year started with the brutal rape and murder in Kasur of a six-year-old girl named Zainab whose body was discovered in a rubbish dump. This case drew extensive media attention and resulted in massive riots due to the inaction of the police in finding the perpetrator. Immense public pressure resulted in the search and arrest within two weeks of the culprit Imran Ali, who was subsequently sentenced to death by the Anti-Terrorism Court. His conviction was upheld by both the Lahore High Court and Supreme Court and a plea of clemency was rejected by the President of Pakistan. Imran Ali was hanged in Kot Lakhpat jail on 17 October 2018.

[...] The Federal Ministry of Human Rights drafted an action plan in November 2018 to address the issue of child abuse in the country. In a document presented before the National Assembly's Special Committee on child abuse, it was stated that the plan would focus on prevention, protection, recovery, reintegration, and participation.

[...] Very little focus on investigation and recovery of missing children was seen despite thousands of children going missing every year in Pakistan. In July 2018, a constitutional petition was filed in the Supreme Court by Roshni Research and Development Organisation, an NGO working for child protection, urging the Court to order the federal and provincial governments to recognise cases of missing children as a cognisable offence. The Court was informed in the ensuing hearings that 30 children had disappeared from various parts of the country, particularly Karachi, within the first six months of 2018 and between 5,000 and 6,000 children disappear every year in Karachi alone.

[...] The Sindh cabinet placed a ban on child beggary in November. It directed the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to start a child beggary campaign and rescue all child beggars on the streets and give them refuge in children's homes run by the Department.

[...] Child trafficking has emerged as a major problem in South Asia from where most children are trafficked, according to the UN Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018. The report named Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh as three countries from where most victims in the region are trafficked. It also found that children now form 30 percent of the total trafficking victims in the world and the number of girls trafficked are considerably greater than boys.

[...] A couple were arrested in Gujjarpura for allegedly torturing their 11-year-old maid, Sumera, clubbing and burning her with an iron rod.

Another 11-year-old girl, Kinza, was beaten with blunt instruments by her employers—a woman army officer and her doctor husband. The husband was arrested in November after his interim bail expired. The wife, named as the prime suspect, was already being investigated by army authorities.

[...] Seven-year-old Hadia was shot dead by her employer, and her six-year-old sister Safia injured, when they arrived late for work. The incident took place in Lakki Marwat, in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

[...] A seven-year-old child lost his life after being severely beaten by a seminar teacher in the Shalimar area of Lahore in July 2018. In September, a school headmistress at Government Girls Middle School in Sahiwal tortured a young girl for using her toilet. The girl suffered severe injuries and required several stitches to her private organs. The police refused to register a case and asked the father of the victim not to take any action. The same month, a four-year-old was reportedly taken to hospital in Narowal after he was beaten by his teacher. Also in September, the principal of Ali Angel School, Talagang, Chakwal was caught on video brutally beating a child with a stick.

In the previous month a school teacher was also captured on video brutally beating students at a public elementary school in Chitral. Earlier in May, a video of a teacher at Cadet College Mastung surfaced on social media in which he was captured ruthlessly beating students with a stick.

In a first, a prominent Lahore-based all boys private school catering to upper-income households featured in a social media campaign. The school principal was accused by multiple alumni of the school of promoting a culture of physical punishment in classrooms and on campus. [...]

❖ [Sahil, Cruel Numbers 2018: A Compilation of Statistics on Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Pakistan, 3 April 2019](#)

[...] This year Cruel Numbers 2018 has been compiled from monitoring of 85 Newspapers (National and Regional).

The data of child abuse shows that a total number of 3832 cases have been reported in newspapers during the year 2018. These cases were reported from all four provinces including Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit Baltistan (GB).

These cases have increased of more than 11% as compared to the figure 3445 recorded in the year 2017. More than 10 children have been abused per day during the year 2018.

The data shows that out of the total 3832 cases of child abuse, 55% victims were girls and 45% were boys. This year in the age brackets of 6-10 years and 11-15 years, boys are more vulnerable to child sexual abuse as compared to girls. In the age bracket 0-5 years and 16-18 years more girls are vulnerable to child sexual abuse.

The major crime categories of the reported cases are abduction 923, sodomy 589, rape 537, missing children 452, attempt of rape 345, gang sodomy 282, gang rape 156 and 99 cases of child marriages. This year the sodomy cases have increased by 61% and rape cases have been increased by 15% as compared to the year 2017.

This year 2018, a total number of 3832 cases were reported. Out of this 63% cases were from Punjab, 27% cases from Sindh, 4% cases from KP, 3% cases from Islamabad Capital Territory, 2% cases from Balochistan, 34 cases from AJK and 6 cases were reported from Gilgit Baltistan (GB).

This year total reported cases, 86% cases were registered with the police, whereas in 56 cases police refuse to register the case, and 39 cases were unregistered with police. While in 11% cases the case registration status was not mentioned in newspapers.

The cases of murder after sexual abuse are decreased by 16% (92) as compare to the 109 cases reported in the year 2017.

In 2018, a total 1064 cases of abduction have been reported in newspapers. Out of these cases, 79% victims were girls and 21% were boys.

This year a total 130 cases of child marriages have been reported in newspapers. Out of the total 130 cases of child marriages 85% were girls and 15% were boys. [...]

- ❖ [The Guardian, Outrage in Pakistan over abuse of child domestic workers, 13 August 2019](#)
 [...] Each night, after a 12-hour shift of domestic drudgery, Neelum, 11, and Pari, 13, leave their employer's million-dollar mansion with its manicured lawns in Karachi's glitzy Defence neighbourhood, and return to their servant lodgings. There they sleep on thin, termite-infested mattresses, undernourished from their diet of leftovers.
 Behind the glistening glass doors of the country's most opulent neighbourhood, thousands of children work as maids and servants. Across Pakistan, an estimated 264,000 children are employed in such work, and claims of abuse by employers are commonplace. In January, 16-year-old maid Uzma Bibi was allegedly tortured and murdered by her employer in Lahore for helping herself to a small piece of meat. After tweets about her case went viral under the hashtag #justiceforUzma, three people, including her employer, were arrested and are now in custody awaiting trial.
 There was similar social media outcry in 2018 over pictures of 10-year-old Tayyaba's bruised face and hands. She had been working as a maid for a judge and his wife. The couple were cleared of assault allegations but convicted of neglecting an injured child and sentenced to one year in jail.
 Yet despite this rising tide of public outrage, activists say the problem is only intensifying. "The situation is actually getting worse," says Ume Laila, executive director of rights group HomeNet Pakistan. "Children are employed with no protection and unless there is a holistic legal framework for the protection of domestic workers, the situation won't improve. Awareness and practical actions are required."
 [...] A major obstacle is that child work is so normalised in Pakistan. But stricter child protection laws are not in the interests of many of those hiring children as their servants. "It's not only the wealthiest and most powerful who are employing child domestic workers," says Gulaz. "They are employed across the board, whoever can afford to employ them. Many people prefer young workers, because they are easier to control, and exploit. And poor parents are ever ready to offer their children for employment because it at least promises two meals and a roof. Nothing else matters."
 [...] Without proper worker protection, in cases of abuse, dissent is often silenced through "hush money". This happened in the case of Bano, a 13-year-old girl working in Bahria Town in Rahim Yar Khan. She was thrown out of a window by her employer and her backbone was irreparably damaged, leading to her death six months later. Instead of pursuing the matter in court, her father agreed to a settlement with the employer worth 300,000 Pakistani rupees (£1,490). [...]

- ❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan \(HRCP\), HRCP Fact-Finding Report on Child Abuse and Murder in Chunian \(Kasur\), 27 September 2019](#)
 [...] The district of Kasur in Punjab has resurfaced in the media amid the grisly discovery of four children's bodies on 17 September 2019: Faizan, Hussnain, Imran and Suleman. It is suspected that they were also subjected to sexual assault. This follows several high-profile cases of child abuse and murder in Kasur, among them the discovery of a child pornography ring in 2015 that had targeted about 300 children, and the brutal rape and murder of six-year-old Zainab Ansari in 2018 – reportedly the twelfth such incident of child sexual abuse to have occurred within a 10-km radius in a single year.
 [...] While the police explained the measures they had taken to some extent, almost all the victims' families felt they had received very little or no support from the administration and law enforcement agencies and held little hope that the police investigation would reveal the culprit or culprits.
 [...] The HRCP team met Ramzan, the father of one of the victims, eight-year-old Faizan. Ramzan is the imam of the local mosque. He said that his son, a third-grade student, was allegedly kidnapped on the evening of 16 September. The following day, Faizan's body was found in a nearby ditch.
 [...] Finally, the team met Ali Hussnain's parents, who live two streets away from Salman's family. Ali's mother said that her nine-year-old son used to help his father sell hosiery. He went missing on 17 August 2019. [...]

- ❖ [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2020: Events of 2019 – Pakistan, 14 January 2020](#)
 [...] Child sexual abuse remains common. According to the organization Sahil, more than 10 cases of child sexual abuse are reported daily across Pakistan. [...]

- ❖ [Amnesty International, Human Rights in Asia-Pacific: Review of 2019 – Pakistan, 30 January 2020](#)

[...] Reports of sexual abuse and violence against children were widespread. In July, the Human Rights Ministry began a country-wide awareness campaign for “prevention of child sexual abuse”.
 In October, Sohail Ayaz a convicted sexual predator from the UK was arrested in Peshawar for sexual abuse of 30 minors. Ayaz had been working as a consultant with the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for three years since his return to Pakistan.
 In May, Parliament’s lower house blocked a bill to raise the minimum age at which girls can marry to 18 years in line with the minimum marriage age for men. [...]

Health conditions of child IDPs in 2017

- ❖ [Dawn, Displaced families of Fata face an uncertain fate in Jalojai camp, 4 March 2017](#)
 [...] Women, and children like Nawaz, from Khyber, Bajaur and Mohmand of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) live in torn tents with a decreased food allowance and a lack of health facilities.
 [...] 70-year-old Rehman Gul, who has been living in a tattered tent without food rations or any health facility, explains, “the welfare organisations have closed down their schools, health centres and also stopped providing food items.”
 [...] The lack of health facilities in the camp have compelled IDPs to take their ailing elderly, women and children to health centres located elsewhere in the Nowshera district. [...]
- ❖ [The Borgen Project, 5 Things to Know About Pakistan’s IDP Problem, 7 August 2017](#)
 [...] Health: Healthcare in Pakistan is the holy grail for the poor in normal circumstances. Mass exodus due to conflicts and insecurity have made it impossible for displaced persons to attain basic health care. The most common problems among IDPs are malaria, skin infections, diarrhea and colds. Very few mothers and children received assistance to fulfill their nutritional needs. Health services, though available in the area, already overstretched before the IDPs’ arrival. [...]
- ❖ [End Polio Pakistan, Pakistan Polio Update, September 2017](#)
 [...] Other key deliverables to achieve this goal include continued focus on reaching peak performance in core polio reservoirs, closer collaboration with Afghanistan, and improved microplanning to ensure that high-risk mobile populations such as children who are nomads, refugees, internally displaced persons and seasonal migrants, among others, are reached with the polio vaccine. [...]
- ❖ [UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan*, 20 July 2017](#)
 [...] Internally displaced persons
 27. The Committee is concerned that millions of people have been displaced in the State party and that not enough data have been collected on internally displaced persons, nor has legislation or a comprehensive national policy on such persons been put into place. It is also concerned about the hardships faced by those living in camps for internally displaced persons, particularly those in situations of protracted displacement; the high risk of women and girls being exposed to sexual abuse, harassment and trafficking; and the slow resettlement process (arts. 2 and 11). [...]
 [...] 28. The Committee recommends that the State party:
 [...] (b) Improve the living conditions of internally displaced persons living in camps and ensure their access to health-care services, education and other public service [...]

Health conditions of child IDPs in 2018

- ❖ [UNICEF, Humanitarian Action for Children 2018 - South Asia, 4 January 2018](#)
 [...] Pakistan

Pakistan is currently facing a number of natural and human-caused disasters. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) are experiencing protracted, large-scale humanitarian situations, including significant population movement and displacement. In 2017, humanitarian assistance continued to focus on supporting displaced populations in the FATA regions. The Government and humanitarian partners facilitated the return of 42,225 families between January and September,⁹ 14 per cent of which were female-headed households. In total, 262,623 families have returned to their places of origin in FATA since March 2015. However, 32,455 families are still displaced and living in host communities and will continue to require humanitarian support.¹⁰ The risks that these vulnerable populations face are made worse by limited access to basic services, especially in FATA, where protracted instability and humanitarian access challenges have negatively impacted service delivery and infrastructure. Recent inter-cluster assessments conducted in FATA show that 80-90 per cent of educational facilities and health centres have been completely damaged, approximately 50 per cent of water supply schemes are non-functional and 70 per cent of the population (1,103,017 people) lacks access to safe drinking water.¹¹ [...]

9 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Pakistan: FATA Return Weekly (from 15 to 21 September 2017) – Humanitarian Snapshot', OCHA, 27 September 2017.

10 Ibid.

11 Inter-cluster assessment mission reports for North Waziristan Agency (10-13 January 2017 and 14-18 March 2017) and Orakzai Agency (9-12 March 2017)

❖ [UNICEF, Pakistan Mid-Year Humanitarian Situation Report 2018, 30 June 2018](#)

[...] 29,452 families still displaced in KP & tribal districts (UNOCHA Humanitarian Snapshot August 2018)

[...] Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) & Tribal Districts: During the first half of 2018, a key development took place with the merger of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) as per the 25th constitutional amendment that called for this merge; as such, the area is now referred to as the tribal districts of KP. The newly merged districts will be governed under provincial laws of KP as opposed to the Frontier Crimes Regulations which will allow the residents of the tribal districts to have access to resources and opportunities of the neighbouring KP province.

The humanitarian situation in the tribal districts of KP is due to large-scale displacement and returns resulting from years of insecurity, sectarian conflicts and military operations. The vulnerability of these population is aggravated by limited access to basic services, protracted instability and access challenges which negatively impact service delivery and infrastructure. According to the FATA Vulnerability Assessment 2017¹, it was estimated that 4.4 million people, of whom 2.5 million are children, were in need of humanitarian assistance in Pakistan.

UNICEF interventions through 2018 sought to ensure that children and women in host communities and areas of return had access to basic social and protection services. The government and humanitarian partners facilitated the return of 228 families from January to July 2018. However, 29,452 families were still displaced and will continue to require humanitarian support.² UNICEF's humanitarian response in areas of displacement and return was hampered by insecurity, which limited access to areas of the greatest need, as well as delays in obtaining government no-objection certificates (NOC). Cultural norms in the tribal districts also posed a particular challenge to both reaching female beneficiaries as well as recruiting female social mobilizers who could reach women and girls inside their homes. Funding constraints posed a major challenge to achieving results in the humanitarian response. [...]

1 The FATA Interagency Vulnerability Assessment was undertaken instead of a humanitarian needs overview and humanitarian strategic plan as per agreement with the Government. A Transition Framework was instead prepared to address continuing humanitarian needs and linking these with longer term development programmes.

2 UNOCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin (August 2018)

❖ [Médecins Sans Frontières, Increasing newborn babies' chances of survival, 8 November 2018](#)

[...] Most of MSF's patients in Peshawar come from impoverished outlying rural communities where healthcare is still scarcely available, due to issues not only of cost but also access.

Other women are refugees, mainly from Afghanistan, or have been internally displaced from former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), which until the beginning of 2017 endured conflicts and instability resulting from the 2001 war in Afghanistan.

This is why care at the MSF hospital, and transport to the facility, are provided entirely free of charge. Whoever they are, all these women live in harsh and unsanitary conditions that affect their health and their pregnancies. [...]

❖ [Health Resource Availability and Mapping System \(HeRAMS\) in Health Facilities of FATA, Pakistan 2018, 13 November 2018](#)

[...] d. Availability of screening services for under nutrition/malnutrition/growth monitoring (MUAC or W/H, H/A) in Children:

In FATA, the situation of child screening for malnutrition i.e. MUAC, W/A, H/A was poor. Even at the AHQ HOSPITALS level, only 57% had services of child screening for malnutrition. The most affected (Lack of screening services for malnutrition in children) were; South Waziristan, Mohmand Agency, Khyber Agency, FR Tank, FR Kohat and FR D.I.K. Moreover, Health facilities are supported by UNICEF, WFP & WHO for their nutrition related activities through MNCH Program, Directorate of Health Services FATA. There is no government run program for Nutrition yet, however, Nutrition Strategy for FATA is in its final stages of approval and Draft PC-1 for Nutrition has also been Developed. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commissions of Pakistan \(HRCP\), State of Human Rights in 2018: A meaningful democracy, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Female IDPs from Gilgit-Baltistan

IDPs from Gilgit-Baltistan, especially women and girls, receive very little attention in the mainstream media. Two primary factors have contributed to the IDP crisis in Gilgit- Baltistan: (i) the incidence of natural disasters, such as the Attabad landslide in 2010, which displaced the entire village, and (ii) border tensions and sub-regional conflicts. Some participants noted that people who lived close to the border were unable to work their fields because of the threat of landmines; this had a negative impact on their livelihoods. Both factors had led to internal displacement, with women and girls often bearing the brunt of the stress of living in IDP camps. Women IDPs often struggle to sustain their livelihood, given the limited income opportunities available to them outside Gilgit-Baltistan. This is exacerbated by the inadequacy of any compensation packages awarded by the state. [...]

❖ [UNOHCA, Pakistan: Humanitarian Dashboard – 2018, 11 March 2019](#)

[...] Number of IDP women, men, girls, boys and elderly have access to integrated primary healthcare services including MNCH & RH services: 545, 784 of 840,000 (65%) [...]

Health conditions of child IDPs in 2019

❖ [Muhammad Suleman Malik, Muhammad Afzal, Alveena Farid, Fati Ullah Khan, Bushra Mirza, and Mohammad Tahir Waheed, "Disease Status of Afghan Refugees and Migrants in Pakistan," *Front Public Health*, 7:135, 3 July 2019](#)

[...] Here, we present health status for Afghan refugees for last seven years and for IDPs for 2–4 years.

[...] Most migrants or refugees prefer to live in rural areas due to less costs of living. Also, in most cases, the camps arranged by the government for living of refugees lie in outskirts of urban areas. This increases the burden of already populated rural areas and thus incidence of diseases increases. Additionally, movement of people from one place to other serves as a source of dispersal of infections to new areas, where previously those infections were absent or less prevalent.

[...] For collection of health record of internally displaced people (IDPs), we surveyed different districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa namely Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, and Tank as shown in Figure 1. Being neighboring areas of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), these districts contained most population of IDPs. We collected data of communicable and non-communicable diseases of IDPs' enrolled patients from different healthcare centers of IDPs' lodging districts.

[...] Skin diseases were more common than other disorders/diseases in district Peshawar (3,248 cases) whereas respiratory infections were more common in District Dera Ismail Khan and Bannu (14142 and 9399 cases, respectively).

37 World Health Organization (WHO) A Guide to Introducing Inactivated Poliomyelitis Vaccine Based on the Polio Eradication & Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-2018 (2018). Available online at: http://www.who.int/immunization/diseases/poliomyelitis/endgame_objective2/inactivated_polio_vaccine/Introduction_Guide.pdf?ua=1 (accessed June 24, 2019).

❖ [The Organization for World Peace, Conflict In Pakistan And Internally Displaced Persons Living With Disability, 1 September 2019](#)

[...] Increased scholarly attention on disability awareness in Pakistan has uncovered significant information and service gaps that exist for people who have been internally displaced and are living with disabilities from Northwest Pakistan and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Studies reveal that instances of mental disorders are growing within internally displaced families that have been forced to flee their homes to avoid terrorist-related violence.

[...] Dr. Mumtaz believes it necessary to bridge the current information gap and formulate strategies to manage the needs of people living with disabilities in the context of displacement camps. She states no domestic IDP health institutional mechanisms currently exist and at present, “These IDP’s remain unnoticed in terms of health planning by the federal and provincial governments and access to basic health services is denied to IDP’s let alone addressing their disability-specific needs”. [...]

❖ [UNOCHA, Pakistan: Humanitarian Dashboard - Transition 2019 \(1 January - 30 November 2019\), 2 January 2020](#)

[...] IDP Population: 16,780 families

[...] Number of IDP women, men, girls, boys and elderly have access to integrated primary healthcare services including MNCH & RH

Year end target: 1,100,000

Reached: 254,122 (23%) – 83,957 women; 58,261 men; 62,478 boys; 49,426 girls [...]

Families cared for most individuals with physical and mental disabilities in 2017

❖ [Amnesty International Submission to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 61st Session, 29 May to 23 June 2017](#)

[...] 3.4 RIGHT TO EDUCATION (ARTICLES 13-14)

[...] Another major area of concern is the lack of integration into the mainstream schooling of children living with disabilities in Pakistan.¹³² Official education statistics in Pakistan do not incorporate data on children with disabilities.¹³³ Enrolment, drop-out, and transition rates

are not compiled separately for such children.¹³⁴ It is not known how many children with mental and physical disabilities are currently out of school. Lack of disaggregated data and research impedes the development of effective policies to promote inclusive and quality education. Except a few donor-supported projects, school buildings in Pakistan do not have ramps, support bars or other disability friendly facilities.¹³⁵ [...]

132 General Comment No.13, para 6.

133 See for example, Pakistan Education Statistics 2013-14 (Islamabad, 2015).

134 See for example, Pakistan Education Statistics 2013-14 (Islamabad, 2015).

135 See, UNICEF, Examples of Inclusive Education – Pakistan. (Kathmandu, 2003). Available: <http://unesco.org.pk/education/icfe/resources/res26.pdf>

❖ [UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan*, 20 July 2017](#)

[...] Persons with disabilities

23. The Committee is concerned at the narrow definition of disability in the legislation, which limits the capacity of the State party to assess the situation of persons with disabilities and to develop effective

policies to address the discrimination facing them in relation to the enjoyment of Covenant rights. It is also concerned at the lack of reasonable accommodation and personal assistance services for persons with disabilities and at the limited legal provisions aimed at ensuring the accessibility of public facilities and institutions, which seriously impede the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by persons with disabilities (art. 2). [...]

Right to education

[...] 79. The Committee welcomes the inclusion of the right to education in the chapter of the Constitution on fundamental rights and notes the internal security challenges facing the State party, which have a significant adverse impact on children's right to education. The Committee is, however, concerned at:

[...] (g) The absence of inclusive education for children with disabilities; [...]

❖ [UNICEF, The Situation Analysis of Children in Pakistan: The state of child rights in Pakistan, September 2017](#)

[...] 4.1 Out-of-School Children

[...] Rural children, especially girls, are particularly disadvantaged, as are children with disabilities, only 4% attend school. Their exclusion is linked to the social stigma that afflicts children with special needs. This, in turn, discourages parents from sending children with disabilities to school. It is also tied to an absence of facilities, educational materials and trained teachers capable of meeting the needs of students with disabilities. [...]

Families cared for most individuals with physical and mental disabilities in 2018

❖ [Amina Tareen and Khalida Ijaz Tareen \(BJPsych International\), Mental health law in Pakistan, Volume 13 Number, 3 August 2016, published online by Cambridge University Press: 02 January 2018, pp. 67-69](#)

[...] Where a patient is very disturbed or aggressive there is no identified agency to which relatives can turn for help or assistance. Currently, the family are the mainstay of support for people with mental disorders. [...]

❖ [University of Cambridge, Identifying disability in household surveys: Evidence on education access and learning for children with disabilities in Pakistan, February 2018](#)

[...] Data from the TEACH survey identify that there are variations in school enrolment depending on severity and type of disabilities.

It should be noted that Central Punjab, the area selected for the TEACH survey, has higher levels of enrolment than some of the more disadvantaged areas of the country. For example, according to ASER Pakistan data, Central Punjab has an overall enrolment rate of 90%, compared with 83% in Southern Punjab, or 66% in Sindh. In the TEACH sample, the vast majority of 8-12 year olds without disability were in school, with only around 6% out of school (Figure 2). By comparison, around 23% of those identified with moderate to severe disabilities were out of school. Interestingly, a significant proportion of those facing difficulties in walking are out of school, although the sample size is small: nine out of 15 children reported to have moderate to severe difficulties with walking are out of school. ASER Pakistan data also find a relatively high proportion of children facing physical difficulties are out of school. This could suggest the lack of basic adapted facilities in schools, such as ramps, aids and appliances, adapted teaching and learning materials which might prevent these children from accessing schools and the curriculum. [...]

❖ [Brunel University London, Inclusive Education helps all children in Pakistani schools, not just those with special needs, 23 August 2018](#)

[...] the majority of children with disabilities and other special needs in Pakistan are still missing out on being in school at all.

"Given Pakistan's large population of young people, there are 7 million children missing out on education," said project lead Dr Debbie Kramer-Roy, Lecturer in Occupational Therapy at Brunel University London, "and many of those with special needs who are enrolled in school don't receive the support they need to be able to participate in educational and social activities like their classmates." [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Key Issues

[...] People living with disabilities [PWDs]

[...] Stigma and superstition attached to disability in Pakistan prevents the visibility, inclusion, and participation of PWDs in society.

[...] Inclusion and vulnerability

Stigma and superstition attached to disability in Pakistan prevents the visibility, inclusion, and participation of PWDs [persons with disabilities] in society. Ignorance and the absence of social services, care, and respite facilities force many poor families to seek help from quacks and faith healers leading to worsening of the disability and fatal consequences in some cases. [...]

People Living with Disabilities

[...] Children with disabilities remained the most neglected group amongst children in Pakistan. [...]

There are at least 1,700,000 children with autism spectrum disorders in Pakistan, out of which 340,000 are girls, according to the Autism Spectrum Disorders Welfare Trust (ASDWT). These figures, calculated on the basis of international indicators, were shared by ASDWT at a seminar held on World Autism Day 2018 in Lahore. It was also stated such children were more susceptible to violence, especially in rural areas where they are treated with superstition. The lack of care facilities further exacerbates the vulnerability of autistic children. [...]

The conditions in which PWDs live in Pakistan are dismal, as there are very few opportunities for their schooling, training, and employment. [...]

Families cared for most individuals with physical and mental disabilities in 2019

❖ [Australian Government - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 20 February 2019](#)

[...] Health

2.2.6 [...] The elderly and people living with a disability have limited access to health care and to enabling devices to improve quality of life. Significant social stigma associated with disability in Pakistan further limits access as many families will not seek help outside the home. Social stigma also impedes access to health services for sexual minorities (see People who identify as LGBTI). Only around a quarter of the HIV-positive people who have the active support of community groups have access to treatment, while those without support groups have almost no chance of receiving treatment. [...]

❖ [Amjad Hafeez University of Cambridge, Special Education in Pakistan: Problem Tree Analysis: Challenges and Policy Intervention, November 2019](#)

[...] 4.3 Social Attitude towards Education of the Disabled

There is dominant view in society that disabled persons do not need any education. They can not compete for different opportunities in life. Therefore, there is no need to spend on their education. And that they must be looked upon with pity. The disabled persons are thought to remain dependent on other members of a family where they are born. Hence, they are considered a burden rather than as a productive member of society. This attitude keeps special persons away from schools. The problem is compounded if the special education facility is far away from home of a special person. Following three types of social barriers the disabled people face at family level:

i. Parents do not disclose disability of their children at early stage of their lives and do not take steps for their rehabilitation and education, particularly, in case of girls;

ii. Stigma associated with disability;

iii. Poverty and lack of awareness among parents of disabled children hinders their accessibility to education.¹² [...]

12 National Education Policy 2017, Chapter 15

- ❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)
 [...] (b) Girls with disabilities and girls living in rural areas have only limited access to education owing to insufficient investments in education, lack of accessible facilities and parents' preference to enrol their daughters in girls-only schools, especially at the secondary level, which are often not available in rural areas; [...]

Insufficient data existed for accurate reporting on discrimination against LGBTI persons, due in part to severe stigma and fear of re-victimization in 2017

- ❖ [Right Here, Right Now Alliance and Sexual Rights initiative, UPR Submission, November 2017](#)
 [...] Sexual and Gender Minorities (SGM)
 21. Due to the criminalization of homosexuality under section 377v of the Pakistan Penal Code, the LGBTIQ individuals are reluctant to reveal their sexual orientation and identity. "Coming out" as sexual and gender minority can result in teasing, abuse, beating and even killing. There is no open discussion on the subject because it is considered a grave moral offence by the religious authorities.
 The emotional, verbal and physical abuse faced by the sexual and gender minorities stems from social and religious stigmatization of gender nonconformity and homosexuality. Due to the criminalization and social stigmatization of SGM, violence against them is rarely reported to the authorities. While the transgender populations have been recognized legally, they face routine verbal, emotional and physical abuse and violence from the society as well as law enforcement agencies. [...]
- ❖ [Asian Human Rights Commission, PAKISTAN: Impunity and violence against Transgender community rises, 4 October 2017](#)
 [...] According to various NGO surveys, there are more than one million transgender persons in Pakistan, but many are too scared to reveal their identity. [...] The attitude of law enforcement agencies too is condemnable. The transgender community has suffered more violence at the hands of Pakistani police officers than any other single group of men. The police treat them as suspects rather than victims, blaming their lifestyle as "sex workers" for the violence against them. The community is scared to report any abuse, fearing harassment and threats from the police. Many transgender individuals have reportedly been sexually abused by police officers, who demand sexual favours from them, and even then refuse to file a complaint or FIR. [...]

6.3.2. Omissions in 2018 (compared to 2017) some of which continued to be omitted in 2019

NGOs reported police were at times implicated in rape cases in 2018

- ❖ [Dawn, Policeman held in rape case, 6 April 2018](#)
 [...] A policeman was arrested on the charge of raping a woman at his official residence located in G-9/1. The action was taken after the woman lodged a complaint with the Karachi Company police. The accused was taken to hospital for a medico legal examination and later produced in the court which sent him to jail on a judicial remand.
 The complainant, a maid, said a man took her to the official quarters from a bus stop on the pretext of giving her a job at a house. [...]
 The accused was stationed at the Police Lines Headquarters for the last couple of years. [...]
- ❖ [Geo TV, Police moharrir allegedly rapes six-year-old in DG Khan, 4 September 2018](#)
 [...] A six-year-old was allegedly raped by a police moharrir in Dhera Ghazi Khan, it emerged on Tuesday.

According to the victim's mother, Khaleel coaxed her daughter into accompanying him to the City Police Station where he raped her.

A case was registered by the police against the moharrir who was arrested and transferred to an unknown location.

The minor was shifted to the Teaching Hospital for a physical examination. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, State of Human Rights in 2018, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] Police crime/dereliction of duty

Amidst growing concern around police accountability, the Sindh government set up the Internal Police Accountability Branch (IAB) in August, answerable to the Inspector General of Police and tasked with 'conducting inquiries against policemen over allegations of corruption, misuse of powers and other complaints in a transparent manner'. [...]

In May, in response to a complaint filed by Justice Project Pakistan (JPP), the National Commission on Human Rights initiated a formal inquiry into nearly 1,500 cases of torture uncovered in Faisalabad alone. The JPP had produced a report in collaboration with Yale Law School, Policing as Torture: A Report on Systematic Brutality and Torture by the Police in Faisalabad, which revealed conclusive signs of abuse in 1,424 cases for the period 2006-2012.

According to the data, 58 of the victims were children and over 134 were women. The report stated that 143 victims were suspended, 464 were forced to witness others being tortured, 15 were subjected to sleep deprivation, 11 were exposed to extreme heat or cold, and 114 were sexually abused. The report also found that 61 percent of women were sexually abused, and 81 percent were subjected to culturally inappropriate practices.

Thirteen policemen, including three SHOs, were subsequently summoned by the NCHR in August for torturing citizens. Despite this action, a fruit vendor in Faisalabad was picked up in September, blindfolded, brutally tortured at an undisclosed location, and allegedly forced to accept that he had committed a robbery, proving that the practice of torture was still very much a part of police investigation. In June, on the occasion of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the NCHR said they had received 100 complaints in the past year, adding that the commission had also picked up 58 cases suo motu, of which 34 were related to female victims. According to the commission, Pakistan lacked data, adequate monitoring and redressal mechanisms, as well as comprehensive national legislation against torture. It was reported that human rights officers had been appointed to prohibit and prevent torture in police stations, and that nearly 25 officers of the Islamabad police had been dismissed for their involvement in inflicting torture.

[...] What scant data exists shows that, like the rest of the country, Balochistan is also plagued with brutal misogynistic violence, targeting women and girls alike. Rape, abduction, and murder are commonplace. What is different in Balochistan is that locals hold the state responsible for the majority of violence, particularly abduction.

NGOs reported police were at times implicated in rape cases in 2019

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Rape Allegations Against Pakistan's Police, 23 May 2019](#)

[...] A 22-year-old woman in Rawalpindi district in Pakistan's Punjab province reported to police that four men had abducted her at gunpoint and raped her. Most disturbingly, she alleged that three of the four assailants were police officers.

The authorities have since arrested all four suspects and suspended three police officers as criminal investigations proceed.

This is one of several recent incidents in which Pakistani police – the very people who should be tackling rape and protecting the public – have been accused of committing sexual violence. In April 2019, an assistant sub-inspector of police was charged with raping a woman in Bahawalpur district, Punjab. The woman had earlier gone to the police station to report that she had been gang raped, but says that the official later called her back to the station claiming he needed to record her statement, and then raped her. In September 2018, another police official was charged with raping a 6-year-old girl in Dera Ghazi Khan district, Punjab.

These cases highlight the difficulty Pakistan's sexual violence survivors have getting recourse. Sexual assault victims often fear pressing charges because they and their families may become subject to harassment and intimidation by the police, due to harmful gender attitudes and pressure from perpetrators. Without proper witness protection, survivors can easily be intimidated into silence. These barriers reflect deeply entrenched gender inequality within Pakistani society, including in state institutions such as the police and judiciary. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, Threats of rape unacceptable, 5 February 2019](#)

[...] In the wake of several incidents in the last few days in which state and law enforcement agencies appear to have acted with impunity, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCPC) has expressed serious concern over the alleged harassment of a Pashtun woman in the village of Khaisor in North Waziristan, based on a video statement recorded by her young son, Hayat Khan, and released on social media.

In a statement issued today, HRCPC has strongly condemned the incident, saying that 'there can be no justification for state agency officials to enter a private home and threaten to rape a woman whose husband and elder son were arrested reportedly in an earlier security operation. While her husband has now been released, this in no way 'cancels out' the harassment and rape threats she says she has faced.

'HRCPC is also perturbed to learn from other sources, including an independent team of human rights activists who visited Hayat Khan's mother immediately after the video was released, that this was not an isolated incident. That rape, or the threat of rape, should be used to force citizens to remain silent in the face of state agency excesses, is deplorable. [...]

❖ [Express Tribune, Cops among six held for 'gang-raping' woman inside her home in Karachi, 2 October 2019](#)

[...] A local court handed over on Tuesday six accused, including two police officials, to the police on physical remand for their alleged involvement in a case of gang rape.

The case was reported to the police by the victim, K*, on September 29. According to the FIR, no. 315/19, a copy of which is available with The Express Tribune, she was alone at home on September 26, when she heard a knock on her door at around 12pm. When she opened the door, four men forced their way inside and started threatening her at gunpoint.

One of the men, who the victim recalls being addressed to as Sarfaraz by his accomplices, then took her inside a room and assaulted her while filming the ordeal on his mobile phone. [...]

❖ [Human Rights Watch, Human Rights Watch Submission to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women review of Pakistan's periodic report 75th Session - December 2019](#)

[...] 6. Sexual Violence against Women Perpetrated by Police (Article 2)

There have been numerous recent incidents in which Pakistani police have been accused of committing sexual violence against women.

[...] In April 2019, an assistant sub-inspector of police was charged with raping a woman in Bahawalpur district, Punjab.³⁰ In May 2019, a 22-year-old woman in Rawalpindi district, Punjab, reported to police that four men had abducted her at gunpoint and raped her, alleging that three of the four assailants were police officers. The authorities have since arrested all four suspects and suspended three police officers as criminal investigations proceed.³¹

Sexual assault victims often fear pressing charges, concerned that they and their families may be subjected to harassment and intimidation by the police, due to harmful gender attitudes and pressure from perpetrators. Without proper witness protection, survivors can be intimidated into silence. These barriers reflect deeply entrenched gender inequality in society, including in state institutions like the police and judiciary.

Pakistan faces grave security challenges that require a rights-respecting, accountable police force able to protect the entire population. When police become perpetrators of sexual violence, the credibility of all police are damaged and victims are even less likely to seek their help.³² [...]

30 "ASI booked for raping woman in Bahawalpur," Dawn, April 15, 2019.

31 "3 policemen among four arrested in Rawalpindi rape case," Dawn, May 18, 2019.

32 Saroop Ijaz, "Rape Allegations Against Pakistan's Police: Prosecute Officers Implicated, Enact Wider Reforms," Human Rights Watch Dispatch, May 23, 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/05/23/rape-allegations-against-pakistans-police>.

❖ [Justice Project Pakistan, Submission to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\): Supplementary Information on Pakistan for Consideration by the Committee at its 75th Session in February 2020, January 2020](#)

[...] Torture as a Form of Gender-Based Violence: Custodial Rape, Sexual Assault and Cultural Humiliation
Women and female prisoners are subjected to a specifically gendered nature of torture in custody. They experience "psychological and sexual trauma", with their bodies being used as "another site of torture for their male relatives."¹⁶

In Faisalabad, while women were subjected to many of the same forms of abuse as men, they also experienced expressly "gendered" forms of violence.¹⁷ A much greater proportion of female victims suffered from "sexual assault", "cultural humiliation"¹⁸ and "forced witnessing of torture"¹⁹, which effectively constitutes gender-based violence.

[...] These reported statistics from Faisalabad district constitute a small proportion of the gender-based violence that women in Pakistan are subjected to by police. Penetrative rape, sexual assault and being forced to strip all constitute sexual offences in the Pakistan Penal Code, but police in Faisalabad were able to commit them with impunity. [...]

16 "Policing as Torture: Data Analysis of Punjab Police's Use of Unlawful Torture." Justice Project Pakistan. https://www.jpp.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2019_01_13_PUB_Policing_as_Torture.pdf

17 "Abuse of Women by the Faisalabad Police." Justice Project Pakistan. <https://www.jpp.org.pk/report/abuse-of-women-by-the-faisalabad-police/>, page 2.

18 Cultural humiliation consists of "forcing victims to engage in or observe conduct that violates their cultural or religious rules or values". In one case, the police forced victims to "strip nude and parade outside in front of their neighbours". Defined in "Policing as Torture: A Report on Systematic Brutality and Torture by the Police in Faisalabad, Pakistan". Justice Project Pakistan and Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic, page 13.

<https://www.jpp.org.pk/report/policing-as-torture/>

19 "Abuse of Women by the Faisalabad Police." Justice Project Pakistan. <https://www.jpp.org.pk/report/abuse-of-women-by-the-faisalabad-police/>, page 4.

Statistics on contraception use and maternal mortality rates in 2018

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2018, 17 December 2018](#)

[...] Pakistan

Health	female	male	value ¹
Mortality, childbirth			178

1 Age-standardized death rates per 100,000 population

❖ [National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18, January 2019](#)

[...] 7 Family Planning

[...] 7.1 CONTRACEPTIVE KNOWLEDGE AND USE

[...] Overall, the contraceptive prevalence rate is 34% of currently married women age 15-49, with 25% using modern contraceptive methods and 9% using traditional methods. Use of a family planning method rises with age of currently married women (Table 7.3). The use of family planning methods among younger women (age 15-19 and age 20-24) is low (7% and 18%, respectively). Use of traditional family planning methods is substantially higher among married women age 30 and above (Table 7.3). [...]

The modern contraceptive methods most commonly used by currently married women in Pakistan are the male condom (9%) and female sterilisation (9%). Injectables remain the third popular modern contraceptive method (3%). Though the use of implants is only at 0.4%, this survey marks the first time a PDHS has noted their use in Pakistan (Figure 7.1). [...]

7.5 DEMAND FOR FAMILY PLANNING

[...] Fifty-two percent of currently married women age 15-49 in Pakistan have a demand for family planning; 19% for spacing births, and 33% for limiting births. Only 34% of currently married women are

using a contraceptive method either to space or to limit births, and therefore have fulfilled their need. However, 17% of currently married women have an unmet need for family planning: 10% want to space and 8% desire to limit births but are currently not using any contraception (Table 7.14, Figure 7.6). [...]

Statistics on contraception use and maternal mortality rates in 2019

❖ [World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2019, 16 December 2019](#)

[...] Health

[...] Maternal mortality, deaths per 100,000 live births – – 140

❖ [Shirkat Gah – Women’s Resource Centre, Alternative CEDAW Report 2020 on Pakistan’s Fifth Periodic Report Alternative CSO Report, 2020](#)

[...] Health

CEDAW Para 16 & CEDAW/C/PAK/RQ/5 Paras 135-138

[...] Maternal mortality rates remain high especially amongst poor women and are related to high rates of stillbirths.²³ Maternal mortality is not just a technical issue that can be resolved through services, but linked with women’s general health issues and strategic interests, including decision-making about child spacing, family planning and age at marriage. Mortality also stems from the lack of access to emergency obstetric care (EMOC) within 2 hours of emergency. [...]

23 <https://www.unicef.org/pakistan/reports/unicef-Pakistan-annual-report-2018>

❖ [The Pakistan Alliance for Postabortion Care, RE: Supplementary information on Pakistan scheduled for review by the CEDAW Committee during its 75111 session in February, 2020, 20 January 2020](#)

[...] Unmet Contraceptive Need

Out of a total of approximately 9 million pregnancies in Pakistan in 2012, 4.2 million (46 percent) are unintended . Of these 4.2 million unintended pregnancies, 54 percent end in induced abortions. An additional 34 percent of unintended pregnancies result in an estimated 1.4 million unplanned births. These abortions carry huge costs as witnessed by the large numbers of women who have postabortion complications and obtain treatment, as well as those who need but do not get treatment. Further, the unplanned births impose their own economic, social, and health costs on families, especially mothers .¹⁴ Hospital based data mentions that postabortion family planning is a missed opportunity which needs to be addressed at all levels of health care delivery system both in public and private sector to reduce number of unwanted pregnancies. [...]

14 Sathar, Z., Singh, S., Rashida, G., Shah, Z. and Niazi, R. (2014), Induced Abortions and Unintended Pregnancies in Pakistan . Studies in Family Planning, 45: 471-491. doi:10.1111/j.1728-4465.2014.00004

6.3.3. Omissions in 2019 (compared to 2018, 2017 and 2016)

In-laws frequently abused and harassed the wives of their sons in 2019

❖ [National Institute of Population Studies, Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18, January 2019](#)

[...] 16.2.1 Perpetrators of Physical Violence Eighty percent of ever-married women who have experienced physical violence since age 15 report their current husband as the perpetrator, while 8% name a former husband as the perpetrator. Seventeen percent report violence by mothers or stepmothers, and 11% each report violence by sisters or brothers and fathers or stepfathers (Table 16.3). [...]

- ❖ [Social Policy and Development Centre \(SPDC\), NUI Galway, Ipsos Mori, and International Centre for Research on Women \(ICRW\), Economic and Social Costs of Violence Against Women in Pakistan: Summary Report, April 2019](#)

[...] Key Findings At a Glance

[...] This study finds that the home is the most dangerous location for women in Pakistan. Violence by an intimate partner and by other family members (e.g. in-laws, parents, siblings) were the most common forms of violence experienced, with 24% of respondents experiencing one or both of these forms of violence in the past 12 months. [...]

2.2. Methods of data collection

This study used a mixed method approach including both quantitative surveys of individual women, households and businesses, and qualitative inquiry methods including key informant interviews, participatory focus groups and individual in-depth interviews. An overall sample of 2998 women was drawn from 123 primary sampling units (also known as enumeration areas) across the main provinces of Punjab, Sind, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad Capital Territory.²

2 The sample frame is consistent with other nationally representative household surveys that generally excludes Gilgit-Baltistan, FATA and Azad Kashmir due to different administrative set-ups and challenges in accessing them.

- ❖ [Dawn, Mother-of-three allegedly burnt alive by husband, in-laws in Shakargarh tehsil, 2 May 2019](#)

[...] A mother-of-three was burnt alive on Wednesday, allegedly by her husband and his family members, in village Taajowal-Noor Kot of Punjab's Shakargarh tehsil over a domestic issue.

According to the first information report (FIR) filed of the incident, Nabeela Bibi was often tortured and administered brutal beatings by her husband Shehzad Ahmed and his family over minor domestic disputes. [...]

- ❖ [Dawn, What are your options if you're a victim of domestic abuse in Pakistan? 28 May 2019](#)

[...] What qualifies as domestic abuse by law?

Talking to Images, lawyer Sara Malkani shares, "Domestic violence is defined broadly in each of these laws, I would say. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, verbal and also economical abuse. It covers domestic relationships and that includes your spouse, siblings, your parents, etc." [...]

- ❖ [Dawn, Bride beaten to death in Lahore by 'husband, in-laws' a day after marriage, 31 December 2019](#)

[...] A woman was allegedly tortured to death by her in-laws a day after her marriage on Walton Road.

According to the first information report lodged by Suleman Khan, the brother of the deceased Sawera, she was subjected to torture by her husband and his family members over unidentified reasons. [...]

According to women's rights activists the National Commission on the Status of Women lacked resources in 2019

- ❖ [Aurat Foundation and Legal Aid Society, Deeds not Words, Pakistan Civil Society's Alternative Report on CEDAW, 2020](#)

[...] Introduction

[...] The Government's responses in the Fifth Report give the impression that it has complied fully with CEDAW Articles in letter and spirit. Ground realities belie these tall claims. We appreciate some progress, e.g. enactment of women-friendly laws at federal and provincial levels, including positive amendments in electoral laws. Much of the credit goes to civil society, human rights activists' advocacy and proactive initiatives, women legislators, Status of Women Commissions (CSWs). Yet, there exist many unresolved issues within the bitter reality that women and girls risk being discriminated against, humiliated, raped, and "dishonour"-killed, on any pretext that offends patriarchal and misogynist mindsets. There are signs of regression instead of progression in several respects. The National Machinery for women's advancement is not fully functional or effective; illegal 'jirgas' and 'panchayats' continue to wreak havoc with women's lives. Enforcement of positive pro-women legislation is not pursued seriously. [...]

Article 2 - National Machinery for the Advancement of Women:

(CEDAW/C/PAK/CO/4, March 2013 paras 17, 18, 19, 25), (CEDAW/C/PAK/5 October 2018: para 6, 12, 19, 61-69) (CEDAW/C/PAK/Q/5 July 2019, para 4),

National and provincial CSWs - Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (KP), Punjab and Sindh, and provincial implementing agencies (line ministries, Women's Development and Social Welfare Departments) face financial, administrative and human resource challenges. The Balochistan Commission is notified but not established.

Particularly in 2019, the Commissions' functionality suffered from delayed appointments of Chairs and/or members – KP January to end-May, Punjab end-May to date after summary removal of the Chairperson without due procedure, NCSW October to date.

Lack of SoPs for NCSW's dealings with its administrative Ministry (Human Rights), other key Ministries, Divisions and the Women's Parliamentary Caucus negatively affects streamlining of contacts. The coordination mechanism established to harmonize inter-provincial approaches suffers from resource shortages. NCSW staff approval and recruitment faced prolonged delays. Approved professional staff posts are still vacant. Service rules were approved after a seven year delay. Business Rules are awaited for the National, Punjab and Sindh Commissions. Financial autonomy is undermined by underfunding and budget cuts, forcing the CSWs to survive with volunteers, and donor funded activities. These indications of low government priority raise concerns that future Chairs and members could be selected based on political affiliations, ending neutrality of approaches.

Inadequate achievement of women's advancement is due to lack of conceptual clarity among implementers, outdated databases, missing or unclear policies, plans, limited resources and poor management capacity.

Information about MoHR plans, activities of the provincial CEDAW and other Treaty Implementation Cells, is not accessible to civil society/NGOs neither are implementation reports of National and Provincial Policies/Plans. [...]

❖ [Shirkat Gah – Women's Resource Centre, Alternative CEDAW Report 2020 on Pakistan's Fifth Periodic Report Alternative CSO Report, 2020](#)

[...] National Machineries

CEDAW Para 4 & CEDAW/C/PAK/RQ/5 Paras 33-41

The failure to appoint people to commissions in a timely manner renders institutions dysfunctional for long periods, impeding effectiveness and continuity. The NCHR is dormant since June 2019; nine months lapsed before the chairperson of the KP CSW was appointed, the Punjab CSW has been dysfunctional since May 2019; the NCSW since October 2019. Inordinate delays in approving NCSW Service and Financial Rules impede appointments of subject/expert staff and requisite administrative staff. The KP and Sindh CSWs lack autonomy as the Chair is not the Principal Accounting Officer; autonomy of all provincial CSWs is reduced by WDDs prior vetting of all financial matters, research reports etc. [...]

❖ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Pakistan, 10 March 2020](#)

[...] National machinery for the advancement of women

21. The Committee commends the State party for the development and operationalization of the Human Rights Information Management System. It further commends the work of the National Commission on the Status of Women. However, it remains concerned that, since the adoption of the eighteenth amendment to the Constitution and the devolution of powers in the area of women's rights, governance challenges continue to exist in the integration and coordination of policies aimed at the advancement of women. The Committee remains concerned about the lack of capacity and resources allocated to the provincial commissions and the women's development departments, which may prevent them from fulfilling their mandate as provincial machinery for the advancement of women. The Committee further notes with concern the limited human and financial resources available to the National Commission on the Status of Women to fulfil its broad mandate to promote and protect women's rights and gender equality. [...]

7.3.1. Omissions in 2017 (compared to 2016), repeated in 2018 and 2019

Figures on child labourers in 2017

❖ [Dawn, Govt urged to carry out child labour survey, 13 June 2017](#)

[...] Members of the civil society have urged the government to carry out a comprehensive child labour survey across the country so that effective measures can be taken to eradicate child labour in the country. [...] Members of the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (Sparc) made the suggestion at an event on World Day Against Child Labour.

Speaking on the occasion, Sparc Executive Director Sadia Hussein called for a detailed child labour survey across all provinces so that more can be known about the practice.

[...] “The last National Child Labour Survey was conducted more than 20 years ago in 1996 according to which around 3.3 million children were working in Pakistan.

According to a 2015 survey by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), it is estimated that 5.7 million 10 to 17 year olds are working, which is 20pc of all children,” she said.

She explained that these numbers account for those children who are employed in the agriculture sectors and that the large number of children working in the informal economy were unaccounted for.

The closest figures for domestic child labour is from a 2004 ILO report which says 264,000 children work as domestic labour. [...]

❖ [The Express Tribune, Child labour: lack of coherent reforms in Pakistan, 1 July 2017](#)

[...] Labour Force Survey data shows that 1.7 million children (12-14 years) are employed in Pakistan, thus it is necessary to regulate this work by inserting light work provisions in the provincial legislations. [...]

❖ [United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 20 July 2017](#)

[...] 63. The Committee is concerned that the minimum age for labour is set at 14 years while the Constitution guarantees free compulsory education up to 16 years of age. It is also concerned that, according to official data, over 2 million children aged between 10 and 14 years are working and that 28 per cent of them are engaged in hazardous work. [...]

❖ [United Nations General Assembly, Human Rights Council, Summary of Stakeholders' submissions on Pakistan, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 23 August 2017](#)

[...] 95. JS8 [Joint submission 8 submitted by: Child Rights Movement] indicated that the absence of recognition of child domestic labour as a worst form of child labour made it very difficult to produce a precise estimate of its scale and impact.¹⁷⁵ [...]

175 JS8, paras. 20 and 22.

Figures on child labourers in 2018

❖ [SPARC, 'State of Pakistan's children 2017', undated \(according to press reports, published in July 2018\)](#)

[...] The last Child Labour Survey in Pakistan was conducted back in 1996, which estimated child labour to be at 3.3 million.³ Since then, there has been no nationwide child labour survey. However, efforts to initiate a comprehensive child labour survey were initiated in 2017 across three provinces of Pakistan, namely; Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The most substantial effort in this regard was taken by the Government of Punjab, which initiated the survey with the help of UNESCO and completed data collection tasks by the end of 2017.

In the absence of nationwide results from official child labour surveys, the next best alternative is the Labour Force Survey of Pakistan, which estimated children aged 10-17 in labour. Based on the national Labour Force Survey 2010-2011, a publication titled Understanding Children's Work (UCW) in South Asia

by ILO, UNICEF and World Bank indicated that 5.7 million 10-17-year-olds, representing almost 20% of all children in the age group are involved in labour in Pakistan.⁴ Among these children, more than two-thirds of those engaged within the agricultural sector in Pakistan. A similar proportion were estimated to be doing unpaid family work. The surveys in the following years showed a dramatic decline in these figures with the Labour Force Survey 2014-15 estimated 3.7 million children (aged 10-17) engaged in the workforce.⁵ Since the national Labour Force Survey does not cover children below the age of 10, a large proportion of child labour is not accounted for in the survey. Furthermore, it can be hard to use the survey as an estimate for determining the working conditions for adolescents aged between 14- 17 years; which is the age bar for permitting children to work in Pakistan under certain limitations laid out in laws regulating work for children in the country. [...]

3 http://kpcode.kp.gov.pk/uploads/2015_I9_THE_KHYBER_PAKHTUNKHWA_PROHIBITION_OF_EMPLOYMENT_OF_CHILDREN_ACT_2015.pdf

4 http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-new_delhi/documents/publication/wcms_440164.Pdf

5 <http://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/labour-force-survey-2014-15-annual-report>

❖ [Human Rights Watch, “Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her?”, Barriers to Girls’ Education in Pakistan, 12 November 2018](#)

[...] Child labor remains widespread in Pakistan, though exact figures are hard to come by. The International Labour Organization cites estimates that almost 13 percent of children aged 10 to 14 years are in employment, rising to 33 percent among children ages 15 to 17.¹⁹⁴

[...] An NGO staff member working in poor areas of Lahore estimated that 70 percent of children in those neighborhoods are in paid employment, much of it home-based.¹⁹⁶ [...]

194 “The Elimination of Child Labour and Promotion of Decent Work in the Stora Enso Value Chain, with a Focus on Pakistan,” International Labour Organization (ILO), undated but the project duration is 2015-2017, http://www.ilo.org/islamabad/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_427005/lang--en/index.htm (accessed September 13, 2018).

[...] 196 Human Rights Watch interview with NGO worker (name withheld), Lahore, July 21, 2017.

Figures on child labourers in 2019

❖ [Human Rights Commissions of Pakistan \(HRCP\), State of Human Rights in 2018: A meaningful democracy, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] An estimated 12 million children are involved in child labour in the country. [...]

❖ [UNICEF, Every Child is Protected from Violence and Exploitation: Country Programme of Cooperation between the Government of Pakistan and UNICEF 2018-2022, May 2019](#)

[...] No data is currently available on child labour, however the provincial governments of Pakistan have commissioned surveys which will start in mid-2019 with technical support from UNICEF. The provincial survey results will also be consolidated into a national report. [...]

❖ [Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child \(SPARC\), The State of Pakistan’s Children 2018, 29 October 2019](#)

[...] In Pakistan, the last national survey on Child Labour was conducted in 1996, according to which, around 3.3 million children were stated to be working as child labourers in Pakistan.²² [...]

22 <https://www.dawn.com/news/1339215>

7.3.2. Omissions in 2018 (compared to 2017 and 2016)

Details on forms of child labour in 2018

- ❖ [BBC News, Tayyaba abuse case shines light on Pakistan's child maids, 9 June 2018](#)

[...] Children aren't legally allowed to work in most businesses in Pakistan, but in the vast majority of the country there's no law banning them from working inside homes.
Child maids are often required to cook, clean and look after babies - and there are thought to be tens of thousands of them across the country.
[...] For some, it's a business. Irshad Bibi runs an employment agency on the outskirts of Islamabad.
"I find work for children who are at least 12 years old, not younger than 10," she tells me defensively.
There's a long queue of families in her office trying to find jobs for their children. One father's young son and daughter ran away from the last home they were working in, but he's back because he says he needs the money.
"No parent wants their young child to go and work," Irshad tells me, "They're desperate... Here now is a parent crying, saying 'I am being thrown out of my house, I haven't even got 5,000 rupees [£32; \$43], take my child and get her some work'." Some child maids end up working in homes alongside their parents, or find work locally. But others are recruited by agents. [...]
- ❖ [Daily Pakistan, Child Labor in Pakistan: What Imran Khan must do?, 29 August 2018](#)

[...] Child labor has been controlled to some extent by legislation in the sophisticated areas but the conditions are not ideal. Even today, most of the domestic servants in formal sectors are children. Many before the age of 6 are sold as domestic workers only for sixty to eighty thousand rupees for one year. These home servants are dealt as slaves who don't have any rights. Working 24/7 becomes their fate since the buyers take them as a purchasable item instead of a human being. They wash cars outside the houses during scorching hot summer days.
[...] The majority of Pakistani children have to toil in agriculture sector without any compensation. [...]
- ❖ [Human Rights Watch, "Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her?", Barriers to Girls' Education in Pakistan, 12 November 2018](#)

[...] Saba is one of the almost 22.5 million children in Pakistan who are out of school, the majority of whom are girls. She sells potatoes on the street outside a private school and longs to attend school herself. Poor families often prioritize boys' education, as grown sons are expected to support their parents in the future while girls marry and join their in-laws' household.
[...] Saba, age 11, who does not attend school, with her mother. Saba's mother cooks potatoes and Saba sells them on the street. Almost 13 percent of Pakistani children aged 10 to 14 years are in paid employment, rising to 33 percent among children ages 15 to 17--and work, also including housework or child care, often keeps girls out of schools. - Insiya Syed for Human Rights Watch, September 2018
[...] Child Labor
Many children, girls and boys, are out of school because they are working. Sometimes they are engaged in paid work, which for girls often consists of home-based industries, such as sewing, embroidery, or assembling small items. Other children—almost always girls—are kept home to do housework in the family home. [...]
- ❖ [Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2019: Pakistan, 4 February 2019](#)

[...] Extreme forms of labor exploitation remain common. Bonded labor was formally abolished in 1992, and there have been long-standing efforts to enforce the ban and related laws against child labor. Gradual social change has also eroded the power of wealthy landowning families involved in such exploitation. Nevertheless, employers continue to use chronic indebtedness to restrict laborers' rights and hold actual earnings well below prescribed levels, particularly among sharecroppers and in the brick-kiln industry. [...]
- ❖ [Human Rights Commissions of Pakistan \(HRCP\), State of Human Rights in 2018: A meaningful democracy, 14 February 2019](#)

[...] A couple were arrested in Gujjarpura for allegedly torturing their 11-year-old maid, Sumera, clubbing and burning her with an iron rod.

Another 11-year-old girl, Kinza, was beaten with blunt instruments by her employers—a woman army officer and her doctor husband. The husband was arrested in November after his interim bail expired. The wife, named as the prime suspect, was already being investigated by army authorities.

[...] Seven-year-old Hadia was shot dead by her employer, and her six-year-old sister Safia injured, when they arrived late for work. The incident took place in Lakki Marwat, in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

[...] Three owners of a brick kiln in Daska, Sialkot district were booked in May for allegedly selling 13 members of a labourer's family, including women and children, to other brick kilns after they demanded an increase in their wages.

[...] In February, the previous Punjab administration announced a drive to eradicate child labour in brick kilns. Following this, 32 child labourers were reportedly freed and owners arrested in Sialkot.

In April, activists called for detailed information on the Punjab government's Integrated Project for Elimination of Child and Bonded Labour 2014. The government had apparently allocated Rs5.1bn for this project and claimed to have removed 88,000 children from brick kilns and rescued around 41,000 from child labour in other sectors. However, activists and people working with brick kiln labourers said that the schools were empty and children were still working. In district Sheikhpura, 204 one-room schools set up informally under this project were reported to have been closed down.

[...] The employment of children in homes continues to prevail unchecked and only surfaces in the media when extreme cases of neglect and abuse are reported.

[...] The number of domestic workers in Pakistan is roughly estimated to be over 8 million. Most of these are women and girls whose labour is undocumented, rendering the compiling of accurate statistics impossible. A high number of these workers are children. The treatment meted out by employers only comes to light when media reports highlight extreme abuse, and anecdotal accounts speak of long work hours and heavy workloads, low pay, no rest or holidays, allegations of theft, and physical and sexual abuse. [...]

Details on forms of child labour in 2019

- ❖ [International Labour Organization \(ILO\), Eliminating child labour and forced labour in the cotton, textile and garment value chains: an integrated approach \(CLEAR COTTON\) \(Project fact sheet\), 24 June 2019](#)

[...] Child labour and forced labour are both present in the supply chain across the globe including in Pakistan where cotton production processes are labour intensive and/or dominated by small-holder farms or by tenancy and sharecropping. Child labour is also a particular issue for certain parts of the textile-garment industry because most of the producers requires low-skilled labour and short time delivery. In the cotton, textile and garment value chains, there are indicators of forced labour, such as bonded labour, withholding wages, restriction of movement, excessive overtime, abusive working and living conditions involving also adolescent labourers. [...]

- ❖ [The Guardian, Outrage in Pakistan over abuse of child domestic workers, 13 August 2019](#)

[...] Each night, after a 12-hour shift of domestic drudgery, Neelum, 11, and Pari, 13, leave their employer's million-dollar mansion with its manicured lawns in Karachi's glitzy Defence neighbourhood, and return to their servant lodgings. There they sleep on thin, termite-infested mattresses, undernourished from their diet of leftovers.

Behind the glistening glass doors of the country's most opulent neighbourhood, thousands of children work as maids and servants. Across Pakistan, an estimated 264,000 children are employed in such work, and claims of abuse by employers are commonplace. [...]

- ❖ [Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child \(SPARC\), The State of Pakistan's Children 2018, 29 October 2019](#)

[...] Another reason for the data to underestimate the girl child's vs. the boy child's labour is that the girls' work is less visible, such as domestic services as maids in private households, or unpaid domestic work at home.²¹ This is one of the most under-rated forms of child labour, as well as the most prevalent and the most unreported.

The data also shows that the agricultural sector accounts for the largest share of non-formal child labour, while industries stand second at employing child labour. A large number of child labourers are also engaged in providing non-formal commercial and domestic services. The estimated data for children working in the Agriculture sector, aged between 5-17 years, is 70.9% of the total child labour force.

It is estimated 11.9% of child labour works in the industrial sector; and 17.2% works in the non-formal, unorganized sector. [...]

21 This domestic work, almost always done by out-of-school girls, is both quantitatively and qualitatively much heavier than, and quite different from, the ILO's description of the permissibility of school children theoretically "helping their parents at home" or doing "light work". Thus, the opposition to such terminology (and the very concept) from child rights activists is not surprising.

❖ [Amnesty International, Human Rights in Asia-Pacific: Review of 2019 – Pakistan, 30 January 2020](#)

[...] The provincial government of the Punjab province passed a domestic workers protection act in January prohibiting employment of minors under 15 in households. However, children continued to be hired as domestic labour across Pakistan. [...]

❖ [Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2020: Pakistan, 4 March 2020](#)

[...] Bonded labor was formally abolished in 1992, and there have been long-standing efforts to enforce the ban and related laws against child labor. For example, in one example from May 2019, 63 brick kiln workers filed a complaint with the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HCRP) that they had been sold along with the kiln where they worked. They were formally released from bondage by a court order in June. Gradual social change has also eroded the power of wealthy landowning families involved in such exploitation. Nevertheless, extreme forms of labor exploitation remain common. Employers continue to use chronic indebtedness to restrict laborers' rights and hold actual earnings well below prescribed levels, particularly among sharecroppers and in the brick-kiln industry. [...]