



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Consideration of reports submitted by States Parties
under article 35 of the Convention

Replies of Pakistan to the list of issues in relation to its initial report^{*}, ^{**}

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^{*} The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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



General obligations

Articles 1–4

Harmonization of all laws with the Convention

1. Following the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the subject of rights of persons with disabilities was transferred to the provinces and consequently each province has taken independent measures to cater to the rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs).
2. Laws have been introduced at the Federal as well as provincial levels to amend and modify the 1981 Ordinance. At the federal level, ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act was enacted in 2020 (ICT Act, 2020) whereas Punjab repealed the 1981 Ordinance by promulgating the Punjab Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act 2022, and passing the Punjab Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Monitoring and Enforcement Regulations 2025. Sindh is implementing The Sindh Persons with Disability Empowerment Act 2018. Balochistan is also implementing the Balochistan Persons with Disabilities Act, 2017 followed by the Balochistan Persons with Disabilities Rules 2025. In KP, a comprehensive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Bill 2023 has been vetted and is under deliberation of Cabinet Committee on Legislation. These laws reflect Pakistan's implementation of the principles of non-discrimination, equality of opportunity, and access to justice and service delivery in line with the Constitution as well as the Convention. The enacted laws place a positive obligation on the State to recognize persons with disabilities as rights holders, requiring systemic accommodations to ensure their full and equal participation in all spheres of life, including education, employment, mobility, and access to public services and infrastructure.

Enforcement and Coordination Mechanism

3. The domestic laws enacted for persons with disability all put in place an effective mechanism for enforcement of the Convention. At the federal level, an apex body, the Council for the Rights Persons with Disabilities has been constituted while provincial councils are responsible for overseeing the implementation of respective laws and ensuring compliance with the UNCRPD. At the local level, District Welfare and Rehabilitation Units are established in each district to facilitate the implementation of the Act. In Sindh, a Provincial Advisory Council was established under Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the role is being delivered by the Social Welfare Department KP whereas the provincial CRPD committee looks after the subject in Balochistan.
4. Pursuant to Section 23 of the ICT Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2020, a Medical Assessment Board (Board) was formally notified in 2021 to assess and certify disabilities within the Islamabad Capital Territory. Since its establishment, the Board has convened a total of 226 meetings and issued 19,380 disability certificates to eligible individuals. The Board has also developed and approved a standardized framework for disability assessment, aimed at determining the extent of disability based on severity. The ICT CRPD is also working towards development of a detailed registration form as an additional voluntary document to be filled by a PWD to collect specific and detailed information about PWD to facilitate linking these individuals with appropriate disability specific services as well as broader social welfare schemes. The issuance of disability certificates is categorized under four primary types: physical disability, hearing impairment, visual impairment, and psychosocial disability. Furthermore, NADRA issues special CNIC with Universal logo of disability to the holder of Disability Certificate nationwide.
5. The overall implementation, monitoring and coordination of the Convention is being done by the National Mechanism for implementation, Reporting and follow up (NMRF) housed in the Ministry of Human Rights. Recently an Executive Committee has also been notified. At the provincial level, this coordination and monitoring is done by the provincial treaty implementation cells (TICs) and concerned departments like the Council on Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Punjab, Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disability

and Sindh Persons with Disabilities Protection Authority in Sindh, the Social Welfare Department in KP, and Social Welfare & Human Rights Department in Balochistan.

Updation of 2002 Policy

6. The National Policy on Persons with Disabilities (2002) and its 2006 Action Plan laid the foundation for disability inclusion in Pakistan. In continuation, the Ministry of Human Rights in 2016 introduced the National Action Plan on Human Rights, which was further revised in 2020. It includes a dedicated component on the rights of persons with disabilities. Key measures include implementation of the ICT Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2020 (including job quotas); formulation of accessible building codes; mandatory Disabled Impact Assessments (DIA) in development projects; and provision of financial assistance to vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities.

Ratification of the Optional Protocol

7. Pakistan has not ratified the Optional Protocol to this Convention. However, the Government of Pakistan has developed a robust internal complaint redressal and remedial mechanisms to ensure access to justice for the persons with disabilities. Pakistan has developed a four-tiered model of redressal; (a) Judicial Institutions, (b) National Human Rights Commissions, (c) Ombudspersons, and (d) Special Tribunals. The superior judiciary has demonstrated increasing commitment to the protection and enforcement of the rights of persons with disabilities (PWDs), consistent with Constitutional guarantees and international human rights obligations. A noticeable shift is emerging in which courts are not only adjudicating over matters involving death penalty issues of PWDs but are also expanding jurisprudence around non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and human dignity of PWDs. For example, during the reporting period FOSPAH concluded 1,442 out of 1,600 cases filed under the Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act, 2020.

8. A prominent category of disability-related litigation pertains to the implementation of employment quotas. In the landmark case of *Malik Ubaidullah v. Government of Punjab and others* (2021), (**Ubaidullah**), the Lahore High Court addressed the method of calculating the disability employment quota under government policy. The Court held that the 3% quota must be calculated on the basis of the total sanctioned posts of an establishment, not merely the posts advertised. The Court rejected the existing practice of using advertised posts as the basis for quota enforcement, finding it to be "detrimental to the interest and welfare of the persons with disabilities" and a violation of their fundamental rights to life, livelihood, and dignity under Articles 9 and 14 of the Constitution of Pakistan.

Equality and Non-discrimination Article 5

9. Article 8 of the Constitution explicitly provides that State shall not enact any law prejudicial to the fundamental rights and any such law shall be deemed void. The Constitution also guarantees equality of all citizens under Article 25. Furthermore, all the laws enacted at both Federal and Provincial levels on rights of PWDs, comprehensively define discrimination and stipulate anti-discrimination measures to protect PWDs. For instance, the ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2020 under section 2(g) defines discrimination as any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which impairs or nullifies the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social spheres, including denial of reasonable accommodation. The Limitation Act 1908 provides exception and protection to the persons with disabilities for condonation of delay in severe cases.

10. In harmony with the constitutional guarantees the Supreme Court in *Mst. Beena v. Raja Muhammad and others*, (2020) (**Beena**) held that "pejorative words, like 'crippled' or 'disabled', seriously offend the right to be a person thereby infringing constitutional

guarantees like right to life, right to human dignity and right to non-discrimination of persons with disabilities, thereby violating Articles 9, 14 and 25 of the Constitution.”

11. Additionally, the provinces have taken their own initiatives to repeal derogatory language from its provincial laws. All provincial laws establish modern definitions of disability and mandate dignity of a PWD to be upheld. These laws explicitly prohibit discrimination and encourage government entities to avoid using derogatory language for PWDs. In Sindh, e.g., the judgments of constitutional courts prohibiting use of derogatory language for PWDs have been circulated among departments for strict compliance.

12. All legislation provides for grievance redressal mechanisms. The national helpline at MoHR also provides legal assistance to PWDs. Recently, the helpline has started utilizing whatsapp services to respond to complaints in order to make it accessible for persons with visual and hearing disabilities. Complaints are also received through the official website of DGSE.

13. In Punjab the Women Development Department has established the Punjab Women’s Helpline (1043) to provide legal assistance. This helpline is accessible to women with disabilities through voice support and referral mechanisms.

14. During the reported A total of 3,821 complaints/cases of violence against persons with disabilities were received.

15. PWDs often face several financial and non-financial difficulties and need support from the State to live with dignity. Several targeted social welfare schemes have been introduced by the Punjab. In 2024, the Punjab Social Protection Authority (PSAP) launched a dedicated program for PWDs called the Himmat Card, which offers a package of different services including provision of quarterly stipend of an amount of Rs. 10,500 to deserving PWD’s.

16. In addition, another program offering Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) is the Hamqadam Program of the Punjab Government. Through this initiative, the vulnerable population is provided cash assistance.

17. In KP, a provincial complaint mechanism for disability-based discrimination is operational. In addition, 7,000 PWDs will benefit from interest-free loans of PKR 100,000 per person.

18. In Balochistan, establishment of both physical & virtual complaint centers for PWDs are in process. Currently, a dedicated helpline is being launched for discrimination complaints. An online portal managed by the Social Welfare Department facilitates case registration and legal support.

19. See paragraph 137 for reserved quotas for PWDs.

Women with disabilities

Article 6

20. At the federal level the National Action Plan on Human Rights as well as National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights contain specific provisions for protection of women, particularly women with disabilities. Specifically, the action plans focus on building, or further strengthening existing partnerships with, and facilitate businesses to increase disability inclusion.

21. Punjab’s Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2022 mandates gender-sensitive provisions in all provincial policies. Section 4(3) specifically calls for addressing aggravated discrimination faced by women and girls with disabilities. Sindh’s Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018 recognizes the rights of women and girls with disabilities and supports their inclusion in socio-economic policies. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) includes targeted provisions for women with disabilities in its Women Empowerment Policy. The KP Labour Policy 2018 affirms mainstreaming of persons with disabilities in economic activities.

22. Punjab's Disability Act 2022 prohibits violence, abuse, and harmful practices under Section 15, including forced marriage or sterilization. It includes special protections for rural women, ensuring access to legal aid and rehabilitation. The Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018 also ensures protections against violence and exploitation. Law enforcement and social welfare personnel have been trained, and accessible complaint mechanisms have been enhanced. KP establishes protections against discrimination, child marriage, and sterilization under the KP Domestic Violence Act, 2021 and the Women Empowerment Policy. Awareness campaigns and shelter services in rural areas complement these legal protections.

23. In Sindh, healthcare facilities have been directed to improve disability-friendly reproductive health. KP has improved access to sexual and reproductive health, with particular focus on rural outreach. In Balochistan general hospital services are utilized by women with disabilities.

24. Sindh's Domestic Violence Act, 2013, applies to women with disabilities. The KP Domestic Violence against Women (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2021 includes protection for women with disabilities. The 2020 KP Human Rights Action Plan outlines accessible protection and rehabilitation services. In Balochistan, Dar-ul-Aman centers support women facing domestic violence. Reintegration is conditional on safety assessments.

25. In 2025 the Federal Government amended the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 and raised the lawful age for marriage to 18 for both males and females. The restriction on child marriage under the law is applicable on all persons irrespective of any disability or any other classification. Sindh's Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2013 also prohibits marriage under the age of eighteen. KP's Child Marriage Restraint Bill is currently under review by the Legislative Committee of the Provincial Cabinet. Balochistan's Child Protection Wing works to prevent child marriage and trafficking, including among girls with disabilities. Also see para 131 for PWD employment quotas.

26. Sindh's SCSW advocates for the inclusion of women with disabilities in policymaking through consultations and recommendations. KP ensures women with disabilities are included in policy making through entities like the National Commission on the Status of Women. Balochistan's 2023 policy dialogue emphasized involving women with disabilities in decision-making.

27. The National Commission on the Status of Women Act, 2012 under Section 13(1) provides for constitution of an Executive Committee and other committees. The Act further provides for co-opting to a Committee any person possessing special knowledge and expertise on the relevant subject. Therefore, the Act comprehensively provides for inclusion of PWDs in decision making.

28. In 2024, NCSW held a National Conference on Women with Disabilities. It led to several important action points, such as improving accessibility, building capacity, and making services more inclusive. NCSW also trained its staff to better understand disability inclusion including an orientation on the Washington Group of Questions.

29. NCSW has also worked on making complaint systems more accessible for women with disabilities. It regularly visits prisons, women's shelters, and welfare centers to monitor conditions for women, including those with disabilities.

Children with disabilities

Article 7

30. At the federal level, the role previously held by the National Commission for Child Welfare and Development (NCCWD) has now been assumed by the National Commission on the Rights of the Child (NCRC), a statutory body that comprises a chairperson and seven members. The NCRC has been given a broad and comprehensive mandate to address all matters concerning children's rights and welfare, including proposing legal and policy reforms, raising awareness, building a research database, inquiring into child rights violations and coordinating with other relevant state institutions irrespective of children's gender, ethnicity, religion or disability.

31. The NCRC uses specialized communication methods, including sign language, Braille, and visual aids to ensure that all children are able to participate fully in its consultation processes.

32. For deinstitutionalization, the Social Welfare Department in KP is working on a comprehensive plan to close large institutional care facilities over the next few years. The time frame for full de-institutionalization is expected to span from 2025 to 2030, with phased transitions starting in 2025.

Awareness raising

Article 8

33. At the federal level, significant awareness initiatives have been undertaken through the National Institute of Special Education. Between 2019 and 2025, a total of 241 training courses, workshops, and seminars were conducted, reaching over 127,000 individuals. In addition, more than 5,000 counseling and awareness sessions were held for parents of persons with disabilities, schoolteachers from both government and private sectors, and other relevant stakeholders.

34. The Ministry of Human Rights has undertaken awareness sessions engaging a wide range of stakeholders including public officials, civil society, media personnel, and religious scholars on the rights of PWD.

35. Furthermore, the Ministry has produced and disseminated a wide array of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials, including posters, leaflets, and videos focused on PWD rights shared through various platforms including PTV, Radio Pakistan, social media, educational institutions, judicial academies, and community-level workshops. These efforts were reinforced by targeted campaigns during key human rights observances such as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

36. Both federal and provincial Child Protection Authorities are also increasingly integrating disability inclusion into their mandates and working to raise awareness about the rights of children with disabilities. The Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Advisory Board addresses the rights and protection needs of children, including those with disabilities, through awareness campaigns and the 1099 helpline. In Punjab, the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (CPWB) promotes inclusion through sensitization drives ensuring community outreach and support for children with disabilities. The Sindh Child Protection Authority (SCPA) works to promote equal rights and access to services for children with disabilities, using tools like the 1098 helpline and community-based engagement. The KP Child Protection and Welfare Commission also runs district-level units and engages stakeholders in raising awareness about the rights and needs of children with disabilities. In Balochistan, the Child Protection Commission has initiated steps to increase the visibility of children with disabilities and is working with partners to promote their rights through training, media messaging, and community engagement.

37. During this period, an estimated 18,500 women participated in awareness and empowerment activities, including 1,650 women with disabilities. Year-wise, participation steadily increased: from 1,500 total beneficiaries in 2019 (150 PWDs) to over 4,500 in 2024 (400 PWDs). Alongside these efforts, gradual improvements were made in physical accessibility. Disability inclusion strategies also expanded

38. In Punjab, members of the judiciary receive regular training on various human rights issues, including the rights of persons with disabilities (PWDs), as part of their ongoing professional development. In Sindh, the Sindh Judicial Academy conducted a one-day legal capacity building session in 2024 and a two-day training for Civil Judges and Judicial Magistrates on the appreciation of evidence and legal rights of PWDs. Additionally, Rule 17 of the Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2021 mandates the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD) to develop disability awareness training for the judiciary, prosecutors, police, and other law enforcement agencies, recruit lawyers to provide free legal aid to PWDs in each region, and ensure the availability of professional sign language interpreters in each district. The KP Judicial Academy provides

regular training to its judicial officers on the rights and legal protections of PWDs. The Balochistan Judicial Academy has also taken steps to promote access to justice for PWDs by integrating dedicated training modules on the CRPD, international and national human rights law, equal legal recognition, protection of victims and witnesses with disabilities.

Accessibility

Article 9

39. Accessibility is defined in the *Design Manual and Guidelines for Accessibility* and the *Accessibility Code of Pakistan – 2006*. These documents promote a barrier-free, inclusive, and rights-based environment for persons with disabilities by setting out clear standards for accessibility in the design of public buildings, parks, housing estates, pedestrian pathways, and other public spaces.

40. Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal provides social protection to the marginalized segment of the society specially focusing on disabled persons. Please also refer to Annex-III.

41. With respect to accessibility and infrastructure, the Capital Development Authority in Islamabad has reported constructions of more than 100 ramps in public and private schools to facilitate children with disabilities. Key public spaces, including 20 schools, tertiary hospitals, parks, markets, the airport, railway stations, and the Convention Centre, have been made accessible. As per records, 40+ ramps have been constructed in six residential and commercial sectors, accessible features have been incorporated in four main city parks and institutions.

42. The Metro Bus Project, with technical assistance from the Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE), includes elevators at all entry and exit points and designated spaces for PWDs in each bus. Provincial mass transit systems also provide priority seating and fare waivers for PWDs. The ICT Council on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ICT CRPD) has initiated the development of tools to evaluate the accessibility of four hospitals in Islamabad.

43. In Punjab, the Punjab Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act (Section 6(1)) mandates accessibility in hospitals, public and private transport, roads, and all other public places. The law requires existing infrastructure to be retrofitted and new buildings and vehicles to comply with accessibility standards. During the 2019–2025 period, sign language interpretation, audio descriptions, and captioning were introduced in both public and private media broadcasts, particularly in news and children's programming. Two Braille Printing Press, one in Lahore and other in Bahawalpur are working to provide textbooks to the students in accessible format.

44. In Sindh, the Karachi Building and Town Planning Regulations, 2002 require all public-use buildings to include ramps, handrails, accessible toilets, Braille signage, and designated parking. Regulations prescribe accessibility requirements for commercial, educational, religious, healthcare, recreational, and governmental facilities. Public and private entities are statutorily required to implement universal design standards to ensure dignified and independent mobility.

45. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, all public institutions have been equipped with ramps, and special education schools are undergoing renovation to improve accessibility. Dedicated transport services, including mini-buses, have been provided for students with disabilities. A new provincial bill mandates the creation of barrier-free environments. KP for FY 2024/25 has also increased its education and social welfare budgets to support PWDs. An allocation of Rs 362.7 billion was made to enhance inclusive education programs, Rs 8.1 billion was allocated for social welfare initiatives benefiting PWDs, and Rs 4.4 billion was reserved for higher education development.

46. The Social Welfare and Special Education Department of Balochistan allocates an annual budget of PKR 3 million for the procurement and distribution of assistive devices.

Right to life

Article 10

47. Pakistan has always taken a measured approach to the death penalty, informed by historical events and evolving legal and social considerations.

48. Pakistan has reviewed the existing laws containing the death penalty specifically in the PPC and other special laws, to determine if the scope of death penalty can be reduced. Accordingly, the number of offences for which death penalty may be imposed was reduced. In addition, judicial safeguards are in place for restricting the scope of death penalty. The Safia Bano Case prohibits the death penalty for accused with psycho-social disabilities.

49. Access to healthcare services for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Pakistan is guided by the principle of non-discrimination and inclusion, as enshrined in national policies and consistent with obligations under the CRPD.

50. Assistive devices are being provided to PWDs through government-supported including mobility aids, hearing devices, and visual aids through designated rehabilitation centers and public health units. While most hospitals across the country are at least partially accessible, work is ongoing to further remove physical barriers to access.

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies

Article 11

51. The National Disaster Response Plan was updated post 2022 floods to include a more explicit focus on vulnerable populations including PWDs.

52. Approximately two million people with disabilities were affected by floods as per official estimates. The Federal Government announced Rs 70 billion for flood relief assistance. The government carried out the distribution of nearly 6 lac tents, 4 lac tarpaulins, 3.5 million mosquito nets, and nearly 18 lac food packs. Post-2022 floods, NDMA and its partners developed more inclusive guidelines on camp accessibility and relief distribution, and appointed disability focal points.

53. To develop systematic and inclusive social protection services for PWDs, including during emergency and disaster situations, the Government of Pakistan through institutions such as the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) undertook targeted initiatives. During the reporting period (2019–2025), over PKR 270 million was allocated to projects focused specifically on the rehabilitation, inclusion, and empowerment of PWDs.

54. Provinces in Pakistan have also taken several initiatives to ensure that PWDs are actively considered in emergency and disaster response planning and implementation. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has prioritized disability inclusion in emergency response mechanisms. Between 2019 and 2025, the PDMA conducted targeted training sessions for emergency service providers and disaster management personnel, focusing on accessible rescue operations, inclusive evacuation procedures, and relief services tailored to the needs of PWDs, such as addressing mobility and communication barriers. PWDs have also been included in coordination mechanisms such as the Emergency Relief Cell and district disaster management committees. These efforts supported outreach to approximately 37,000 individuals with disabilities to mitigate the effects of disasters and strengthen future preparedness.

55. In Balochistan, the Balochistan Climate Change Policy (BCCP) 2024 explicitly addresses the needs of persons with disabilities in the context of climate-induced emergencies. The policy outlines measures such as disability-inclusive planning for infrastructure and disaster risk reduction; accessible information and early warning systems, including for those with sensory impairments; and the development of accessible infrastructure for safe evacuation and transportation during extreme weather events. It also emphasizes access to healthcare during climate-related disasters, and the inclusion of PWDs in training, employment, and decision-making.

56. In 2024 NDMA launched the E-toolkit on Disability Inclusive DRR for government officials. Some rescue services like Rescue 1122 in Punjab and KP have included modules on communicating with people with hearing or visual impairments, and safe evacuation of persons with mobility challenges.

Equal recognition before the law

Article 12

57. The existing legal framework in Pakistan, grounded in Shariah principles, does not permit any form of discrimination in inheritance on the basis of disability. The distribution of a deceased individual's estate is governed by Islamic law, which ensures equal entitlement based on defined shares, without regard to physical or mental ability.

58. To reinforce this principle of non-discrimination, certain provinces have introduced statutory safeguards. *The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mental Health Act, 2017* and the *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rights, Rehabilitation, Accessibility & Empowerment of People with Disabilities Act, 2018* explicitly prohibit discrimination in inheritance matters on the basis of a person's mental capacity or capability.

59. The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has also issued a series of progressive regulations mandating banks to adopt strategic and accountable measures to promote the financial inclusion of PWDs as customers and employees. This includes the establishment of accessible infrastructure.

60. The legal framework in Pakistan facilitates persons with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities to exercise their legal rights through a liberal approach using Special & General Power of Attorney. The courts in Pakistan have also recognized and enforced the rights of PWDs to exercise legal capacity through progressive jurisprudence. In *Zaffar Afzal & Others v. Ashiq Hussain* (Supreme Court, 2023), the Court held that disabilities such as physical communication disabilities, including being deaf and non-verbal, cannot be equated with psycho-social disabilities. The Supreme Court set aside a property mutation for lack of such safeguards, reinforcing the principle that legal capacity must be respected but also protected from exploitation.

61. Additionally, in *Mst. Sana Khursheed v. Government of Punjab* (PLD 2022 Lahore 346), the Lahore High Court affirmed the full legal capacity of PWDs in all areas of life, including the right to own and inherit property, enter contracts, and access justice. The judgment emphasized that physical disability does not equate to legal incapacity and held that persons with disabilities must be presumed competent unless proven otherwise. Drawing on constitutional guarantees and Pakistan's obligations under the UNCRPD, the Court declared that denial of access to public spaces, education, healthcare, and justice constitutes a violation of Articles 9, 14, and 25 of the Constitution. The Court directed the implementation of disability rights laws and unhindered access to justice.

62. Courts have also addressed parental rights of persons with disabilities, particularly in family law and custody matters. In *Beena*, 2020 the Supreme Court of Pakistan rejected the notion that a mother's physical disability could be used to deny her custody of her child.

Access to justice

Article 13

63. Federal and provincial courts, adjudicatory entities, and police stations have increasingly incorporated accessibility features for persons with disabilities. In Islamabad Online Case Digitalization of court proceedings has been introduced through video link, reducing the need for physical appearances. In Sindh, special courts for persons with disabilities were established in every district in 2023 to adjudicate offenses under Section 33(1) of the *Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018*, specifically to enhance access to justice for persons with disabilities. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), court infrastructure has been developed to include wheelchair access, designated parking,

accessible washrooms, ramps, and other necessary facilities to ensure physical access for persons with disabilities. Legal aid services and accommodations such as sign language interpreters, audio descriptions, Easy Read formats, and personal assistance are being prioritized.

64. In Sindh, Rule 17 of the *Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2021* provides that the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD), through the Sindh Persons with Disabilities Protection Authority (SPDPA), must develop comprehensive disability awareness training and recruit lawyers in each region to provide free legal aid to persons with disabilities. KP has introduced easy-read literature, braille, and accessible digital formats in courts.

65. In Islamabad, all the Sessions Courts and District Courts are recording evidence and hearing cases through video link, as well as recording evidence through video link in E-Court. In KP, automation of judicial procedures – including web portals, SMS alerts, online access to court documents, and virtual proceedings – has improved accessibility for persons with disabilities.

66. In Punjab the members of the judiciary receive regular training on multiple issues involving human rights including the rights of PWDs. Furthermore, police officials are imparted training at different stages of their jobs i.e. basic induction and capacity building trainings.

67. Government of Sindh has been paying particular attention to training of judiciary and law enforcement agencies on protection of rights of PWDs. In December 2024, the Sindh Judicial Academy trained district judiciary judges on legal capacity, appreciation of evidence from persons with disabilities, their legal rights, and handling trauma victims in court. Additionally, training on the rights of persons with disabilities were provided to Law Enforcement Agencies. During the reporting period, twenty workshops on issues concerning persons with disabilities were conducted.

68. Similarly, in KP and Balochistan, efforts have been made to emphasize promotion and protection of rights of persons with disability by introducing training modules on the Convention, international law and application of human rights within the criminal justice system.

Liberty and security of a person

Article 14

69. The Constitution of Pakistan 1973 under Article 9 specifically addresses the liberty and security of a person, stating that no one shall be deprived of life or liberty except in accordance with the law. Disability rights laws in all provinces provide a legal framework safeguarding the liberty for the people with disabilities including psychosocial and intellectual disabilities. For instance, the Punjab Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act 2022 under section 3(2) specifically provides safeguards concerning personal liberty of persons with any disability. The Act vide section 10(2) states that where the immediate family of a person with a disability is unable to cater for such a person, arrangements shall be made to place such person at a setup or an institution suitable for his safe living. Moreover, according to section 10(3) of the Act, the Government shall take measures necessary to support the parents or primary caregivers of persons with disabilities, including the provision of short-term care through the setting up of respite care centers. In this regard, several social welfare schemes have been introduced by the Provincial Governments to support these PWDs.

70. Following the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the subject of health was devolved, leading to provincial laws being passed to manage mental health. The Mental Health Ordinance, 2001 continues to operate at the federal level. Under the provincial laws, Mental Health Authorities have been established to register and monitor psychiatric facilities, protect the rights of persons with mental illness, advise the government on mental health matters, set standards for care, prohibit non-consensual treatment including forced medication and hospitalization without consent, train mental health professionals, maintain records of facilities and practitioners.

71. The Sindh government in 2024 launched the first-ever Sindh Mental Health Policy 2023–2030. The policy outlines a comprehensive plan to establish a sustainable and effective system to improve mental health services across the province. Moreover, KP established first Institute of Mental Health Sciences in November 2023. The establishment of the institute has incurred a total cost of Rs. 2.52 billion, making it the first of its kind and unique in the province. In 2025 the Government of Balochistan approved the construction of a center for persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities at the Directorate General of Social Welfare.

72. The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination with the support of WHO has launched a National Mental Health App ‘Hamraaz’ along with an integrated helpline (1166) in April 2023 to provide mental health assistance and counselling services to the people in need. The Hamraaz App in the last two years has provided mental health assistance and counselling services to over 240,000 psychiatric patients.

73. The issues pertaining to involuntary institutionalization of PWDs have also been addressed in courts for example in *Khalid Hussain v. Federation* (2022), the Islamabad High Court recognised the autonomy of a person with psychosocial disability and limited the grounds for involuntary institutionalization.

Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

Article 15

74. Since the enactment of the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2022, inflicting torture on any person in custody – regardless of disability status – is strictly prohibited.

75. Under the Pakistan Prison Rules, 1978 and the Criminal Procedure Code, 1898 (CrPC), procedures are in place to ensure that prisoners with psychosocial disabilities are not kept in ordinary detention facilities longer than necessary and are transferred to appropriate mental health institutions. Such transfers are made under Section 464 CrPC that deals with accused persons whose mental state is in doubt. The Superintendent of Prison must place such individuals under medical observation and report findings to the Inspector General of Prisons, who then obtains Government approval for transfer in accordance with Rules 444–445. In urgent cases, transfers can proceed prior to formal approval under Rules 447–449. The Board of Visitors, established under provincial Mental Health Acts and Mental Health Ordinance 2001, is mandated to inspect records and review the condition of such detainees at least every six months.

76. Currently there are 131 prisoners with disabilities in Punjab prisons, 115 PWDs in Sindh Prisons and 5 in Balochistan. They are being provided adequate facilities during their incarceration period.

77. In Sindh, the Sindh Prisons & Corrections Service Act, 2019, along with the Sindh Prisons & Corrections Service Rules, 2019, provide the framework for prison management and explicitly emphasize humane treatment and basic rights of all inmates, including persons with disabilities. Efforts have been initiated to ensure accessibility within correctional facilities, such as the construction of ramps and accessible infrastructure. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Prisons Rules, 2018 similarly include provisions to safeguard the dignity and welfare of inmates, with attention to the needs of vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities. Accessibility improvements have been introduced, such as ramps and other mobility-support features within prison premises.

78. At both the federal and provincial levels, helplines and complaint mechanisms are in place to enable confidential and safe reporting of abuse, including torture.

Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse

Article 16

79. At Federal level, the ICT Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2020 provides protection against abusive, violent, intolerant and discriminatory behaviour specifically under Section 8 and calls for the government to take all possible steps to protect PWDs from these practices at the hands of any person, institution and authority. Furthermore, the Act also places responsibility on the Council for Rights of Persons with Disabilities or law enforcement agencies to take necessary action to curb such acts. Moreover, the independent commissions including NCHR, NCSW and NCRC have been given powers to investigate cases of violence and abuse. The Ministry of Human Rights operates a Family Protection and Rehabilitation Centre while provincial Dar ul Amans provide protection to women victims of gender-based violence including women with disabilities.

80. In Punjab, the Punjab Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2022 provides protection against all forms of violence. Section 7 prohibits abusive behaviour by any person or institution, while Section 5(1) mandates special safeguards for women, children, transgender, and elderly persons with disabilities. In Sindh, five divisional Facilitation Desks have been reactivated for minority groups, and separate Complaint Cells have been established by the Police to address domestic violence. The Minorities Affairs Department provides free legal support through 8 lawyers and 9 field assistants. Awareness campaigns have been carried out across major cities. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, legal frameworks are being strengthened to ensure protection of vulnerable groups including women and children with disabilities. In Balochistan, Interfaith Harmony Committees at provincial, divisional, and district levels include minority and religious representatives, and the Provincial Minorities Commission addresses violence and rights violations, including against persons with disabilities.

81. Courts and justice sector actors have increasingly recognized the importance of accommodating women and girls with disabilities especially victims of gender-based violence. In some instances, courts have been shifted to the ground floor of buildings to facilitate wheelchair users. GBV courts and social service providers have developed partnerships with Special Education and Social Welfare Departments to ensure interpreters or other forms of assistance are available when required.

Protecting the integrity of the person

Article 17

82. At the national level, the Government has introduced the National Service Delivery Standards and Guidelines for High-Quality Safe Uterine Evacuation/Post-Abortion Care (2018), which establish clinical protocols grounded in informed consent and quality care. These guidelines are reinforced by Pakistan's Universal Health Coverage (UHC) benefit packages, the Guidelines on Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality, and the Intrapartum and Postnatal Care Guidelines, all of which highlight patient-centered, non-discriminatory care as a standard. Additionally, Manual Vacuum Aspiration (MVA) has been included in the Essential Package of Health Services to ensure safe uterine evacuation practices.

83. The MoNHSRC held the "All Pakistan Convention on Awareness of Women on Family Planning", in 2023. This event aims to enhance women's knowledge about family planning, reproductive health, maternal and child health (MCH), and voluntary birth spacing, with a particular focus on rural and peri-urban women.

84. The Sindh Reproductive Healthcare Rights Act, 2019, recognizes the reproductive rights of all individuals. The Punjab Reproductive Health Rights and Family Planning Bill, 2021, under review, reflects similar commitments. In Punjab, the Integrated Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health & Nutrition (IRMNCH) Program and 2015 Service Delivery Standards ensure quality care through public facilities, with an emphasis on accessibility for vulnerable women. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Health Care Commission regulates private facilities, and reproductive health is provided across 1,504 centers, supported by a strong workforce including over 16,000 Lady Health Workers (LHWs).

Similarly, Balochistan's Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) Program focuses on skilled care provision and community midwifery training to reduce maternal mortality.

85. Efforts to ensure the informed participation of women with disabilities include media broadcasts, social media messaging, and community-level education, particularly targeting rural and underserved populations. The government also uses District Health Information Systems (DHIS) to monitor service delivery, including in reproductive health. Family planning indicators show a steady increase in service uptake.

86. Misoprostol and MVA are widely available with trained providers, contributing to safer maternal outcomes. While targeted laws addressing forced reproductive procedures among women with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities are still needed, existing reproductive health policies and service protocols emphasize consent-based, rights-respecting care.

87. Provincial disability laws in Pakistan prohibit non-consensual medical procedures, research, or interventions without the informed consent of the person, except in emergency situations. They also safeguard persons with disabilities from forced institutionalization and uphold their right to make independent decisions concerning their health and well-being.

Liberty of movement and nationality

Article 18

88. Measures to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in civil registration, certification, and nationality procedures in Pakistan remain largely disability-neutral. Disability has never served as a barrier to birth registration, and no legal provision restricts or delays the issuance of a birth registration certificate on account of a child's disability status. In fact, every child born in Pakistan is required to be registered, regardless of ability.

89. In KP, targeted measures such as mobile registration vehicles in collaboration with NGOs and regular awareness campaigns have been undertaken to improve registration rates, particularly in rural and remote areas.

90. Some provinces include an optional field for noting disability in birth registration forms, the formal issuance of a Disability Certificate requires a medical assessment by a designated medical board, along with supporting documentation such as a birth certificate or a NADRA-issued identity card.

91. Pakistan's naturalization laws are also disability-neutral. The legal framework does not provide any basis for denying nationality or naturalization on the grounds of disability.

92. The 2023 census desegregates data on the basis of nationalities. Currently there are 1.42 million Afghan Refugees in Pakistan bearing Proof of Registration Cards, there are 0.85 Million Afghan Citizen Ship Card holders, and 1.5 Million Unregistered Afghans and 0.29 Million overstaying cases. Pakistan has received 6978 applications for asylum from 2011 till 2022. Currently, there are a total of 1.539 million refugees living in Pakistan.

93. With regard to undocumented Afghans with disabilities, there have been no reported instances of arbitrary deportation on the grounds of disability. The Government remains committed to non-discrimination in its immigration practices.

94. Pakistan is not a signatory to Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and its protocol but deals with Afghan refugees' issue on humanitarian basis with respect for the Principle of Non-Refoulement. For their repatriation, the Government of Pakistan, Afghanistan and UNHCR signed a Tripartite Agreement in 2003, which embodies the principles of gradualism and voluntariness in repatriation.

95. Policies regarding Afghan Refugees have also been framed under International Agreements mainly the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), a quadripartite initiative of Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan in addition to the UNHCR.

96. Due to increased demand, the number of PCM centers to facilitate the Afghan refugees in case of their lost cards or any modifications in Proof of Registration (PoR) cards has been increased to 11 from four. The PCM centers also cater for verification of Unregistered Members of Registered Families (UMRF) cases and the Document Renewal and Information Verification Exercise (DRIVE) caseload processing. Issuance of birth certificates to the children of Afghan Refugees has been resumed by NADRA. Moreover, the validation process for unregistered members of registered Afghan refugee families in Pakistan was ongoing throughout 2021–2024, which ended on March 31, 2025 in all PCM centers. Till date about 42,734 UMRF have been validated.

97. The Government of Pakistan in close collaboration with UNHCR, is providing facilitation and assistance to Afghan refugees to ensure their dignified and safe return and to find durable solutions for Afghans living in Pakistan through voluntary repatriation.

Living independently and being included in the community

Article 19

98. Pakistan has a strong culture of community living, and PWDs typically reside within families and communities rather than in isolated institutions. The government supports independent living by facilitating access to assistive devices and mobility aids, enabling greater interaction and movement within communities.

99. At Federal level, under the Directorate General of Special Education, a National Mobility & Independence Training Centre (NM&ITC), Islamabad trains visually impaired persons in the fields of Orientation and Mobility. It provides free training courses to students, teachers, doctors, parents, children, NGO workers etc. This centre offers one-month training courses in six (06). Rehabilitation Centre for Children with Developmental Disorders is imparting Education, Pre-Vocational skills and providing Medical Rehabilitative Services to more than 204 Intellectually Challenged Children residing in Federal Capital Territory and its suburb areas.

100. The Ministry of Housing and Works in its National Housing Policy, 2025 laid special emphasis on needs of vulnerable groups including persons with disabilities. The policy lists persons with disabilities, female-head households, transgender, and internally displaced persons due to natural and man-made disasters among vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in need of immediate and special treatment in terms of housing access. The policy guidelines stipulate that marginalized and disadvantaged groups of people should be given priority for easy access to housing finance.

Personal mobility

Article 20

101. Mobility training for persons with disabilities is being provided across various provinces through targeted programs. The Directorate General of Special Education has conducted 91 long- and short-term trainings, seminars, and awareness programs during the reporting period, benefiting 5,331 persons with disabilities. The National Mobility & Independence Training Centre provided training to PWDs. In KP, training sessions include the use of assistive technologies to promote safe and independent mobility. These sessions are made available to both individuals with disabilities and DPO representatives. Furthermore, 7913 assistive devices are approved for procurement to facilitate mobility of PWDs in KP.

102. Additionally, the Government is providing duty-free cars, 50% concession in Air and Rail fare, free education in Government Institution and free medical treatment in Government hospitals for all Persons with Disabilities.

Freedom of expression and opinion and access to information

Article 21

103. Mobility aids and assistive devices are made available through multiple government channels. Centres under the Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE) provide white canes, crutches, spectacles, wheelchairs, hearing aids, and other assistive technologies in collaboration with Parent Teacher Associations and various welfare agencies. The National Special Education Centre under DGSE also manufactures and supplies artificial limbs to physically impaired students.

Respect for privacy

Article 22

104. The Right to Information Act, 2017 expressly bars public bodies, including councils and advisory boards established under provincial laws for the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, from publicly disclosing any data that pertains to the personal privacy of individuals or documents submitted to such bodies.

105. Furthermore, in 2025 NADRA revised its regulations to introduce significant upgrades to Teslin identity card. These enhanced cards now feature key Smart Card security elements, including bilingual information in Urdu and English, easing passport applications. QR codes replace thumb impressions, offering modernized security without additional fees. For PWDs, a major update is the issuance of special identity cards with lifetime validity.

Respect for home and family

Article 23

106. Federal and provincial laws in Pakistan uphold the right of PWDs to marry and form a family without discrimination. There are no legal provisions that restrict or differentiate against individuals on the basis of disability with regard to marriage or family life. These rights are protected and promoted under the broader human rights framework applicable in the country.

107. Please see paragraphs 10 and 62 regarding the Beena judgment of the Supreme Court.

108. Furthermore, all health services related to maternity, motherhood, and childhood are provided without discrimination and are equally accessible to all individuals, regardless of disability status.

Education

Article 24

109. At the federal level, a Pilot Project for Inclusive Education (2018–2021) with a total cost of Rs. 30.00 million, enrolled 2,000 children with disabilities in public and private schools after outreach to 30 rural Union Councils. The National Institute of Special Education trained over 1,300 teachers, while 3,699 students received education in sign language and 1,390 visually impaired students were provided free education, transportation, and boarding. Additionally, a *Feasibility Study for a Centre for Persons with Multiple Disabilities* was approved with a cost of Rs. 15.00 million, to assess the establishment of a specialized facility offering early intervention, diagnostics, education, rehabilitation, vocational training, and boarding for children aged 0–16 with multiple disabilities.

110. The National Institute of Special Education at Ministry of Education carried out 332 capacity building training, workshops and seminars which benefitted 132477 persons.

111. The National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) has actively contributed to enhancing inclusive education by conducting dedicated consultations on free and compulsory education. During these consultations, the Commission engaged with the

special education departments of each province, requesting them to identify key challenges in delivering quality education to children with disabilities.

112. The NCRC is also working closely with provincial education and special education departments to promote the integration of special education services within the mainstream education framework.

113. In terms of accessible education delivery, 3,699 students received instruction in sign language at the National Special Education Centre for Hearing Impaired Children, while 1,390 visually impaired students received tailored education at the National Special Education Centre for Visually Impaired Children.

114. The Ministries of Human Rights and of Federal Education and Professional Training have launched the National Single Curricula including material related to civic education and human rights.

115. In the Punjab, there are 28 functional boarding schools for visually impaired children, 14 dedicated institutions for training and education of children with psychological challenges, 49 institutes imparting education to children with hearing disabilities and 5 institutes for physically disabled students. Furthermore, 588 students with disabilities have been mainstreamed in general education schools in 2025. Moreover, a total of 1,484 students with disabilities in Punjab are receiving vocational and technical education through TEVTA training centres.

116. In Sindh, the Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018 and the Sindh Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013 mandate inclusive education. The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD) has secured commitments from around 60 private and 15 welfare schools to admit students with disabilities from the 2025–26 academic year. Additionally, the School Education Department plans to begin inclusive education in 300 model schools, and a joint policy on inclusive education has been developed. Directives have been issued to all private schools to reserve 5% of seats and offer a 50% fee concession to students with disabilities. A master training program is underway, with 76 private school teachers selected as Master Trainers in inclusive education methods.

117. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has 52 special education institutes catering to 3,600 special students, ensuring access to both education and vocational training. To encourage enrolment, the government has launched a stipend program, with the PCRDP providing regular stipends of PKR 4,000 per student. Sign language training was conducted for 46 participants, and the special quota for persons with disabilities in education institutions has been enhanced to 6%, while 2% is reserved for transgender persons. STEVTA is also enhancing capacity in vocational education for persons with disabilities.

118. The Government of Balochistan has recently allocated three new Special Education Complexes in its public sector development projects for 2025–2026 to be established at Loralai, Pishin and Naseerabad. These are in addition to the three complexes already functional in the province.

119. In Balochistan, 21% of persons with disabilities (PWDs) are enrolled in inclusive education settings. Notable progress has been made for learners aged 5 to 15, with 50 students transitioning to mainstream schools. Additionally, 180 special students have shifted from traditional school settings to vocational training centres. At the higher education level, 30 students advanced to universities. Also see paragraph 144 regarding the KUMAK Policy.

120. Between 2019 and 2025 in Balochistan, 156 students with disabilities successfully enrolled in tertiary education across the province. Over 1,900 students with hearing impairments accessed formal education through sign language, while 270 students with visual impairments benefited from materials in accessible formats. Five special education schools were equipped with internet connectivity, and 16 schools received computers to support inclusive digital learning. Vocational training was also expanded, with 1,040 individuals gaining access to skill-based programs that enhance independence and employability.

121. In recent years, higher education in Pakistan has taken concrete steps toward the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs), guided by the Higher Education Commission (HEC)'s "Policy for Students with Disabilities at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Pakistan, 2021." This policy seeks to promote equal access, reasonable accommodation, and a supportive learning environment for students with disabilities in line with national and international commitments. According to data collected by HEC's Higher Education Data Repository in 2021, a total of 2,486 students with disabilities were enrolled in HEIs across Pakistan.

122. The policy mandates the creation of institutional mechanisms such as Accessibility Committees and Disability Coordinators in all HEIs. The policy outlines incentives for students with disabilities, including dedicated quotas, financial aid, and age relaxation in admissions.

123. Between 2019 and 2025, a total of 76 teachers have been trained to better support inclusive education practices.

Health

Article 25

124. Government of the Punjab has undertaken a range of initiatives to support persons with disabilities (PWDs) through multiple departments. The Social Welfare & Bait-ul-Maal Department operates "Nasheman" homes in Lahore, Bahawalpur, and Faisalabad, providing professional care, training, and rehabilitation. The Health & Population Department delivers free medical treatment to PWDs and their families through all 293 Rural Health Centers and medical social services projects operating in all DHQ and THQ hospitals across Punjab. District Rehabilitation & Training Committees (DRTCs) provide free assistive devices such as artificial limbs, wheelchairs, and hearing aids. Additionally, e-Khidmat Markaz offers services like the Khidmat Card to facilitate access for PWDs.

125. Protocols are in place for early intervention, assessment, and medical treatment of disabilities. These include prevention efforts through educational curricula in health and child development to raise awareness among families. Early detection through accessible diagnostic systems is emphasized to ensure timely intervention. Genetic counselling is recognized as essential, requiring collaboration among departments like Health, Women Development, Social Welfare, and Special Education to inform the public about hereditary disabilities. Family guidance programs are also promoted to empower parents and children.

126. In Sindh, special health teams have been deployed by the Health Department to DEPDC centers across the province to support Medical Assessment Boards in providing healthcare services to persons with disabilities. In KP, the focus on the health of persons with disabilities is reinforced through the KP Social Protection Policy 2022.

127. At the federal level, the Mental Health Ordinance 2001 establishes the principle of informed consent for all medical treatment. This right is further affirmed across all provincial disability laws, which explicitly require that no medical procedure be undertaken without the informed consent of the person with disability.

Habilitation and rehabilitation

Article 26

128. Pakistan has undertaken several inclusive measures to ensure that persons with disabilities (PWDs) are meaningfully consulted in the design and implementation of rehabilitation and habilitation services. During the development of the National Strategic Action Plan on Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology (2021–2026), PWDs, including service users and caregivers, were actively at each stage engaged through regional and national consultations.

129. In addition, DPOs and individuals with disabilities were involved in shaping community-based inclusive development (CBID) programs piloted in select districts. Their

feedback played a central role in refining service delivery models, identifying capacity-building priorities, and improving community outreach strategies. Similarly, legislative and policy processes have incorporated the voices of PWDs through public hearings, technical working groups, and formal platforms such as the National Forum of Women with Disabilities and the National Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons. These consultations informed disability-specific laws and provincial strategies, including the Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act.

130. Further, DPOs contributed to the monitoring and evaluation of rehabilitation and health services by participating in performance reviews and independent monitoring efforts. Their insights supported the development of more responsive and effective feedback mechanisms. To enhance user engagement, Pakistan also piloted digital platforms that enable PWDs to report service gaps and share real-time feedback on assistive technologies and rehabilitation services.

131. Importantly, PWDs have been represented in Pakistan's official delegations to international forums, such as the Global Disability Summits of 2022 and 2025. Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate Pakistan's commitment to participatory, rights-based policymaking that connects habilitation and rehabilitation services to the broader objective of enabling independent living for all.

132. The Government of Sindh, through the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD), provides early intervention and rehabilitation services to children identified through medical assessment boards. These services are delivered via DEPDP rehabilitation units across the province. Furthermore, an MoU has been signed with Ziauddin University for the deployment of rehabilitation professionals in DEPDP centers located in Karachi.

133. PDMA distributed 60 wheelchairs to 12 districts during the floods of 2022 to PWDs. Besides, its humanitarian NGO partners also distribute assistive devices to the PWDs. The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) KP has also ensured the inclusion of persons with disabilities in disaster response efforts from 2019–2025, with provisions for accessible shelters, transportation, and relief services. Moreover, the Social Welfare Department worked in coordination with NGOs and relevant authorities to ensure that PWDs were not left vulnerable during emergencies.

134. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Government allocated PKR 20 million in 2025–26 for the provision of assistive devices, aiming to improve the accessibility and independence of persons with disabilities. Moreover, from 2019 to 2025, more than 2,000 persons with disabilities benefitted from various training and educational initiatives funded or supported by the KP Welfare Department.

135. In Balochistan, the Government promotes community engagement in disability-inclusive programming through initiatives such as the Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme. This program ensures the participation of persons with disabilities in socio-economic planning and decision-making. Civil society organizations actively engage with provincial leadership to advocate for inclusive development.

136. Between 2019 and 2024, Balochistan consistently allocated budgetary support for rehabilitation services. In 2019–20, the initial allocation stood at PKR 1,234.2 million, which increased to PKR 1,428.2 million in 2020–21, PKR 1,464.2 million in 2020–21, PKR 1,255.0 million in 2022–23, and PKR 1,268.4 million in 2023–24. In 2024, the Social Welfare and Special Education Department distributed 2,000 assistive devices.

Work and employment

Article 27

137. As part of a nationwide effort to promote the inclusion of PWDs in the labour force, all provinces in Pakistan have introduced mandatory job quotas for PWDs, ranging up to 5%. These initiatives stem from initial directions issued by the Supreme Court of Pakistan

in Constitution Petitions No. 64/2013 and 77/2014, which mandated a 2% job quota in government offices. Subsequently, provinces such as Sindh and Balochistan have taken further steps by raising the quota to 5%, demonstrating a strong commitment to inclusive employment policies. Detail of implementation of quota at both federal and provincial levels is as below:

<i>Government</i>	<i>PWDs Job Quota</i>	<i>Working Strength of Persons with Disabilities (Total)</i>
Federal	2%	4 196
Punjab	3%	550
Sindh	5%	1 134
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	2%	1 157
Balochistan	5%	10

Source: Federal and Provincial Establishment and S&GAD.

138. In KP, the Social Welfare Department operates two vocational training centers for persons with disabilities in Mardan and Peshawar. To date, 1,200 students have graduated from these centers with certified vocational skills, enabling them to pursue livelihoods. Notably, in several cases during the reporting period the Peshawar High Court upheld the right to employment of PWDs under the disability quota.

139. To further expand educational and employment opportunities, the KP government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Peshawar University for the establishment of a Braille Academy to focus on teaching practical skills such as computer literacy, Braille reading and writing, and the use of assistive technologies.

140. In addition to these public initiatives, the Trust for Voluntary Organizations (TVO) has played a significant role in supporting entrepreneurship and livelihood training for PWDs through donor-supported, community-level projects. Out of the 31 projects funded by TVO that directly benefited over 43,000 PWDs, several focused on vocational and entrepreneurial training.

141. Moreover, there is a Graduation and Income Generation Scheme for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) to achieve self-sustenance through microenterprises supported by interest-free loans provided by Punjab Social Protection Authority (PSPA). This program is being implemented in collaboration with Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC). PSIC acts as the fund manager for this program and Akhuwat implements the scheme as the service provider. It is a revolving fund and financial outlay is Rs. 270 million till December 2024. The total number of unique beneficiaries is 23,486 and total number of loans disbursed till February 2025 is 38,039.

142. In Sindh, the Directorate General of Labour has appointed several persons with disabilities (PWDs) to government posts, including Junior Clerks, Labour Inspector, and Naib Qasid. The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD) has facilitated employment for more than 88 PWDs across private sector organizations. To support this, universities, registered NGOs, and private employers have been actively encouraged to implement the 5% job quota and promote inclusive work environments.

143. Further, the Investment Department's PIU CLICK-SID project has appointed women with disabilities in key roles.

144. Under the Balochistan PWD Support Fund (KUMAK) Policy 2025, persons with disabilities (PWDs) are eligible for interest-free microfinance loans of up to PKR 500,000 to support their entrepreneurial ventures. Technical training opportunities are being provided to help PWDs develop skills for self-sufficiency. For those unable to work or earn a livelihood, financial assistance is extended through their disability identification cards.

Adequate standard of living and social life

Article 28

145. Between financial years 2019 to 2025, a total budget of PKR 1,082.051 million was allocated by Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) specifically for PWDs across Pakistan, including Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Out of this allocation, PKR 382 million was distributed as direct financial assistance to 26,507 PWDs. In terms of mobility support, 3,792 standard and customized wheelchairs were distributed, while artificial limbs were provided to 994 beneficiaries at a cost of PKR 128 million. Additionally, PKR 126 million was allocated for the provision of hearing aids to 2,816 individuals with hearing impairments. These services were provided without discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, religion, or sex.

146. As part of its livelihood program, PPAF reserved 3.25% of assets and 1% of training opportunities for persons with disabilities. Since inception, PPAF has rehabilitated 39,481 individuals with various disabilities through assistive devices, caregiver support, skills development, and entrepreneurial training. In Balochistan alone, 500 PWDs were rehabilitated, and awareness seminars on psychosocial disabilities were conducted in partnership with the Chal Foundation. So far, 851 beneficiaries with disabilities have been enrolled as asset beneficiaries.

147. Additionally, through its partnership with the Family Educational Services Foundation (FESF), PPAF supported over 1,400 individuals at Deaf Reach Schools with scholarships and skills training, while facilitating employment for more than 450 newly-impacted individuals. FESF also led the effort to introduce 6,000 new words in sign language.

148. Since its inception, the Trust for Voluntary Organisations (TVO) has funded 31 projects focused on the inclusion and support of PWDs, disbursing a total of PKR 48.07 million and directly benefiting over 43,000 PWDs nationwide. These interventions focus on enhancing economic self-reliance by improving access to education, vocational training, and livelihood opportunities, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

Participation in public and political life

Article 29

149. To promote the full participation of PWDs in national and local elections, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) formulated and launched the Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Framework (GMSIF) 2024–2028, a five-year policy aimed at revising electoral laws, policies, and procedures. This framework focuses on enhancing voter registration and participation among vulnerable groups, including PWDs.

150. To ensure accessibility, the ECP has developed and disseminated Braille and 3D voter education materials specifically designed to assist voters with visual impairments. Moreover, recognizing the importance of community engagement and expert input, the ECP established the Gender and Disability Electoral Working Group (GDEWG). This forum brings together civil society organizations working on the political rights of PWDs, and other vulnerable communities to identify barriers and propose strategies for inclusive electoral participation.

151. In terms of capacity building, over 1.4 million electoral officials and security personnel received gender-sensitive training, which includes modules on the needs and rights of PWDs and practical guidance on facilitating their participation on polling day. As part of its inclusive employment practices, the ECP currently employs 51 persons with disabilities across its Secretariat and field offices.

152. For the General Elections 2024, the ECP undertook measures to improve the accessibility of polling stations. More than 70% of polling stations across Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan were physically accessible, with ramps, designated

parking, and other mobility-friendly infrastructure to facilitate voting for individuals with physical disabilities, health conditions, and senior citizens.

153. To further support the participation of PWDs, the ECP also developed and distributed Braille ballots to aid visually impaired voters. Awareness campaigns were conducted prior to the elections to inform PWDs about their voting rights and the special facilities available to them at polling stations.

Participation in Cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

Article 30

154. The Government of Pakistan acceded to the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled on 12 December 2023.

155. Following accession, preliminary efforts have been taken to explore possible modalities for the Treaty's effective implementation in Pakistan through review of existing legal frameworks, including the Copyright Ordinance, 1962, to identify potential areas requiring review or amendment. Marrakesh Treaty enabling provisions are under consideration in the proposed Copyright Amendment Bill.

156. Pakistan remains committed to promoting inclusive sports and recreational opportunities for PWDs. Various events and initiatives have been organized across the country, targeting persons who are blind, deaf, or physically disabled.

157. During the reporting period PSB made payments of three million rupees to Pakistan Blind Federation. Between July 2022 and June 2023, the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council (PBCC) organized several major tournaments.

158. For athletes with hearing disabilities, the government supported the T20 Deaf Cricket Championship held in three phases across various regions in 2022–2023.

159. The Government has also extended financial support and incentives to athletes with disabilities. This includes cash awards to medal winners for the year 2022–2023. Additionally, Mr. Altaf-ur-Rehman, a para table tennis athlete, was awarded financial support and a specialized sports wheelchair for the 5th Islamic Solidarity Games in 2022.

160. Pakistan has won a paralympic gold medal by Haider Ali in the Men's Discus F37 event at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics. Mr. Zawar Noor secured the winning shield for Pakistan in the Wheelchair Cricket Asia Cup 2023–2024. Other notable athletes from Mr. Misal Khan, an all-rounder and Asian Champion with the Pakistan Wheelchair Cricket Team, who played a pivotal role in the team's success at the Asia Cup 2023–2024 held in Nepal; and Mr. Ayaz Khan.

Statistics and data collection

Article 31

161. In Pakistan, disability data collection has undergone significant evolution, reflecting both methodological advancements.

162. The 7th Population and Housing Census (2023) instead of using the definition of the 1971 Ordinance incorporated the Washington Group Short Set (WG-SS) of questions, focusing on functional limitations rather than medical diagnoses. The census assessed six domains: seeing, hearing, walking, communication, cognition (remembering/concentrating), and self-care, using a 4-point scale to reflect the severity of difficulty.

163. As part of the 2023 Population and Housing Census, a dedicated disability component was incorporated for the first time, enabling the collection of comprehensive national-level data on persons with disabilities (PWDs). This dataset captures information on various types of disabilities, including functional limitations, visual and hearing impairments, and mental disabilities. According to the census findings, Pakistan's total population stands

at 240,458,089, of which 7,448,574 individuals have reported one or more forms of disability. This represents approximately **3.1%** of the total population.

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Population	240 458 089	123 845 012	116 613 077
Disability	7 448 574	4 088 899	3 359 675
Functional limitation	23 170 373	12 239 992	10 930 381
Seeing	4 314 433	2 285 068	2 029 365
Hearing	4 778 218	2 520 248	2 257 970
Walking/Climbing	7 493 240	4 008 994	3 484 246
Communication	2 584 399	1 419 295	1 165 104
Memorization/ Focus	3 538 180	1 899 015	1 639 165
Self care, etc.	2 611 695	1 362 575	1 249 120

Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics – Population and Housing Census 2023.

164. Additionally, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics has integrated the WG-SS in its periodic household survey, the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey.

International cooperation

Article 32

165. Provinces are conducting gap analyses of existing laws against the UNCRPD and other international obligations. Steps include the introduction or amendment of laws, notification of implementation committees, and data collection on job quotas and assistive devices. There is a growing focus on ensuring job quota enforcement in both public and private sectors. In addition to improved disability data collection, Disability Impact Assessments (DIAs) have increased PWD representation in decision-making as well as their financial inclusion.

166. Disability inclusion efforts are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 3, 4, 8, 10 and 16. At the policy level, existing data sources and mechanisms for disability-related information have been integrated into SDGs implementation-monitoring dashboard for evidence-based decisions and targeted interventions.

National implementation and monitoring

Article 33

167. The Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) is the national coordinating body responsible for implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). This responsibility is carried out through the National Monitoring and Reporting Framework (NMRF), which works in close coordination with regional Treaty Implementation Cells (TICs), the SDG Secretariat, and provincial Human Rights Departments. The federal government continues to provide overall coordination through structures such as the National Council on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In addition, various regional councils and advisory boards have been constituted across provinces to safeguard the rights of PWDs.

168. Federal and provincial mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the Convention have also been strengthened and now include the active participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations. Under the National Monitoring and Reporting Framework, provinces have been requested to develop their own policies in alignment with the UNCRPD, and input from organizations of persons with disabilities is regularly sought. At the operational level, various steps have been taken to support inclusion

and participation. NADRA issues special CNICs bearing the universal disability logo, and Mobile Registration Vehicles (MRVs) process registrations on the spot, including for those with multiple or severe disabilities. Persons with disabilities are eligible for the Central Superior Services (CSS) civil service examination. Further, PWDs and their family members are entitled to free medical treatment in public healthcare facilities, and persons with physical disabilities are eligible for duty-free import of vehicles up to 1300cc. Public colleges and universities also offer free education to PWDs.
