

INQUIRY INTO THE PLIGHT OF STREET CHILDREN IN ICT – CHALLENGES & WAY FORWARD



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Executive Summary

The street children constitute one of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of population. They are exposed to abject poverty and face a myriad of challenges as they make do under the open sky without an appropriate care system. The child labour and beggary are further manifestations of the child exploitation posing dire consequences for their growth and development. As the challenges of street children continue to grow more intense and complex with every passing day, the relevant governmental authorities and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs)/ civil society organizations (CSOs) need to take effective steps to stem its further growth.

The report in hand sets out the priorities and presents evidence-based recommendations to the stakeholders with a view to ensuring grant of basic rights to such children. A quick run-down of the report is as follows:

Chapter 1 of the report introduces the background, objectives and the parameters of the research, explaining that Pakistan stands 148th in Global ranking in Global Kids Rights Index. The statistics reflect that in 2021 over 10 children were sexually abused every day in Pakistan. Of total 643 cases of children sexually abused in open spaces 45% incidents took place in streets, 39% in fields, 9% in jungles and 10% in grave yards. The overall objective of the research is to diagnose, investigate and address systemic issues relating to children. The key assumptions include that the child labour / begging is a socio economic phenomenon. It is not adequately dealt with owing to a lack of holistic approach, shortcomings in policy/legal framework and ineffective mechanism. Accordingly a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodology has been employed.

Chapter 2 reflects upon the concept and dynamics of street children in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). It points out that children's involvement in the labor market and begging to some-extent is an outcome of extreme poverty but predominantly it is part of an organized lucrative business or means for getting easy money because people's hearts melt to see child misery. Scores of children from poor families in villages are brought to ICT for work in garages, shops and other places on payment of very small amounts and meals. In some cases they are allowed to meet their families after six months.

Chapter 3 focuses on research findings. The data collected from the field revealed that 91% sample children were living with their families while 9% were homeless. Amongst 65% literate children 49% were school-going, followed by 44% studying in madressah, while 5% were taking informal education. The average income per day of street children was Rs.347%, while those of street children at Shrines was Rs.1000/= per day. The compelling factors for them to work/beg include low income in 83% cases, followed by 9% illness/disability of parent(s) while in 1% case it was drug addiction of parent/guardian. In another 1%, there were other compelling factors which the respondents didn't share. Nevertheless, field visits and interaction with the community provided sufficient reasons to conclude that it is predominantly a lucrative business of families and begging rings and children are being badly exploited. They have their own vehicle for the pick and drop of the children deployed for work / begging. The street children, however, in 63% cases stated that they go for work / begging on designated sites on foot, in 25% they use public transport while in 10% cases they go by bicycle and in 2% cases they have other means of transport. About 38% children eat a meal three times a day, 36% twice a day and just once in 9%, while the meal of 17% was dependent on their circumstances. About 76% of children had access to clean drinking water and 60% of the children had no medical facilities.

The unregistered refugees are not even allowed to enter the government health facilities and their children cannot appear in Board examinations. About 18% of children do not have access to free toilet facilities. Children experienced verbal abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse in 52%, 38% and 4% cases, respectively. The violence in 65% was by general public, 14% by employer, 8% each by parents and co-workers while 5% observed silence in response.

Chapter 4 explains that the Child protection system (CPS) is a combination of formal and informal structures, functions and capacities for the prevention and response to violence against children. The best approaches to deal with the phenomenon of street children have also been discussed. The implementation of CPS in general and ICT in particular is detailed in the following four parts of this chapter:

Part I presents an overview of the international instruments, duly ratified by the GoP. The foremost being the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and International Labour

Organization (ILO) Convention 182 and the General Comment No.21 of the CRC Committee regarding interpretation of the provisions of CRC with specific reference to street children.

Part II focuses on the National policy / legal framework for child protection and it points out the absence of National Child Protection Policy. The Outcome 3 ‘Protection of Child Rights’ of the Action Plan for Human Rights deals with child rights in general. It also gives a detailed critical review of eight laws relating to children in need / at risk and identifies the gaps / lacunae therein. It explains how the mechanism for the shelter, welfare and development of children in need under the child protection law is inadequate, ineffective and inefficient. The law relating to the compulsory education of children lacks any provision for stern action against the parents / guardian who deliberately avoid education of their children and involve them in begging and child labour. The law on human trafficking does not recognize internal trafficking. Consequently scores of children are brought to ICT for child labour / begging. The law on employment of children neither bans nor provides a minimum age for the working of children in light work, which is the non-compliance of the ILO Convention 138. The child labour is banned only in specified establishments and process and that too is exempted in case the business is carried on by the family of the child worker or government. The field research witnessed violation of the provisions relating to child labour but the Local Administration had no record or recollection of action taken in this regard – reflecting non-implementation of law.

Part III gives a short insight into the institutional set-up for the protection, welfare and development of children in general including street children. It points out that there is no Child Court in ICT. Out of 22 Police Stations (PSs) in ICT just one Model PS that has a desk for children. From 1991 to May 2022, 597 adult beggars and their facilitators were put behind the bars. The Challans submitted in 98.99% cases, leading to conviction in 69.01% and acquittal in 1.35%, yet scores of beggars are witnessed across the city and demand stern action against them. About 11,681 street children from Jan.2020 to May 2022 were picked up by the police and dropped at Edhi Centre and Child Protection Institute (CPI). The Edhi Centre has neither mandate nor capacity to accommodate street children, therefore, Edhi Centre released them in the evening. The police officials are well aware of this limitation even then this is a persistent practice. There is no welfare centre to accommodate female street children. The medical examination of street children received by CPI from across the

country revealed serious issues of malnourishment, drug addiction, sexual abuse, skin diseases and even HIV. About 425 Federal schools across ICT have capacity to induct 8276 students. These schools can be used for the informal / formal education of street children. The outreach of the existing educational and technical training systems needs to be extended to benefit the street children.

Final chapter 5 presents the policy recommendations to be implemented by the concerned government agencies. The highlights are as under:

- Registration and profiling, followed by birth registration of street children through a portal/ centralized database;
- Provision of minimum age for light work to be defined, as per ILO standards;
- Ban on removal of children below the minimum age for work from the custody of their parents;
- Bridge the gap between informal and formal technical skills;
- Disciplinary actions against the corrupt officials and the officials giving blind eye to the violation of law;
- University students to impart education to street children as a part of their curriculum;
- Internal or domestic trafficking of children needs to be recognized as an offence and ratification of relevant international protocol is imperative;
- The CPIs must be easily accessible with separate blocks for children of each gender; and have a robust mechanism for protection, welfare and development of street children;
- Registration of refugees on priority basis and



basic facilities of health and education must be ensured, regardless of their status;

- Capacity building of the Police and CPI officials in law and rescue of street children;
- Referral mechanism needs to be developed; &
- Concerted efforts and a high level commitment need to be ensured.

Concluding, the street children are no doubt the victims of their situation. Breath taking challenges have robbed their childhood. Some seem to have no expectations from life yet struggling for their survival while the twinkling eyes and winning smiles of many reflect their hope, determination and cosmic capacity for survival. Concerted and coordinated efforts are required to enable them to emerge with dignity for better a tomorrow.

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Abbreviation & Acronyms

AIOU	Allama Iqbal Open University
AJ&K	Azad Jammu & Kashmir
BECS	Basic Education Community School
BISP	Benazir Income Support Programme
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CMIS	Case management information system
CPI	Child Protection Institution
CPO	Child Protection Officer
CPS	Child Protection System
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DG	Director General
FDE	Federal Directorate of Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GB	Gilgit Baltistan
GO	Government Organization
HRI	Human Rights Institution
IEC	Information Education Communication
ICT	Islamabad Capital Territory
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
ILO	International Labour Organization
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
MCWC	Maternal and Child Health Welfare Center
MoFEPT	Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
WM	Wafaqi Mohtasib
NAVTTTC	National Vocational & Technical Training Commission

NBF	National Book Foundation
NCC	National Committee on Children
NCCWD	National Commission for Child Welfare and Development
NCHR	National Commission on the Rights of Child
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OGCC	Office of the Grievance Commissioner for Children
OTO	One-to-One
PKSS	Pehli Kiran School System
PPC	Pakistan Penal Code
SAARC	South Asia Association for Regional Co-operation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHO	Station House Officer
SF	Sultana Foundation
SMC	School Management Committee
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund (Originally it was United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)

1. OVERVIEW OF THE REPORT

1.1.Introduction and Background

The office of Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) of Pakistan (WM) was established vide President's *Order No.1 of 1983 "to diagnose, investigate, redress and rectify an injustice done to a person through mal-administration", which includes "a decision, process, recommendation, act of omission or commission.,*ⁱ Subsequently, a Federal Ombudsman Institutional Reforms Act came into force on 20-03-2013 to standardize and harmonize the laws relating to Federal institutions.

The systemic issues, relating to vulnerable communities, especially children are addressed through evidence-based recommendations to the concerned institutions by the Office Wafaqi Mohtasib.

Exploitation of children is unfortunately a common feature across the globe and Pakistan is no exception. Street children are the most vulnerable owing to their exposure to all forms of risks. There is no exact data of street children, however, it is estimated that globally up to 150 million children spend most of their lives on the streets.ⁱⁱ With reference to Pakistan, most of the out of school children are involved in labour and begging. As per report,ⁱⁱⁱ of 63 million children (5-16 years), 20 million children are out of school in the country. While 33% of the under 18 population in ICT, is out of school.^{iv}

The National and international commitments of the Government of Pakistan (GoP) obligate the State to take special measures for the protection and promotion of child rights. Yet the children of all ages are witnessed to have been deprived of basic rights to health, education, protection and enabling environment. They are spotted on the street either working in workshops, restaurants / dhabas, shops, selling items, cleaning vehicles for money and begging on a daily basis even at odd hours. Some of them are also seen loitering around and according to the sources they are involved in pickpocketing and drugs. These children are exposed to all forms of risks and are in need of care.

Multiple initiatives have been taken by the GoP and the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) / Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), (discussed in detail in Chapter 4 of the report), yet the street children are witnessed living in high-risk circumstances. Pakistan stands 148th in overall global kids rights index^v of 182 countries in the year 2021.^{vi} (*See Table 1*)

In 2021 (as per Sahil's 'Cruel Numbers 2021') total 3852 cases of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) had been reported in the newspaper from across the country including Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJ&K). Over 10 children are reportedly abused per day. The report further revealed that out of the total 643 cases that took place in open spaces, 45% were in streets, 39% in fields, 9% in jungle and 10% cases in graveyards.

Domain	Ranking	Score
Overall	148	0.526
Life ranking	142	0.585
Health ranking	137	0.617
Education ranking	168	0.430
Protection ranking	135	0.608
Environment ranking	124-134	0.429

Table 1: Pakistan's Ranking and Score in Kids Rights Index

The ICT with 247 reported cases of CSA occupies third top rung of the ladder of most vulnerable districts after Kasur and Rawalpindi in the context of CSA.

The overall increase in the incidents of CSA in Pakistan in 2021 increased by 25% as compared to the cases reported in 2020. Since most of such cases remain unreported due to the influence of the perpetrator or stigma attached to such heinous offence which deters the victim families to approach for justice the said statistics is only the tip of the iceberg.

Taking cognizance of exploitation of children in street situation, the Grievance Commissioner for Children, working under the Hon'ble Wafaqi Mohtasib initiated this inquiry to address the systemic issues relating to street children and to develop an efficient road map for the relevant government agencies and the CSOs to deal with this phenomenon in a professional manner.

1.2. Research Objectives

The overall objectives of this inquiry are to diagnose and investigate the systemic issues relating to the street children. And to formulate evidence-based priority issues and recommendations for need-based reforms and practical measures that relevant institutions need to take aimed at combating exploitation of street children and vesting them with their due rights. And to formulate evidence-based priority issues as well as recommendations.

The research is sought to take stock of the following objectives:

- The causes that pushed the children in street situation, prevalence and consequences;

- Legal status of children involved in various activities in street situation;
- Gaps and lacunae in the prevailing child protection mechanism;
- Measures being taken with respect to the street children;
- The manner in which authorities, institutions and organizations assess their competencies with respect to street children; and
- The extent and manner of cooperation between the competent institutions, and NGOs/CSOs for the welfare of street children.

In this context, this Inquiry contributed to the following:

- Legal reforms in the context of street children;
- Capacity building of competent authorities, institutions and organizations dealing with street children;
- Improvement of mutual cooperation of competent institutions, civil society organizations and experts aimed at ensuring systematic, inter-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach to child begging prevention and suppression;
- Raising the awareness level in institutions, organizations and experts on the issues relating to street children and the measures required to be taken for their welfare and development as responsible citizens / residents of Pakistan.

1.3.Assumptions of the Research

The Inquiry Report specifically examines the ways the relevant institutions and authorities most competent to address the issue, as well as the NGOs/CSOs dealing with child issues, perceive and treat the street children phenomenon.

The investigation commenced with the following assumptions:

- Lack of holistic approach to deal with the issue of street children;
- Child labour and child begging, as a social economic phenomenon, not adequately dealt by the prevailing legal framework and strategic documents;
- Prevailing legal provisions related to begging and child labour are not being implemented consistently and efficiently;
- Causes of children in street situation are complex and not sufficiently investigated;

- No records relating to child beggars and child labourers are being kept, which makes it difficult to determine the magnitude of the issue;
- Collaboration of competent authorities, institutions and organization with respect to street children is inadequate; and
- Measures being taken are neither systematic nor efficient

1.4.Inception Meetings and Decision

The overall framework of the research is based on the preliminary consultation meeting with the multi-stakeholders on 19th January 2018 at Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman)’s Secretariat Islamabad, followed by a visit of the Wafaqi Mohtasib’s Grievance Commissioner for Children to Kashan (Shelter Home) and other organizations providing services to the street children in Islamabad. The final decision in this regard was taken by Hon’ble Wafaqi Mohtasib in December 2021. The concept note of the study had been shared with National Committee on Children (NCC), in a meeting held on 31st January 2022. The NCC unanimously endorsed the proposal. The detailed draft implementation plan of research including its concept note, strategy, tools and work plan were discussed with the Task Force for their feedback / guidance. The members of the said Task Force include Ms. Afshan Tehseen, Chairperson National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC); Ms. Fauzia Nasreen, Former Ambassador; Ms. Manizeh Bano, Executive Director, Sahil; and Focal Persons of the Office of Chief Commissioner ICT and ICT Police.

1.5.Approach

In view of the multi-dimensional aspects of issues surrounding street children and the sensitivity involved, a holistic multi-pronged participatory approach was adopted.

1.6.Methodology

A mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was employed as under:

1.7.Desk Research

The process commenced with the review of relevant laws, international instruments and policy documents. The research has been supplemented by news sources, documentaries, online publications from multiple sources and the Administrative data procured from the ICT Police and Service providers.

1.8. Field Research

The data from the field was collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with the street children, their parents / guardians, and the community members, service providers, law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders. Direct observation at the sites and analysis of statistics / administrative data enriched the study.

Additionally informal interactions were carried out with the street children and community members to give them an opportunity to share their issues in comfort zone with the GCC, WMS. For the purpose of the research, the street children and their parents / community members were determined to be the primary source of information. While the secondary source of information constitute the law enforcement agencies, local Administration, social protection institutions / service providers, educational institutions and other stakeholders.



1.9. Sampling Method

The selection of sampling methods was based on the nature, aims and objectives of research and the type of data required to complete the process. Accordingly, multiple sampling techniques were employed to deal with each targeted group, in the following manner:

a. Street Children and Community Members / Parents / Guardian of Street Children

- i. A random sampling method was used for the selection of street children for in-depth interviews in the specified locales of all five zones of ICT. The sample also includes the street children found in the shelter homes and drop-in center.

- ii. A convenient sampling method was used for FGDs with street children in all five zones of ICT.

b. Other Stakeholders

A purposive sampling method was used for in-depth interviews and FGDs with the community members, law enforcement agencies, service providers and relevant authorities including *inter alia*, Commissioner Afghan Refugees, National Database Registration Authority, Pakistan Bait ul Maal and Child Protection Institutes.

c. In-depth Interviews

A total of 506 in-depth interviews had been conducted with the stakeholders. This includes 443 street children, 44 community members including parents/ guardians of street children (10% of street children sample) and interviews of 19 concerned officials of law enforcement agencies and service providers across ICT. (see Annexure 'A').

d. Sample Selection

i. Street Children

The samples have been selected from all five zones of ICT and specified locales in each zone.

1. **Zone – Wise:** The distribution of the sample of street children had been 83%, 7%, 4%, 4% and 2% in Zone 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively (see *figure 1*). The reason for major sample from Zone 1 was because it constitutes all Sectors of ICT Urban 1 and 2.
2. **Locale – Wise:** About 65% of children were interviewed in the markets, followed by 13% shrines, 15% roads, 6% hotel / dhabas and 1% other places including slum areas.

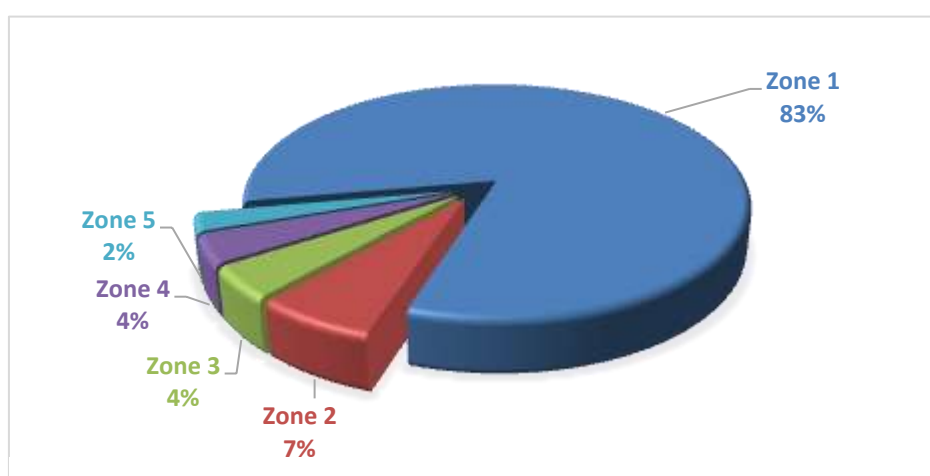


Figure 1: Locale-wise selection of street children sample

ii. Community Members

- 1. Zone – Wise:** The sample selection of community members was 57% from Zone 1, followed by 9%, 9%, 14% and 11% from Zone 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively.
- 2. Locale – Wise:** Of total 44, 59% community members were from markets, followed by 18% from roads, 12% from shrines and 11% from hotel / dhabas.



Figure 2: Locale-wise selection of community members sample

e. Focus Group Discussions

The FGDs (in quite a flexible and informal manner) were also conducted in all five zones of ICT in the specified locales. Of the total 52 FGDs, 24 were conducted exclusively with the street children found on the street either begging or busy in rag-picking, cleaning of cars, selling goods, etc., while 27 FGDs were with the community members in the locales with high concentration of street children. They were basically the employers, parents of the street children, shop keepers stationed in those locales since decades and have witnessed the patterns of street children, their backgrounds and the situation they were living in.



One FGD was conducted with the key stakeholders including the representatives of relevant government agencies vis-à-vis., ICT Police, NADRA, Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety Division; National Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC); Federal Directorate of Education; NADRA; Baitul Maal, Basic Education Community Schools and NGOs / CSOs including SPARC; Pehli Kiran School System; Sultana Foundation; Kashan and Edhi Home. *See Annexure 'A'*

I – With Community Members/Parents/Guardian						
Locales						
Zones	Shrines	Markets	Hotels/Dhabas	Roads	Kachi Abadis	Total
Zone-I	Golra Sharif	Nearby market	Nearby hotels and dhabas (02)	Golra Road F-11 Road	Mehrabadi near F-11 service road	07
Zone-II	-	Nearby fruit market	Nearby dhabas (02)	Tarnol road	-	04
Zone-III	Bari Imam	Bari bazaar Bara Kahu bazaar	Nearby hotels and dhabas (04)	Murree road	Kot Hathyal Nai Abadi	10
Zone-IV	-	Khanna Pul Sabzi Mandi	Nearby dhaba	Islamabad Expressway	Nearby Kachi Abadi	04
Zone-V	-	PWD main market	-	PWD road	-	02
Total	02	06	09	06	04	27
II – With Street Children						
Locales						
Zones	Shrines	Markets	Hotels/Dhabas	Roads	Kachi Abadis	Total
Zone-I	Golra Sharif	Nearby market	Nearby dhaba	Golra Road F-11 Road	Mehrabadi near F-11 service road	06
Zone-II	-	Nearby fruit market	Nearby dhabas (03)	Tarnol road	-	05
Zone-III	Bari Imam	Bari bazaar Bara Kahu bazaar	Nearby hotel	Murree road	Kot Hathyal Nai Abadi	07
Zone-IV	-	Khanna Pul Sabzi Mandi	Nearby dhaba	Islamabad Expressway	Nearby Kachi Abadi	04
Zone-V	-	PWD main market	-	PWD road	-	02
Total	02	06	06	06	04	24
III – With Key Stakeholders/Service Providers at Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat						01
Grand total						52

Table 2: Matrix of FGDs

1.10. Language

The interviews and FGDs with the street children and community members were conducted by the research team in multiple languages including Urdu, Punjabi and Pushto to ensure convenience of the respondents.

1.11. Tools

A wide array of survey tools was used in field research in order to keep it flexible enough to allow adaptation to local conditions required to explore the hidden and invisible aspect of the challenges faced by street children and their repercussions. A research process was maintained to ensure the information generated by a particular research component would lead into the next step of the process (*see Annexure 'B'*).

Each enumerator pre-tested the questionnaires to identify any gaps and improvements. The questionnaires filled during this stage were not included in the overall research sample of interviews.

1.12. Data Validation

The information received from various sources was triangulated for validation purposes.

1.13. Limitation

The greatest limitation in this research is the absence of data / statistics on street children. Given the informal or illegal nature of child begging / labour, data is difficult to obtain, and very little empirical research on these issues exists, especially in relation to ICT.

1.14. Research Team

The research study was conceptualized and led by Syeda Viquar un nisa Hashmi, Advisor / Grievance Commissioner for Children, WMS. The research team comprised of Mr. Adnan Ahmed, Investigation Officer, WMS, Ms. Faiqa Arshad, Assistant to OGCC, WMS.

The students of Iqra University were engaged as enumerators to conduct interviews with street children and community members



and parents / guardians of the street children (*see Annexure 'C'*). The team of enumerators was divided into three groups, each with a group lead. The enumerators were given orientation on:

- Rapport building for open sharing of information;
- Probing and questioning techniques for interview;
- Recording and moderating techniques;
- Understanding questionnaire and providing facilitation; and
- Ethical considerations for field research, e.g. obtaining interviewee consent, maintaining impartiality, confidentiality, trustworthiness etc.



1.15. Conclusion

Realizing the fact that the children are an asset of the country and the promotion and protection of children is the priority of the GoP. But they are badly exploited on the street and there is a need to thoroughly explore the core issues in this regard and devise a way forward. With this in mind the research was designed in a manner whereby all means for collecting empirical evidence were employed.

2. NOTION OF STREET CHILDREN

2.1.Overview

The ‘street children’, also termed as ‘street-connected children’ or the children in street situations are generally perceived as those living in households that do not satisfy their basic human needs. Such children or adolescents include those who spend a substantial portion of their time in the streets working, begging or hanging out but tend to maintain a strong family link; or the children whose family ties severed through running away or abandoned or on being orphaned.

In 1986, UNICEF devised a conceptual standpoint classifying street children, based on the extent of their connectivity to the streets into the three broad categories, vis-à-vis., children who reside in the street and do not maintain regular contact with their families, as for instance the runaway or abandoned kids; children who work in the street – such children spend most of their time in the streets, but return to their homes / families on a daily basis; and children from street families – these children live with their families in the street.

The street plays a pivotal role in the everyday lives and identities of such children and they tend to have a strong connection to public spaces (e.g. streets, markets, parks, and bus or train stations). This group includes children who do not live or work on the street but regularly accompany other children or family members in the streets.^{vii} The drowsy or lifeless new born babies in the laps of women beggars also fall



within the realm of street children.

Great majority of street children are either found working in restaurants/ dhabas, food streets, markets, or cleaning vehicles on the roads and parking; or begging; selling items, which according to ILO is a form of begging.^{viii}

“a range of activities whereby an individual asks a stranger for money on the basis of being poor or needing charitable donations for health or religious reasons. Beggars may also sell small items such as dusters or flowers, in return for money that may have little to do with the value of the item for sale.”

Box 1: *Definition of begging, adopted by ILO in 2004*

Majority of such children are exploited either by their own families, or contractor/ pimps, or employers in terms of child labor, debt bondage, child prostitution, forced beggary, and trafficking. The street situation subjects them to a continued exploitation.



This research analyzes that the children are driven in street situations owing to economic factors including economic viability of beggars as organized crime, inequalities, inflation, and a lack of viable economic alternatives. The institution of zakat and charity is being exploited by vested groups who use street children to collect money for them. Criminal networks thrive under adverse political conditions including government weakness and corruption. Demographic factors include urbanization, refugees and internally displaced populations, population growth, and a high proportion of the youth population have substantial bearing on the streetism of children.

The child seems to be victimized and re-victimized in the whole process, from the handler who takes advantage of parents' poverty and the trafficker who abducts children to the peddler for selling drugs for financially gain.

Box 2: *Researcher's Analysis on the Victimization Process of Street Children*

2.2.Overall Dynamics of Streetism in ICT

Street children are a dynamic and mobile population. The estimates or count done at a particular point can be misleading depending on when the count took place. The number of children in the street fluctuate either with seasonal change as, for instance, the number of street children in market places substantially increase in the evening time



during Ramadan and even in late hours before Eid. Likewise, the number of children begging door to door increases during Eid ul Adha for the purpose of meat collection. So as in shrines during Urs (mass gathering for celebration at shrines) and on every Thursday as Muslims prefer giving charity especially on Thursdays.

The research revealed the following categories of children in street situation in ICT:

2.2.1. Afghan Refugees

About 2.14% of total 837,970 registered Afghan refugees (including 19,961 children (*See Table 3*) in Pakistan live in Islamabad.^{ix}

An overwhelming majority of them reached Pakistan through alternative channels were unregistered asylum seekers. Some were found to have just a pre-screening interview card issued by an NGO in 2020. However, no processes seem to have taken place as the concerned NGO denied the existence of data in this regard. According to the Commissioner for Afghan Refugees, the registration

Registered Afghan Children in ICT

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
0-4 years	2,880	2,721	5,601
5-11 years	5,042	4,686	9,728
12-17	2,369	2,263	4,632
Total	10,291	9,670	19,961

Table 3: Registered Afghan Refugees in ICT



Box 3: Card possessed by an unregistered Afghan Refugee

process of Afghan refugees is on hold pending formulation of a requisite policy.

The children of Afghans are either rag-picker or do labour work. Some of them are also involved in begging and drugs. The reports indicate that Afghan kids are brought here by cartels that are involved in the illegal business of begging.^x

The refugees regardless of their category as discussed above continue to need essential services, including primary health care, lifesaving vaccines against polio and measles, nutrition, education, protection, shelter, water, and sanitation. However, the unregistered Afghan refugees are denied health facilities and registration in the formal education system.

2.2.2. Nomads

They do not have any fixed place to live and have squatted informal settlements 'katchi abadis' / slums in Islamabad.

a. Migrants from Northern Area

Most of them have migrated from different parts of the country decades ago and they live in slums. An overwhelming majority have migrated from *inter alia*, Agencies in the northern part of the country. Some of them were found to be living in extremely unhygienic conditions. While a category of them whose children are generally into rag picking or labour work was found to be very well-organized and well-equipped in terms of transportation. In some rare cases their children were found begging.

I need medical treatment but the watchman of Government Hospital refused to allow me to enter in the premises because I do not have a refugee registration card.

Box 4: *Statement of a Unregistered*

The unregistered refugees are at liberty to take informal education but they cannot be registered for Board examination.

Box 5: *Statement of the Representatives of FDE*



According to the community members, some of them are in the drug and ammunition business. Operation was carried out on their community on Golra road and now they have moved to G-11 road.

b. Changar

Decades' ago scores of people migrated from Punjab, especially Multan, Faisalabad, Bahawalpur, etc., living in katchi abadis/ urban slums in ICT, are termed 'Changar' in local language. Their communities located in the areas close to Golra Darbar, Burma Town, Zia Masjid, Khana, Bara Kahu, had been visited by the research team. Apparently their women sale bangles and some other items and their men work as labourers or rag pickers. An overwhelming majority of them, including their children of all ages are involved in begging. Some of them including their children are not only taking drugs but they are also drug peddlers. The reports revealed that most of the time, adults accompanying the children are not their parents but handlers. Such children had been tested on several occasions and were found to be drugged.^{xi}



'The children start taking drugs with their mothers at an early age.'

'Selling of drugs is a regular business of 'changars'.'

Box 6: *Statements of Shopkeeper carrying on his business in front of Golra Darbar for the last 30 years*

2.3. Begging Rings

Beggary is an organized crime involving financial gains, illicit business activities, organizational hierarchy, corruption, and the use of violence or intimidation. Reports indicate that beggary rackets are operated by professionals who control territory. Beggars pay rent to reserve a particular area for themselves and the busier the site, the steeper the rent.



Often the limbs of these children are amputated or they are disfigured to attract sympathy. They are also physically and sexually abused and kept in miserable conditions. Emotional neglect and non-provision of basic necessities including healthcare, food, clothing, education and shelter impact their psychosocial development.

The ICT Police Mujahid squad conducted the surveillance of beggar women and children and traced 20 heads of peddling and begging rings. The mafia forced the women, infirm or disabled persons and children even of just 4-5 years of age to work long hours each day soliciting money or selling products, toys, snacks, flowers and some products in ICT cleaning vehicles.^{xii} They generally take advantage of the children loitering around, destitute / homeless children, provide them with food and force them to begging.^{xiii}



The Police record revealed that in some cases relatives are involved in this crime.^{xiv} The investigation revealed that the child beggary is well organized. In one of many cases, revealed by ICT Police, the accused used to drop several innocent children on different locations in the morning for beggary purposes and he used to collect them in the evening.^{xv}

A beggar at Madani Chowk new Dhamma, close to the airport. The boy standing by is his assistant to get him money from people in vehicles and drags his cart. Both the boys were witnessed to have cell phones.

Reportedly, the minors were ‘hired on rent’ or sold for begging in different areas and highways of

Faisalabad. In the Ghulam Muhammadabad area, a man allegedly sold his one-and-a-half month old daughter to a begging group for money.^{xvi} The presence of the kids gave the appearance of parents trying to provide for their families.

Box 7: *Researcher’s*

2.4. Child Labour

An overwhelming majority of children as young as 5-6 years of age are found working on tyre shops, restaurants / dhabas, and shops. Their timings as inquired by the research team,

even in front of the employer, was from 7.00 a.m. to 10 p.m., on payment of Rs.100/= per day. Some of the employers, however, claimed to have been paying them Rs.250/= per day.

The employers are actually preying on the vulnerabilities of the poor families in remote areas. The employers trick or deceive parents and guardians into giving up their children by promising to give the children an apprenticeship, decent working conditions, an education, or any number of things so that parents or guardians entrust their children to these third parties. While on the other hand they exploit these children by making them work hard from morning till late evening in consideration of very little amount.



2.5.Implications of Streetism on Children

Owing to their high-risk lifestyle, poor living conditions and lack of medical care, these children are highly susceptible to chronic illnesses. The Administrative data of street children rescued by CPI and the children underwent medical examination at the SPARC's Drop-in Centers revealed that most of them were malnourished, suffering from skin diseases. Some were sexually abused and one of them was even HIV positive. The innocent children are removed from their families. Without support from family or the government they have to fend for themselves. Being unprotected they become easy prey for criminals and be drawn into gangs, selling drugs, stealing and prostitution.



The discrimination and stigmatisation these kids face daily from individuals usually has a negative impact on their overall psyche and self-esteem and it shapes how they view society. Children are constantly developing and learning from their environment and life on the streets which could transform an innocent child to a reprehensible adult. They are trained to lie and deceive people. One of the children in PWD found begging and when he was asked about his whereabouts he stated that he is working in a workshop but didn't tell the exact shop

in the market. He started telling a painful story of her mother's illness and that he needs money for her treatment. When the Grievance Commissioner for Children assured full medical treatment for her mother and asked him to take her to his mother, he very quietly sneaked out from there. The research team waited for him for 30 minutes but he didn't show-up. He was not even seen in that area afterward.

“Baji manu jan do manu eid tey goshat jama karna hey” [Sister let me go as I have to collect meet on Eid day].

Box 8: *Statement of a Street Child at Shelter Centre (Kashaan)*

Streetism snatches the childhood of innocent children. The children had been observed to have no idea of excitement for any Eid celebration and their focus remained on collecting charities.

2.6. Conclusion

It is significant from the above that induction of children in labour and/or beggary could have been initially due to poverty and compelling circumstance owing to internal displacement in times of calamities, terrorism, conflicts in the home towns. Majority of such families migrated decades ago and being well settled they no longer fall within the definition of migrants. But now they find this lifestyle of living in huts (termed as 'jhuggies' in local language) an unlawfully occupied land, without any burden of paying rent or utilities bills, begging and using their children for this purpose a convenient and lucrative business. They don't even feel the need to have their own National Identity Cards and registration of their children. The education of their children is neither their priority nor desire because their children are a source of their income. That is why they don't want their children to waste time in schools. They like their children to be like them. They simply don't realize the harm they are causing to their children. There is a need to break this vicious cycle through stern actions.



3. SITUATION ANALYSIS OF THE STREET CHILDREN IN ICT

3.1. Street Children

3.1.1. Demographics

- a. **Age, Gender and Disability:** The average age of street children respondents was 12 years with 65% male and 35% female. Of these 4% were disable.
- b. **Mother Tongue:** The children's mother tongue was Punjabi, Saraiki, Pashto, Balochi, Balti, Kashmiri, Urdu and Hindko.
- c. **Place of Origin:** The respondents belonged to Sargodha, Multan, Faisalabad, Bahawalpur, Chakwal, Swabi, Attock, Afghanistan, Swat, Bolan, D.I. Khan, Khushab, Bolan, Mach, Dir, Lahore, D.G. Khan, Landi Kotal, Mianwali, Bannu, Lakki Marwat etc. They moved to ICT years ago for earning purposes and those from Northern Areas and Afghanistan due to the law and order situation there.
- d. **Family:** About 91% children were living with their families which in 67% cases consisted of both parents, followed by 16% with father only, 10% with single mother and 6% guardian. On the other hand 1% of children remained quiet on the question in this regard. On the other hand, the remaining 9% of respondents were homeless. This category includes the runaway children as well as orphans. One such child was identified at Chungi 25 near Daewoo Bus Stop on Peshawar Road and he was referred to CPI for appropriate intervention by the Research Team. The said child has been reunited with his family in Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).



Figure 3: Family Status of Respondent children

- e. **Working Status of the Parents / Guardians of Street Children:** About 75% of the parents/ guardian of the children (father: 63% cases; mother: 30% cases; guardian: 6% cases; and no response: 1% case) of the children were working while in 24% cases the parent(s) were not doing any work. This may be attributed to drug addiction in many cases, as revealed during FGDs with community members.
- f. **Place of Living:** As per responses of street children, 37% live in proper homes, followed by 35% cases in huts, 23% cases in open space, 3% at place of work and 2% in other place. Further explanation in this regard was not given.
- g. **Educational Status:** According to 65% respondents they were literate. Amongst the literate, 49% was school going followed by 44% studying in Madressah and 5% were taking informal education. On the other hand 2% observed silence.

During the course of FGD / interaction with the children they had either never been to school or they dropped out due to compelling circumstances. One of the children of about 8 years of age passionately told the Grievance Commissioner for Children that he was studying in class III, he can recite Kalmas and loves to study. But his mother moved here from the village and now he has been asked to sell the stationery items.

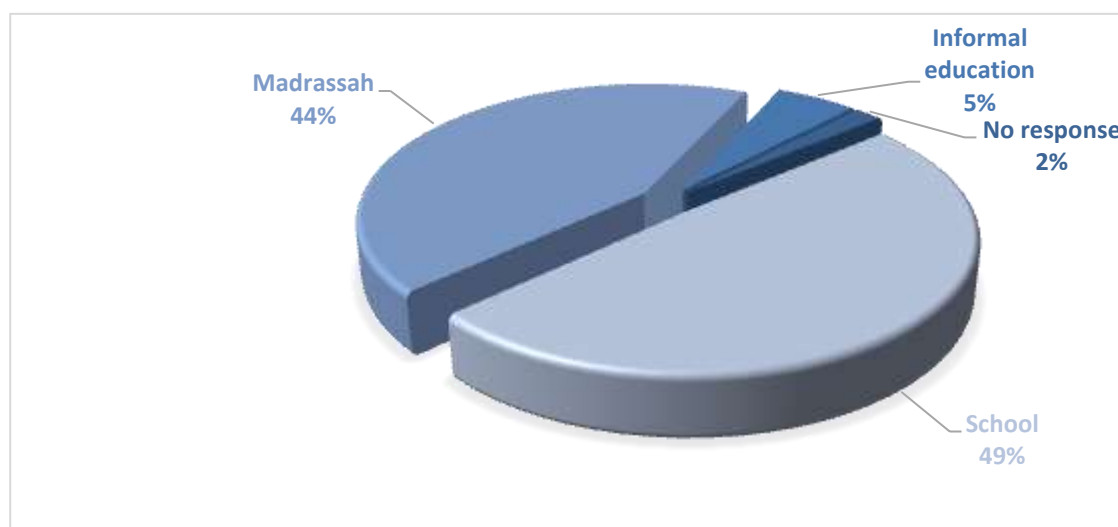


Figure 4: Educational Status of Respondent Children

- h. **Support for Education:** According to the respondents taking education, 43% of them were supported by their father, followed by 6% mothers, 2% guardians and 4% by someone else. The FGD / interaction with the community members including the

parents of the street children revealed that the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government organizations (GOs) are providing free education. Books/bags are provided in most of the cases and in some cases uniform and food is also provided. One of the mothers of children also stated that NGOs provide groceries / ration, after a month or so. These facts were verified during the course of interviews with the service providers.

About 58% of the street children expressed their desire to continue education while the response of 41% respondents was negative. This may be attributed to the fact that focus on begging is being imbibed in them as a sole means of their survival.

- i. **Street Children's Occupation:** About 33% of the respondent children were selling miscellaneous items, followed by 30% begging (which is a form of child labour), 10% rag picking, 10% car cleaning on roads; 7% working in shops, restaurants / dhabbas and 3% in other miscellaneous labour work. While 6% of them just loiter around and are not involved in any kind of work and / or studies. They just loiter around in the streets.

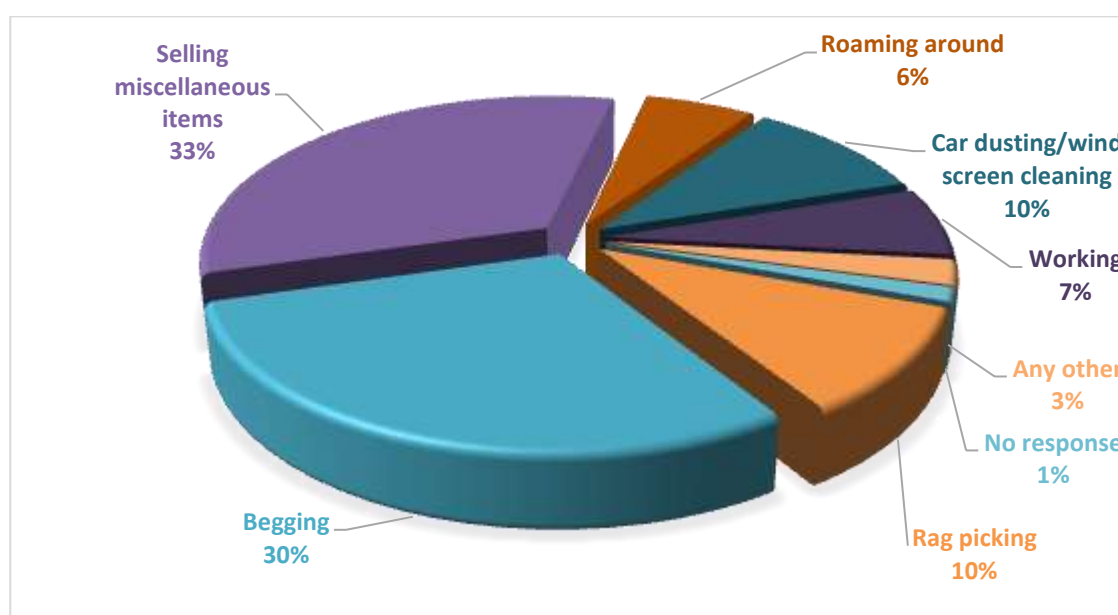


Figure 5: Occupation of Respondent Street Children

- j. **Income:** The average income per day of children was Rs.347/= per day. However, the FGDs/ interaction with the children at Bari Imam revealed an average income of Rs.1000/= per day. It has been observed at many places that children even of the age

of 3 years were holding rose petals or food items for sale but people generally do not buy from them and give Rs.50/= - Rs.100/= as charity. The representative of an NGO stated that the general income of each family of 4-5 members is about Rs.1,50,000/= per month. Out of which the family pays to their facilitator.

- k. Reasons for Work:** The responses of the street children respondents on the question relating the reasons for their work include no or low income in 83% cases, followed by demise of parent(s) in 9% cases, illness / disability of parent / guardian and drug addiction of parents /guardian in 1% cases. In 1% other compelling circumstances while another and 1% respondents refused to respond. Begging and induction of children in the workforce by their parents, in some cases is no doubt, due to poverty but it has been observed and verified by stakeholders that begging is a lucrative business carried out by begging mafia and Changars. Child labour in most cases is an outcome of an internal or domestic trafficking of women and children.

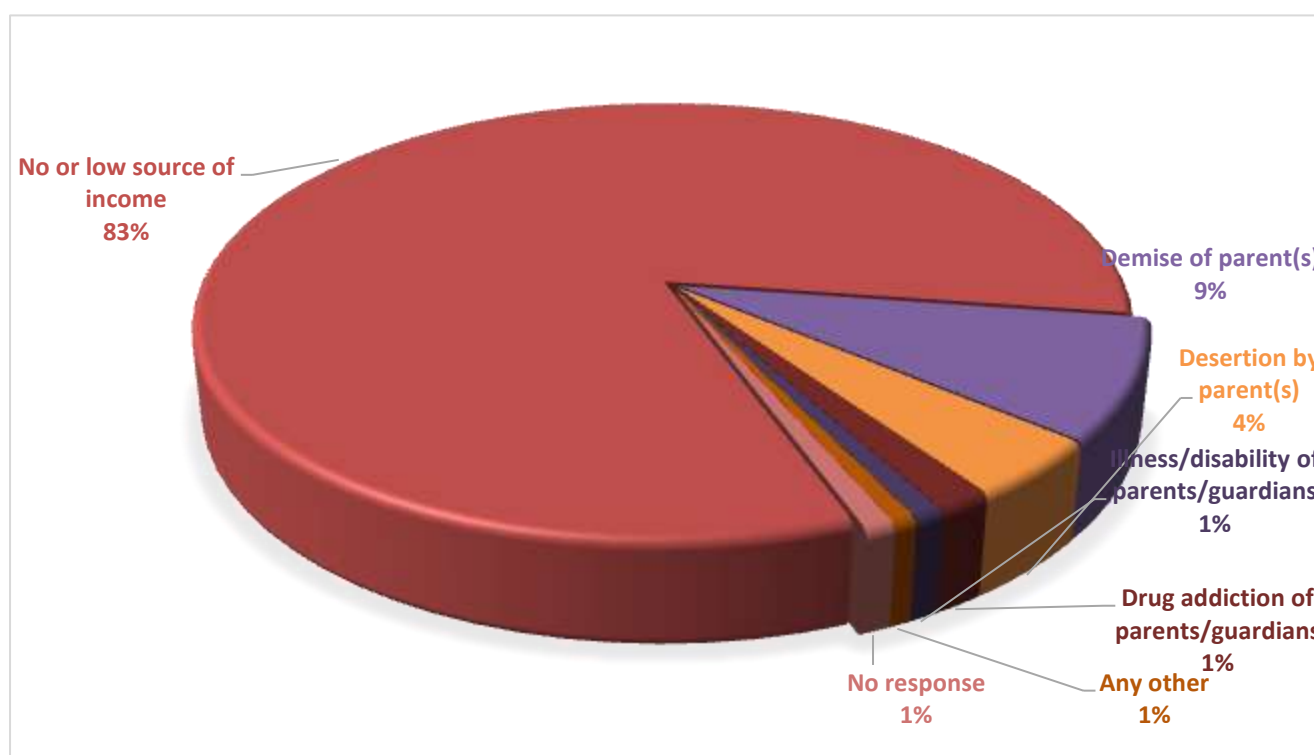


Figure 6: Street Children's Reasons to Work

3.2.Mode of Commutation

The children at work or involved in begging in 63% cases go to their designated place of work / begging on foot, followed by the use of public transport in 25%, by bicycle in 10% cases and other means in 2% cases. The other means include the lift from the persons on the way. The research team witnessed the presence of bikes, Toyota Corolla cars, Suzuki Carry and other vehicles including donkey carts in slums areas where refugees and Changar were living. According to the community members these vehicles are used for the purposes of pick and drop of children and the transportation of rag collected by them.

3.3.Company in Travelling to Workplace

In 35% cases children are accompanied by their friends, followed by parent(s) in 31% cases, guardian in 21% cases, and 10% with any other while 3% didn't reply.

3.4.Provision of Meals

Responses of street children revealed that 38% of them take meals thrice a day, followed by 36% who get meals twice a day, 17% eat food subject to the situation while 9% of them get to eat once a day. The children in 60% cases, according to them, pay for the food while in 39% cases they get free of cost while 1% refused to answer. Generally, the children begging or working around the Shrines like Bari Imam and Golra Darbars have no issue of food because of frequent Langer (distribution of food for the sake of Allah) by people with substantive means of living. At Bari Imam free food is served thrice a day and even tea is served at 4 p.m. Some schools and drop-in centers also provide food once a day.

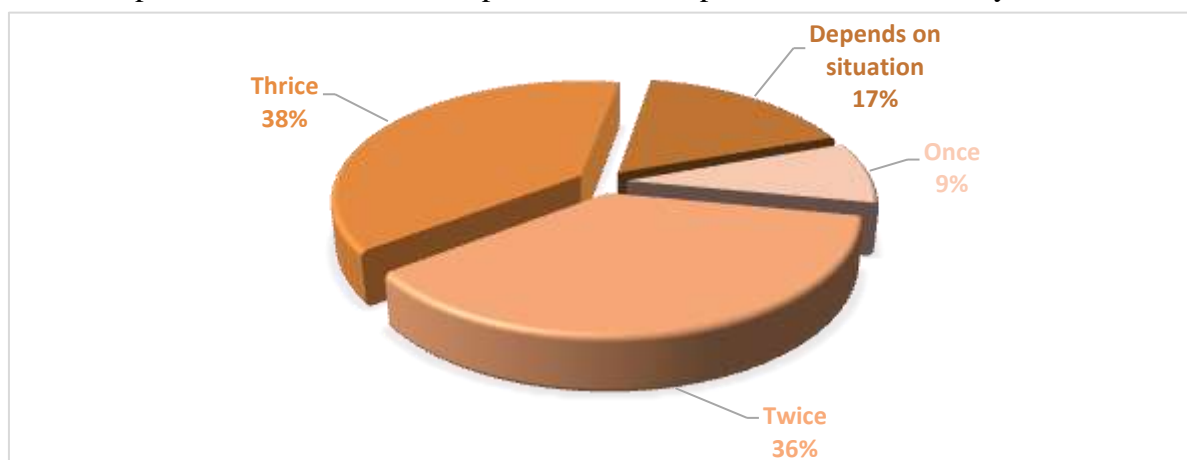


Figure 7: Provision of Meals for Street Children

3.5. Access to Clean Drinking Water

About 76% of children have access to clean drinking water. This is generally attributed to Filter Plants in most of the locations. Further the children working in hotels/dhabas or shops have access to clean drinking waters. The schools (formal and informal) also have drinking water facilities, while 26% children have no access to clean drinking water. However, according to some Changars involved in begging and rag picking sometimes they get water from the water tankers for free.

3.6. Access to Health Care Facilities

About 60% of the street children have no access to health care services. Of these children 70% have to pay for it while 29% get it for free which is generally on account of the medical camps at the schools, and the services by the government hospital, etc. However, as discussed in detail in the preceding Chapters the government hospitals do not provide health care services to the unregistered refugees. The Administrative data of CPI and SPARC revealed that street children were suffering from multiple diseases including skin allergies, chicken pox and even HIV.

3.7. Access to Toilet Facilities

About 82% of children have the facility to use toilet while 18% do not have that facility and they have to pay for each visit to toilet.

3.8. Violence Experienced

The respondent children had to face abusive language in 52% cases, followed by being subjected to physical abuse in 38% cases, sexual abuse in 4% cases while in 6% cases the respondents remained silent. According to the respondents the violence is committed by the public in general in 65% cases, employers in 14% cases, co-workers and parents in 8% cases each and 5% of respondents didn't reply to the question. These responses are endorsed by the administrative data relating the medical examination of the street children shared by CPI and SPARC.

The violence against street children in 65% cases was by the public, followed by 14% by employers, 8% each by co-workers and parents whereas in 5% cases the respondent observed silence.

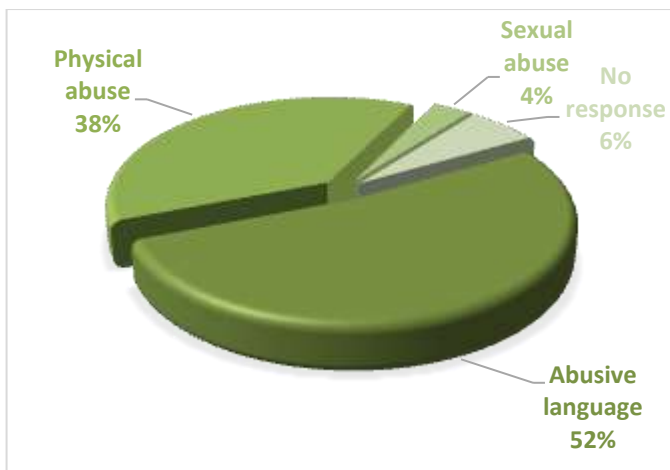


Figure 8: Violence Experience by Street Children

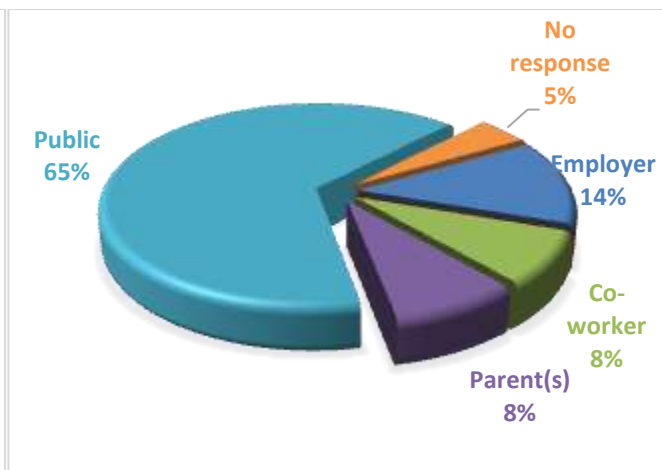


Figure 9: The Abuser of Street Children

3.9.Community Members

A total of 44 community members including 52% common people with no direct relationship with the street children, 18% mothers, 18% guardians and 12% fathers of the street children were interviewed. Of these community members 59% of them and / or their spouse were at work while 41% of them were not doing any proper work.

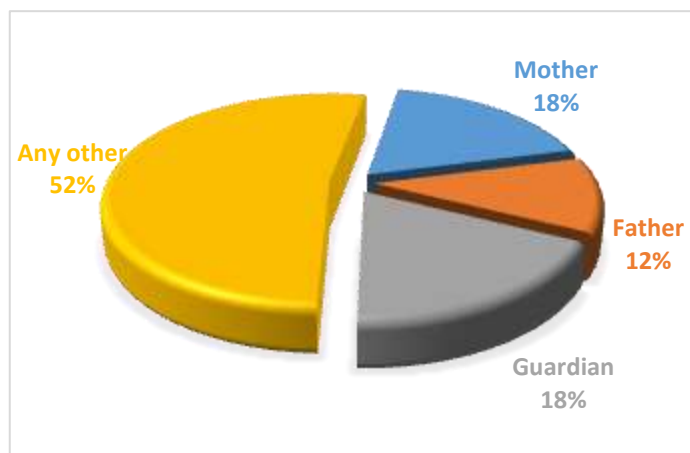


Figure 10: Relationship of Community Members with the Street Children

3.9.1. Demographics

- a. **Mother Tongue:** The mother tongues of the respondents were Punjabi, Saraiki, Pashto, Balochi, Balti, Kashmiri, Urdu and Hindko.
- b. **Place of Origin:** They belonged to Sargodha, Multan, Faisalabad, Bahawalpur, Chakwal, Swabi, Attock, Afghanistan, Swat, Bolan, D.I. Khan, Khushab, Bolan, Mach, Dir, Lahore, D.G. Khan, Landi Kotal, Mianwali, Bannu, and Lakki Marwat etc.

3.9.2. Occupation of Community Members' Own Children

According to their responses, 52% of the children were selling miscellaneous items, followed by 23% children involved in car dusting / windscreen cleaning, 18% rag picking, and 7% other labour work. Although none revealed that his / her child is into begging, but generally children and even adults selling

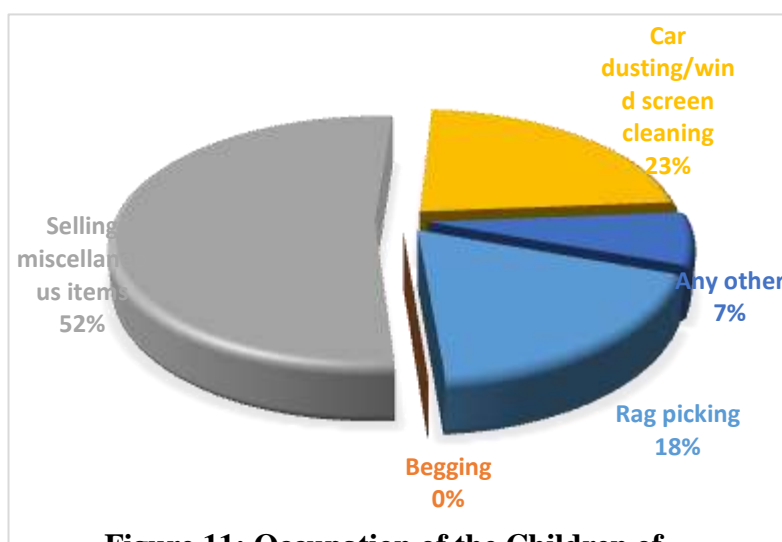


Figure 11: Occupation of the Children of Respondent / Community Members

miscellaneous items on road are actually begging while holding miscellaneous items to save themselves from being picked up by the police.

3.9.3. Knowledge about the Street Children in General

About 82% of the respondents were well aware of the issues relating to street children in their community.

a. Reasons for the Children to Live or Work on Streets

According to them, in 80% cases the children have to work or live on street due to no or low source of income, followed by 14% due to their parent(s)/guardian's illness or disability, 11% due to drug addiction of their parent(s) / guardian and in 2% cases they work to learn skills.

b. Birth Registration

According to them the birth registration is about 80% in their community members, especially the people running small businesses and they themselves did the registration of their children while 20% respondents had either no knowledge of birth registration or they don't care about it. This fact was verified during the FGDs/ interaction with the community members. Some of the Changer families in Bara Kahu and Khana neither had knowledge of birth registration nor were they interested. They were content with their decades old work of rag picking and begging and they want their children to be like them. Some parents do not

have the National Identity Cards (NICs) and since they are beggars they do not feel the need to get into the hassle of this procedure.

c. Provision of Meal for the Children

The community members were of the view that street children in 52% cases get meals twice a day, followed by 36% children who eat thrice a day, 7% of them eat just once a day while 5% of them eat according to their situation.

d. Access to Clean Drinking Water

The community members were of the view that 80% of children have the provision of clean drinking water, which in 86% cases is free of cost while the remaining children have to pay for it. These findings are more or less similar to the outcome of interviews with the street children, discussed in clause 3.5 above.

e. Access to Health Care Facilities

About 70% of children have access to health care facilities provided by the government and/or NGOs. While 30% are devoid of this basic right as either the Basic Health Units (BHUs) are either not existing or non-functional and the government hospital is far. Further, the unregistered refugees are refused by the government hospital and they can't afford treatment in private clinics.

f. Provision to Use Toilet Services

In 55% cases people have this facility free of cost while the remaining don't have it. The charges for use of the facility is Rs.20/= per visit.

g. Violence against Children

According to the Community Members, 59% street children have to bear with abusive language, 39% physical abuse and 2% sexual abuse. Only in 9% cases they could manage help in such cases

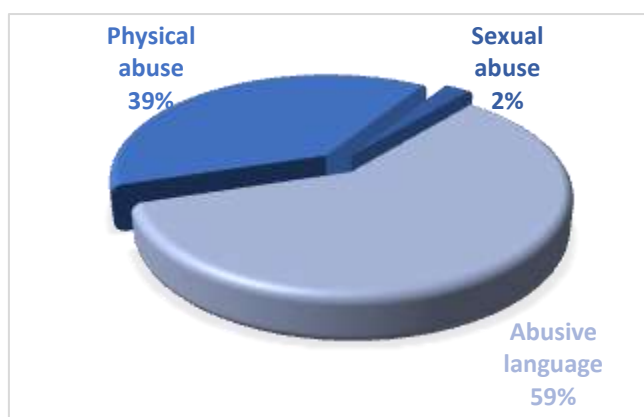


Figure 12: Violence against children in the Community

while in 91% cases no one came forward to extend help to the victims and their families.

3.10. General Recommendations by the Respondents

It was urged that street children, especially the homeless children, must be provided with shelter and basic needs for their welfare and development. It was also stated that a mechanism must be devised for the protection of children and a prompt and positive response in the cases of violence against children.

It was further stated that the children must be provided facilities of free education with food and recreational activities, regardless of their status in the country. During FGDs with the children, the boys expressed their interest in cricket and football while the girls wanted to learn embroidery and stitching.

3.11. Conclusion

It may conveniently be deduced from the above findings that although an overwhelming majority of street children is living with their families but a sizable number of them are involved in begging or selling of miscellaneous items, which is abegging in disguise. Although quite a few street children are receiving formal and / or informal education yet many such children either lack facility of education or they are so badly involved in their family beggary that they and / or their parents do not feel the need for education. Besides, the unregistered refugees are barred from taking formal education and to benefit from the government health facilities. They are at high-risk and the system, in general, fails to cater to the basic needs of children and protection of their rights.

4. CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

The term “Child protection” is about protecting every right of every child. The Child Protection System (CPS) can be formal and informal structures, functions and capacities, combined and coordinated efforts to prevent and respond to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children in a holistic manner.

This system is meant to address a full spectrum of risk factors in the lives of all children and their families to protect children from all forms of abuse, violence, effects of war and conflict, neglect and abandonment, discrimination and exploitation as well as comprehensive care and/or rehabilitation of victims of abuse and neglect.

The major components of CPS include human resources, finance, laws/ policies, governance, monitoring, data collection, protection, response services and care management. The key stakeholders of this system include children, families, communities, and those working at sub-national level or national level as well as those working internationally, and their interaction and relationship *inter se*.^{xvii}

4.1. International Best Practices

The street children phenomenon is a global concern and to deal with it, research-based approaches have been developed. Researchers in Latin America formulated the following approaches towards street children:

- a. Correctional and institutional approach
- b. Rehabilitation approach
- c. Street education or outreach approach, and
- c. Approach based around prevention.

Thomas De Benitez integrated street education and prevention models into a new human-rights based approach.^{xviii}

The focus of the first model ‘correctional and institutional’ is on placing street children in institutions such as prisons or juvenile detention centres and correcting their individual pathologies. The second ‘rehabilitative or protection-oriented’ model, which is more

benevolent and it considers street children as victims of difficult situations. Its objective is to ensure their basic needs of housing, food and support, and to provide rehabilitation programs in order to reintegrate them into mainstream society. The third human-rights based model assumes that street children's problems are caused by weak social structures. Therefore, its education and outreach approach provides education and empowers street children to take collective actions to solve their problems. While its prevention approach attempts to address the root causes of child homelessness. The policy framework of the Chinese government is based on the said approaches.

The CPS with specific reference to ICT in particular is discussed in detail in the following three parts of these children: II. International Normative Framework for Child Protection; (II) the Domestic Policy / Legal Framework for Child Protection; and (III) Domestic Institutional Set-up.

Part I

This Section deals with the international commitments of the GoP as being the State Party to the international instruments duly ratified by it. The provisions of the said international instruments are required to be executed through harmonized policies, legislation and action plans.

4.2. International Normative Framework for Child Protection

The GOP is obligated to protect the children living on its territory not only in terms of its constitutional provisions and domestic laws, framed there-under but also under the international commitments, by virtue of the ratification of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC);^{xix} the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR);^{xx} and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR),^{xxi} ILO Conventions and other instruments.

A brief overview of the provisions of aforesaid instruments is as under:

4.2.1. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

This Convention recognizes special care and assistance for childhood and assistance.^{xxii} to prevent discrimination on the ground of social origin, property, birth or other status (Art. 2) and to take in all actions concerning children in their best interest as a primary consideration (Art. 3(1)).

It requires the State Parties to take all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights enshrined in the Convention (Article 4) to ensure non-discrimination (Art.2), birth registration and ensure proof of identity (Article 7 & 8), as the absence thereof will have an adverse impact on the protection of rights for street children; protection of children from all forms of physical or mental violence, while in the care of parent(s)/ legal guardian (s) or a person having the care of the child; (Article 19.1.); alternative care; for a child deprived of his / her family (Article 20); child's right to access to health care services(Article 24); standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development; (Article 27);right to education on equality basis; (Article 28); right to life (Article 29) and life with dignity (Art.32); right to survival and development (Article 30). This requires a holistic approach and the street children generally with limited range of activities and behavior require careful attention on their behavior and lifestyles; protection from the illicit use of forms of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as well as the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances (Article 33); all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (Article 34); all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare (Article 36); and to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim (Article 39).

4.2.2. General Comment No.21 (2017) on children in street situation

The Committee on the Rights of the Child provides authoritative guidance to States on developing comprehensive, long-term national strategies relating to children in street situations using a holistic child rights approach, addressing both prevention and response in line with the provisions of CRC. The street situation of a child or his / her parents and other family members in the term comes under the “other status”. The Committee urged that

“vulnerability” in conjunction with the resilience and self-reliance of individual children in street situations must be taken into consideration.

4.2.3. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

This instrument re-enforces the right of every minor to measures of protection by virtue of his or her status as a part of his or her family, society and the State. This right of the child is regardless of his or her race, color, sex, language, religion, national or social origin, property or birth (Art.24(1)).

4.2.4. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

The ICESCR requires the Member State to take special measures of protection and assistance on behalf of all children and young persons without any discrimination. Children and young persons should be protected from economic and social exploitation. Further States should also set age limits below which the paid employment of child labour should be prohibited and punishable by law (Art. 10(3))

4.2.5. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children

This instrument supplements the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes and it is also termed as “Palmero Protocol”. The term “Trafficking in persons” is defined thereunder as ‘the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation in terms of the prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (Art.3 (a)). The Member States are obligated to formulate policies and programmes for the effective prevention and control of trafficking in-person.

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized

Crime (not yet ratified by Pakistan) does not limit trafficking to cross-border thus implicitly includes trafficking within a country,^{xxiii} thus implicitly recognizes internal trafficking in-person

4.2.6. ILO Convention on Worst Forms of Child Labor (No. 182)

The GoP ratified International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on Worst Forms of Child Labor (No. 182) in 2001. This instrument is concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Form of Child Labour Convention (C182);^{xxiv}

4.2.7. ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age for Employment

The ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age for Employment^{xxv} requires the Member State to ensure the following:

- effective abolition of child labour and to raise progressively the minimum age for admission to employment or work to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons. (Article 1);
- the minimum age shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, shall not be less than 15 years. (Art.2);
- The minimum age for admission to any type of employment or work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of young persons shall not be less than 18 years. (Art.3); and
- The above conditions of minimum age are not applicable in the case mining and quarrying; manufacturing; construction; electricity, gas and water; sanitary services; transport, storage and communication; and plantations and other agricultural undertakings mainly producing for commercial purposes, but excluding family and small-scale holdings producing for local consumption and not regularly employing hired workers. (Art.5).

4.2.8. Other International Instruments

Pakistan is a party to some other instruments aiming at directly or indirectly improving the rights of the child, such as the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

Against Women (CEDAW);^{xxvi} the Declaration and Agenda for Action adopted at the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, signed in 1996, and reaffirmed by the Yokohama Global Commitment in 2001, the Optional Protocol to the CRC, providing for the prohibition *inter alia*, the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, has been signed and their ratification is in process; South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) Convention on Regional Arrangements for the Promotion of Child Welfare in South Asia 2001; SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution, 2002; and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2000. Target 16.2 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to “end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against, and torture of, children,” and is obligated to take special measures for the prevention of violence against children.

Part II

4.3. The Domestic Policy / Legal Framework for Child Protection

This section gives an overview of the prevailing policy / legal framework for children in Pakistan in general and ICT in particular.

The basic policy guidelines for child protection are enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan and elaborated in terms of the National and institutional policies. The enforcement of the said policy provisions has been realized through action plans, laws and the establishment of institutions.

Brief description of the legal framework is presented below:

4.3.1. Constitutional Provisions

The Constitution of Pakistan lays down the foundational concept of legal equality of citizens and holds that “all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law”.^{xxvii} The education, being a basic human right has been made free and compulsory by virtue of 18th Constitutional Amendment.^{xxviii} Recognizing the special right of protection for children due to their vulnerability, the Article reads that “nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making special provision for the protection of women and children”,^{xxix} and

stipulates that the state shall “make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work, ensuring that children and women are not employed in vocations unsuited to their age or sex....”^{xxx} Further, it envisages provision for the promotion of the socio economic welfare of the people without any discrimination and within the available resources in terms of *inter alia* facilities for work and adequate livelihood with reasonable rest and leisure; social security by compulsory social insurance or other means; basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing housing, education and medical relief as are permanently or temporarily unable to earn their livelihood on account of infirmity, sickness or unemployment.^{xxxi}

4.3.2. Federal Policy Framework

An overview of the policy provisions is as follows:

a. National Child Protection Policy

Presently there is no National Child Protection Policy (NCP). The National Child Protection Policy, approved by the Cabinet on 24th May 2006^{xxxii} was for the period 2006 – 2015.

This policy document provided for adopting legislative and regulatory measures for the protection of children from abuse and exploitation; enhancing administrative and institutional capacities at national, provincial and district level to effectively address the issues of protection and welfare of children; creating public awareness through increased dissemination of information on child protection through media; protection of children at local and community level by setting up CPS; encouraging children’s participation in the process and decisions affecting them; and preventing children from violence at homes, schools, workplaces and institutions.

b. National Plan of Action for Children

The National Plan of Action (NPA) for children, based on NCP, approved by the Cabinet on 24th May 2006^{xxxiii} was for the period 2006 – 2015. This document envisaged measures for the survival, development and protection of children from all forms of neglect, abuse, and exploitation. The main strategic thrust of this was on political commitment, raising awareness, capacity building, advocacy, networking, social mobilization, enhanced allocation of resources, and setting up and strengthening functional structures and systems. However, it was not launched officially.

c. Action Plan for Human Rights

This Action Plan for Human Rights for the promotion and protection of human rights was approved by the then Prime Minister on 13th February, 2016. The document envisages child protection under Outcome 3 ‘Protection of Child Rights’, of the thematic Area – II, titled ‘Implementing Key Human Rights Priorities’. This Plan provides for *inter alia* review of laws, ensuring implementation of Article 25-A; progressively phasing out the child labour, effective enforcement of laws for the protection of children from trafficking for begging, forced child labour and other exploitative forms of work. The implementation of the revised version of the said Action Plan commenced in April 2020.

4.3.3. Federal Legal Framework

a. Pakistan Penal Code, 1860

By virtue of Section 328 of Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) abandonment of a child by parents or person caring is an offence punishable with imprisonment for a term of five to seven years, or with fine of five hundred thousand rupees to seven hundred thousand rupees, or with both.

Further the neglect, abandonment or any willful act of omission or commission leading to cause potential harm or physical or psychological injury to the child falls within the purview of “cruelty to a child” – an offence under Section 328-A.^{xxxiv} The said offence is punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term of one to three years or with a fine of rupees five thousand to twenty five thousand.

b. The Vagrancy Ordinance, 1958

This Ordinance provides for the establishment of Welfare Homes for the shelter, medical treatment and education of beggars. The children involved in begging are required to be kept in a separate Section of the Welfare Home, preferably with his or her family members.

i. Points of Concern

Although this law has existed since 1958, but not even a single Welfare Home for the beggars, especially women, children and infirm persons could be established as yet. Countless destitute / homeless children on roads, bus stops, parks, shrines and markets are witnessed to be begging or working. Their state of living and its impact on their tender minds

is not hard to be assessed, yet the said provisions are hardly invoked. The initiative of CPI discussed in the next Section is only for boys and that too is an eyewash.

It has been observed and confirmed by the officials of ICT Police and Edhi Home that the children found begging or selling miscellaneous items are picked up by the Police and dropped at Edhi Home. Since Edhi Home does not have a mandate to accommodate street children hence the said children are released in the evening after serving them with food and this practice has been going on for years.

Knowing the fact that Edhi Home has no mandate or capacity to accommodate street children, dropping them at Edhi Home doesn't make any sense. This is simply a waste of time and resources. The ICT Police must be obligated to drop the street children at CPI rather than at Edhi Centre. Further, countless beggars on the roads are a reflection of the lack of implementation of this law.

c. The Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Act 2018

Under this law the '*child in need of care*' is defined as a child under 18 years of age who (a) has been subjected to or is under serious threat of being subjected to child abuse or child exploitation while in care of parents, legal guardian or any other person who has custody of the child in any manner; or (b) is unattended, victim of an offence, child domestic and such other workers, found begging, imprisoned with the mother or lives in an immoral environment (Section 5). The Court may even restrict the exercise of parental custody and control of a child where a child is at risk of significant harm and is in need of care; or is subject of child care plan; or a child is subject to emergency powers exercised by the Child Protection Officer under this Act (Section 4).

This Act envisages a child protection mechanism in terms of the establishment of CPI and the Constitution of Child Protection Advisory Board. The Board comprises the Minister – in – Charge as Patron and senior representatives of relevant Divisions, Commissions, Metropolitan Corporation, ICT Police and a Member of National Assembly, NGO and others. The role of this Board is to *inter alia*, advise the Government on child protection and care as per policy / laws and international commitments of the GoP; coordination and implementation of child protection and care mechanism; maintain a child protection and case

management information system (CMIS); and to recognize, regulate and inspect the care giving institutions in ICT.

The Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Rules, 2021 have been framed. The said rules provide for the functions of Director General (DG); certification of care giving Institutions; process of case management and assessment, assistance of Police to the Child Protection Officer (CPO); monitoring and follow-up with the child and the child's family / guardian. Rule 9 authorizes the CPO to take the assistance of the Police Officer of the concerned Station House Officer (SHO) during the process of rescuing a child in need of care.

i. Points of Concern

The child care and protection mechanisms as envisaged in the subject Act are vague and inefficient. The provisions need to be elaborated through comprehensive rules, through amendment in the prevailing Rules. They must explicitly provide for the (a) CPI team; (b) qualification and required expertise / experience of key positions in CPI including *inter alia*, the DG, CPO, and others; (c) service providers (in-house) or on the CPI panel; coordination mechanism, especially with the emergency responders of ICT Police.

The law provides that where the CPO is of the view that the child is in need of care or his/ her custody needs to be secured, a comprehensive report will be completed of the initial assessment or the exercise of emergency power which has to be within 30 days which is not efficient at all. By the completion of the assessment report to exercise emergency power the child would have gone through irreparable loss. Initial assessment and securing the custody and production before the Court of competent authority has to be within 24 hours.

During the course of field research a child was identified at the Bus stop on G.T. Road and the OGCC took the CPO to him but even after weeks the child was not taken in custody. An apprehension was expressed that the child might run and get killed in the traffic and they would face the consequences. Establishing institutions without a skilled, well-equipped and efficient team will not serve the purpose. Scores of destitute, homeless and abandoned children are on the street and the institution with a capacity of 24 children has just one child living there. The areas with high concentration of children working / begging on streets are

known to common people. But the concerned institutions and law enforcement agencies are simply giving a blind eye to the situation.

The mechanism must ensure the proactive approach of CPI in identifying the children in need of care by its own team in addition to assessing the cases referred to it rather than waiting for the police to drop or the cases to be referred to it.

d. The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2012 [Act No. XXIV of 2012]

Pursuant to the constitutional provision this law provides for free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years irrespective of sex, nationality or race in Government schools in ICT. The parents are obligated to ensure that their child attend the school except where the School Management Committee (SMC) is satisfied that the child is incapable of attending the school due to his infirmity or mental incapability; or it is not desirable that the child should be compelled to continue study; or in the absence of School in the neighbourhood.

i. Points of Concern

The law does not have any provision for deterrence of those parents / guardians or persons having custody of the children who simply avoid free education of their children without any justification. Resultantly, many street children living with their families are completely uneducated. The children in the age bracket 5 to 10 interviewed at Bari Imam, stated that each one of them earn about Rs.1000/= per day. Therefore, children are their main resource of their income. Increase in the number of children is directly linked with increase in family income with least expenditure on their care and upbringing. For them the education of their children, their birth registration or any other such process is irrelevant because their children are earning quite enough.

e. The Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance, 2022

Under this Ordinance, “human trafficking” is defined as “obtaining, securing, selling, purchasing, recruiting, detaining, harbouring or receiving a person, notwithstanding his implicit or explicit consent, by the use of coercion, kidnapping, abduction, or by giving or

receiving any payment or benefit, or sharing or receiving a share for such person's subsequent transportation for the purpose of attaining any benefit, or for the purpose of exploitative entertainment, slavery or forced labour or adoption, is limited to transportation in or out of Pakistan while inland trafficking is put under the definition of "kidnapping" under PPC.

i. Points of Concern

This Ordinance does not recognize internal trafficking of children. There is a decades' old practice of bringing children as young as 5-6 years from the remote areas of Pakistan for work in auto garages, tyre shops, hotels / dhabas, etc., and even begging. These children are too young to be removed from the custody of their parents. Their removal from the parents, may be in consideration for cash or kind, is a serious violation of the provision of CRC. But unfortunately it is not recognized under the criminal laws. The internal or domestic trafficking is generally considered under the offence of "kidnapping" which is technically wrong because it involves the consent of the parents/guardian. It is because of this gap in law, the internal or domestic trafficking of children is rampant.

Scores of children are brought to ICT and other big cities for work and, as discussed above, they are denied their basic child rights. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime does not limit trafficking to cross-border thus implicitly includes trafficking within a country and it has not yet been ratified by Pakistan. It is imperative that this Protocol must be ratified by Pakistan and internal trafficking must be recognized as an organized crime of human trafficking.

f. The Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act, 2020

This Act for the purpose of raising alerts, response and recovery of missing, abducted, abused or kidnapped children. This law will be very helpful in monitoring, tracing and recovery of missing children as this research provided sufficient evidences that the beggary rings often force the runaway and unattended children into beggary. Following the enactment of this law, the Ministry of Human Rights launched Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Agency (ZARA) Application (App) on Pakistan Citizen's Portal and helpline 1099 nationwide for the recovery of missing children. The Director General of ZARA supervises the mechanism and

dashboard at the Ministry; and it has been integrated with District Police Officers (DPOs) and Regional Police Officers (RPOs) through their respective dashboard and Short Message Service (SMS) notification. This could be made more effective by integrating it with the data base of street children, which will includes the internally trafficked, abandoned and kidnapped children.

g. The Employment of Children Act, 1991

The law is applicable in ICT and Balochistan.^{xxxv} Under this law the child is defined as ‘a person who has not completed fourteen years of age’ and his / her employment is prohibited in occupations specified in Part I of the Schedule which include transportation business, catering establishment at railway station or the construction of railway or the work near the railway lines; ports and work relating to crackers and fireworks in shops. Additionally it prohibits the employment of children in any workshop where the process (specified in Part II) of the schedule vis-à-vis., bidi-making (mini-cigarettes making); carpet weaving; cloth printing, dying and weaving; manufacturing of cement. matches, explosives and fireworks; mica – cutting and splitting; shells and soap manufacturing; wool cleaning; building and construction industry; manufacturing and / or packing of slate pencils; manufacturing of the products of agate; and manufacturing process involving use of toxics, mercury, manganese, pesticides, etc.^{xxxvi}

The law also provides for the constitution of the National Committee on the Rights of Children to advise the Federal Government in this regard. The punishment for the violation of the said provisions is imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine to the extent of rupees twenty thousand or both. The repetition of the said offence is punishable with imprisonment of upto two years but not less than six months.

The child labour, except in the establishment or a class of establishment mentioned in Part II of the law, discussed hereinabove is allowed, provided it is of not more than consecutive 3 hours, followed by an interval of one hour and a full day weekly holiday. The over-time and child’s working between 7.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m. is prohibited. The employer is obligated to give notice to the Inspector regarding the employment of children in addition to maintaining a register and display a notice containing the abstract of Section 3 and 14 relating the prohibition of children employment and the penalties, respectively. The violation of

provisions under Part III of the Act is an offence punishable with simple imprisonment to the extent of one month or with a fine to the extent of Rs.10,000/=.

The Employment of Children Rules, 1995 provide details regarding the pre-requisite for employing the child or adolescence which includes the provisions of the certificate of fitness by surgeon; register of child workers; cleanliness in the workplace; appropriate ventilation and temperature; lighting; availability of drinking water; precautions against fire; fencing of machinery; first aid and notice of accident in case of death or injury of worker; and that no child is allowed to carry weight in excess of ten kilograms.

i. Points of Concern

Detailed analysis of this law revealed the following gaps:

1. Qualified Application of this law

The Child labour is not banned except in the establishments and processes specified in the Act. Further, regardless of the risk involved in the establishments and processes specified in Part I and II of the Schedule attached with this Act, the child labour is not applicable in the case of an establishment where the children are working in the processes as specified in Part II of the Schedule are being carried out by an occupier with the help of his family or to an school being either established, assisted or recognized by the Government. There is no record of any action taken under this Act explicitly indicating non-implementation of this law.

2. Lack of Provision relating to minimum age for child labour, except in the establishments and processes specified in the Act, 1991

The law does not provide minimum age for the child labour in workshops, hotels/ restaurants/ dhabas, food stalls, selling items on roads, bus stops, markets, etc., which do not fall under the categories of establishment under Part II of the Schedule. Consequently, this law implicitly violates the provision of Article 7 of ILO Convention No. 138, which states that national laws or regulations may permit the employment or work of persons from 13 years of age (or 12 years in countries that have specified the general minimum working age as 14 years) in light work which means, the work will (a) not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and (b) not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority or their

capacity to benefit from the instruction received. However, the minimum working age is 14, but children aged 15 to 17 years may still be categorised as child labour if their work is physically or psychologically damaging.^{xxxvii}

3. Denial of right to education to the children at work

There was hardly any child working at restaurants/ dhabas, auto workshops who were taking education. When the child workers were asked about their desire to study they remained silent while a supervisor stated that now they would not study because here they have ‘ayashi’? He was asked to explain ‘ayashi’ and he said ‘food three times a day’. However, some children involved in car cleaning and staying were taking education and working part time. The perusal of police report and FIRs lodged against the Begging Rings revealed that the children destitute / abandoned / poor children forced into begging were given food and drugs. They also facilitate them in gambling so that they may never come out of this vicious cycle of dependence and begging.

4. Lack of Effective and Efficient Monitoring Mechanism

The conditions for child labour in terms of duration and timing in such establishments not restricted for child labour under this law are specified in Section 7 to 9. On the contrary, children of age bracket 8-12, interviewed by the research team in front of the employer explicitly stated that they don’t study and they are obligated to from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. without any specified interval. The payment is Rs.100/= per day while some shopkeepers claimed to be paying them Rs.250/= per day.

This above situation clearly reflects that the Local Administration is giving a blind eye to a serious violations of prevailing law regarding the employment of children in ICT. In the absence of any provision of minimum age in the law, the children as young as 5-8 years of age had been found working in workshops, tyre shops, restaurants / dhaba and other shops in multiple places.

The Local Administration had no record of any action taken against child labour and according to the Focal Person, Pakistan is a ‘CHILD LABOUR FREE COUNTRY’ and no child labour is taking place in ICT. However, serious violation of legal provisions have been

observed during field research. There was not even a single shop / dhaba / restaurant/ workshop with a Notice displayed under Section 12.

Part III

This Section presents details of the existing institutional set-up for the protection, welfare and development of the children in general and caters to the needs of street children.

4.4. Domestic Institutional Set-up

This section presents existing institutions for children in ICT that are directly or indirectly relevant to street children.

4.4.1. Pilot Child Court

According to a report a pilot Child Court was established by virtue of the Child Protection Act, 2018 in ICT but it was not formally inaugurated. However, according to the stakeholders presently there is no exclusive Child Court and the cases related to children are dealt with by the Family Courts in ICT.

4.4.2. ICT Police

There are 22 Police Stations in Islamabad. The Police Station in F6/2 has been declared as a Model Police Station that has a special desk for children.

The ICT Police is the sole Agency responsible for taking action against the begging in ICT. The data of beggars (against whom actions had been taken) is maintained. According to In charge 15 Helpline Police Mujahid Squad was initially a squadron comprising several teams but due to law and order situation it was reduced to a squad.

In the year 2020, 17 cases under Human Trafficking and Anti-Beggary laws had been filed against the facilitators/ beggars including transgender persons. In the said case 43 beggars were arrested while in 2021 a total of 321 had been arrested.

As per administrative data 171, 267 and 159 cases had been put-in the Court of law in the years 2020, 2021 and 2022 (Jan.to May), respectively. The cumulative results reflect submission of Challan in 98.99% cases leading to conviction in 69.01% cases and acquittal in 1.35% cases. The remaining 28.93% cases are under trial.

Sr. No.	Year	No. of cases	Challan	Conviction	Acquittal	Under trial
1	2022 (up to May 2022)	159	153	93	8	52
2	2021	267	267	176	-	91
3	2020	171	171	143	-	28
Total		597	591	412	8	171

Table 4: Cases under the Vagrancy Ordinance, 1958

The administrative data revealed that during the operations 7169 and 1616 children involved in begging had been moved to Edhi Home and CPI in the year 2020 and 2021, respectively by ICT Police. A substantial decrease in rescue of children in 2021 as compared to 2020 was mainly due to reduction of Police squads dedicated for this purpose from three to one due to law and order situation in ICT.

Year	Edhi Home		CPI		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
2021	1045	542	23	06	1616
2020	4334	2509	243	83	7169

Table 5: Street Children handed over to Service Providers

A high number of the arrest of beggars in 2020 may also be attributed to the fact that in March 2020 the Senate Standing Committee on Interior directed the Ministry of Interior and the ICT Administration to launch a crackdown on organised beggary networks in Islamabad. The directions were given for stern action against criminals who deform bodies of children and make them physically impaired in their lust for money to use them for beggary.^{xxxviii}

In 2022 (Jan. – May) 2896 children of both genders were shifted by Mujahid Squad of Police to Edhi Home and CPI. Additionally, 170 children had been moved to Edhi Center by ICT Police. However, it is to be noted that most of the children are repeatedly taken in custody and released. One such child was brought to Kashan (shelter Home in Rawalpindi, discussed in clause (b) of Section 4.4.4.) eight times.

It has been observed that the contractors / facilitators of beggars protect themselves by making the beggars sell coconut. They provide alcohol and drugs (charas) to the beggars and also indulge them in gambling. They were the residents of Sabzi Mandi, Khanna, Shahzad

Town, Golra, Secretariat, I-9, Noon and Tarnol. The gangs are of Afghan national, Musali / Shari, Kingra, Lobahni, and Patoani. They are the residents of Dhok Kala Khan, Zia Masjid, Sohan, H-9 slum area, Afghan Basti adjacent to Police Line signal, ICT double road and G-11 Kashmir road slum area having a community of Musali.

The facilitators of beggars trap the police officials and then blackmail them for initiating disciplinary action against them, which makes it difficult for the law enforcement agencies to lay a hand on them.

i. Points of Concern

a. Lack of Data of Street Children / Beggars

Lack of data relating to street children is a major hurdle in tracking the kidnapped, abducted, abandoned, runaway and such other children who are deceitfully or forcefully involved in begging rackets.

b. Corruption

One of the major issues in prevention and control of begging is bribery. Quite a few stakeholders stated that they witnessed Police extracting money from the beggars and allowed them to continue begging, especially in Golra. The children begging/ working in the street reported that the Police Official snatched money from children begging or working in street.

Official reports further validated the primary data that mafias are patronized by the influential persons including Police officials. In September 2020 eight cops had been identified for patronizing beggars in ICT. ^{xxxix}

c. Ineffective Institutional Set-up for the Support of Children at-Risk

The official reports and the statements of the key stakeholders identified a general practice of police that they collect the street children from various sites and drop them at Edhi Home. This exercise is by no means a measure for the prevention and control of child labour / beggary. It is a mere eye-wash because the Edhi Home doesn't have a mandate to keep street children. Therefore, Edhi Home just keeps them for a few hours, give them food and releases them by the end of the day, which is a futile exercise. The only available Centre for the rescue of street children is CPI but unfortunately it is meant only for boys. Further it is

located in Humak which is far away and ICT Police doesn't have sufficient resources to meet the fuel expenditure involved.

4.4.3. Local Administration

According to the Focal Person of Chief Commissioner ICT, there is no data of action taken against child labour. A country-wide child labour survey is in process. Once it is done then policy will be formulated for appropriate action. Some operations were conducted in the area of Noon where children were found working in brick kilns. Since they were helping their parents hence no action was taken against them. He was of the view that it is good for the children to work as they are at least learning skills.

4.4.4. Child Protection Institute (CPI)

a. Federal

This institute was established in 2021 under the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Act 2018. It is aimed to provide protection services to vulnerable and at-risk children. The CPI receives reports of children in need of care; assessment of their needs; required services for child care from the relevant institutions; maintains and updates the record of case management reports of children in care and performs other relevant tasks.

The child in need of care at CPI has to go through the process of initial assessment, followed by comprehensive assessment. Where the CPO is of the view that where a child is in need of care or his /her custody needs to be secured, a comprehensive report of the initial assessment or the exercise of emergency power will be completed. Upon securing custody of the child the CPO prepares an interim child care plan. Generally, the consent of the parents / guardian / caregiver is taken for offering services to the child in need of care, except where the child is not safe with the child's parents/guardian or caregiver. In such a case, the CPO shall immediately make an application to the Court for care and custody of the child in alternative care.

The institute has a capacity of 250 – 350 children at a time and it received 113 children at risk from 1st October 2021 to 15th May 2022. Of the said children 38 were from ICT, followed by 33 from Punjab, 26 (illegal immigrants) from Afghanistan, 13 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 02 from Sindh, 01 from Kashmir and 26 from Afghanistan. The children

at-risk are referred to by the Police. Helpline 1099 and some were identified by its team during field research. Averages of 25-30 children at-risk per month are benefitted from the CPI. The CPI secures funds from private sources, UNICEF and ILO.

Occupation	Sexually Abused	Drug Addict	Malnourished	Other Diseases	Total
Beggars	01	06	40	03 Skin Disease 01 Chickenpox	51
Trash Picker	02	03	10	03 Skin Disease	18
Child Labour	01	04	15	01 HIV	21
Total	04	13	65	08	90

Table 6: Children Received by Child Protection Institute, ICT

The CPI provides the children at-risk a short term shelter for maximum 3 days afterward they are handed over to the parents / guardians of the children or placed in appropriate alternative care, subject to the Orders of the Court. However, the OGCC team observed a child in CPI staying there for one and a half months, as per orders of the Court of competent jurisdiction.

The record indicates that out of 113 street children 65 were malnourished, 13 drug addict, 4 sexually abused, 8 with skin disease and one was HIV positive. The medical examination data of 23 children was missing.

According to the CPO, the CPI is mapping the Shelter Homes in ICT for monitoring of their services as per standard. The institutions in this regard have been identified at Ghorī Town, Pakistan Town and Soan gardens in ICT. Multi-stakeholders meetings have been held for collaboration.

i. Points of Concern

The major concerns are the legal provisions relating to the establishment of this institution, discussed in detail in clause (i) of Section 4.3.3.(e), above. Additionally, there must be standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for coordination of CPI team with ICT Police, service providers and other stakeholders need to be framed.

b. Provincial Child Protection Institute

The Child Protection Bureau (CPB) in Rawalpindi rescues the children in need of care in twin cities. The administrative data revealed that 88 children residents of ICT were rescued during a span of one year (01/01/2021 – 31/12/2021). The street children were taken in

custody from the locations including Mandi Mor, Double Road, Rahmanabad, Chandni Chowk, Sadiqabad, Gulzar e Quaid, Pirwadhai Adda, Shakriyal, Qadeer Khan Road, Holy Family hospital, Dubai Plaza, Dhok Kala Khan, CPI Rawalpindi, Faizabad, Trali Adda Khana, Arshi Mashid, Satellite Town, Faizabad Adda, Shamsabad, Khanna Pul, Saddar, Chandi Chowk, Awan Market, Quaid-e-Azam hospital, Commercial Market, Kuri Road, Zia Masjid and Sir Syed Chowk Rawalpindi. The said children were abandoned, neglected, runaway involved in begging, selling of items or shoe polishing.

4.4.5. Federal Educational System

a. Islamabad Model Schools and Colleges

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 11-13 of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2012 (derived from Article 25-A of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973), the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MoFEPT)'s policy requires establishment of school in every 5-6 kilometer in ICT.

The Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) has a policy mandate to ensure admission to all children keeping in view the intake capacity of the school (45 per Section).^{xi} The policy also envisages a thorough campaign highlighting *inter alia*, current projects vis-à-vis., STEM, Free meal, digital classrooms, career counseling and others.

In view of the policy provision for admission strictly on merits, the street children / children from under-privileged strata of society lack opportunity in the formal educational system. The BECS and CSOs' schools like PKS System and others, discussed above, impart informal education and prepare them for Board examination. This helps in mainstreaming the children of the informal educational system into the formal educational set-up.

Presently FDE has 425 schools across ICT which include 74, 71, 79, 67, 77 and 57 schools in Urban 1, Urban 2, Nilore, Sihala and Tarnol. The cumulative data revealed that these schools have capacity to induct 1992 female students in Primary Schools; 3507 male students in Middle School, 3971 students in Secondary Co-education schools. While 4393, 1299 and 245 students can be inducted in higher female schools, male schools and Co-Education schools, respectively (See Table "8").^{xli} Zone-wise detail is enclosed as Annexure 'C'.

b. National Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC)

The NAVTTC is offering multiple technical training programmes in addition to certifying Pakistani skilled workforce and recognition of prior learning. According to the Focal Person who participated in FGD, the students enrolled under skill training workshops are given certification. The children under 14 years of age having received informal training at the workshop can be enrolled for certifications. The workshops conducted by NAVTTC brush-up their skills for their better prospects in life.

		Type of Government of Schools in ICT																Grand Total
Schools		Primary				Middle				Secondary				Higher Secondary				
		Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	
No Schools		25	37	127	189	11	16	32	59	42	51	9	102	41	27	7	75	425
Capacity		27232	19499	52621	99352	28712	25187	5727	59626	16700	14190	6331	32521	15313	9579	2045	26937	218436
Class Rooms		631	532	1501	2664	564	542	162	1268	385	353	59	797	273	207	45	525	5254
Strenght of Students	Max	25240	21280	60040	106560	22560	21680	6480	50720	15400	14120	2360	31880	10920	8280	1800	21000	210160
	Min				0				0				0				0	0
Capacity to induct		-1992	1781	7419	7208	-6152	-3507	753	-8906	-1300	-70	-3971	-641	-4393	-1299	-245	-5937	-8276

Table 7: Cumulative Data of Federal Government Schools in ICT

c. Basic Education Community Schools (BECS) System

The BECS has a wide network of 248 primary community schools across ICT with a total strength of 7500 to 8000 plus students with no age restriction for enrolment. It is the largest set-up of informal education in Pakistan with an 80 percent passing ratio. The children are also prepared for the Board examination.

The recruitment of teachers is voluntary-based, however, an honorarium of Rs.12,000/= per month is given to each teacher. Being community – based the teacher herself / himself has to arrange a room to be used for teaching purposes. While the

administration of BECS provides facilities in the school including the text books, Information Education Communication (IEC) material, daris / chattai (mats) for the sitting of students on the floor. The average cost incurred per school is Rs.30,000/= to Rs.35,000/= per month. These schools also serve as day care centres for children whose parents are working. Some NGOs like Salani Trust provide ration (groceries) to the families of students.

Generally, children of Afghan refugees are given admission only in the informal educational system. However, the children referred by the Afghan Embassy and / or UNCHR are admitted in formal schools as well. They do not have to pay



for public transport. All madressah (religious schools) have been obligated to introduce Mathematics, English and General Science in their curricula.

The children are motivated for education through the media. Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has acquired four channels for children which includes educational cartoon programmes. Additionally it is in the process of developing digital content in this regard. Accelerated programme will be developed for out of school children in collaboration with the international development partners.

Fazeelat Raheem	Masters in Mass Communication from Punjab University Current Position: Employee of Press Information Department
Iqra Hameed	Medical Degree Current Position: Lecturer in Federal Govt. Poly Clinic
Suleman Zada	Gold Medalist from Iqra University
Humera Khalid	Masters in Psychology from Quaid-e-Azam University
Mahnoor Anjum	BSC Software Eng. From Virtual University Current Position: Content Writer

Table 8: Success Stories of BECS

d. Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP)

According to the Administrative data shared there are 68,616 (male:38,404 and female: 30,212) children out of school in ICT, which include the street children.

Status	Male	Female	Total
Never been to school	26,082	19,961	46,043
Dropped -out	12,322	10,251	22,573
Total	38,404	30212	68,616

Table 9: Out of School Children in ICT

Under the BISP, the out of school children are identified and have been given monthly stipends. Out of nine million children out of school across the country 4.5 million children have been successfully inducted in school and they are receiving monthly stipends. The amount of stipend for girls is slightly higher than that of boys.

Class	Age Limit	Stipend	
		Girls	Boys
Primary	4-12 years	2000	1500
Secondary		3000	2500
Higher Secondary		4000	3500

Table 10: BISP Stipend Programme

e. The Maternal and Child Health Welfare Center (MCWC)

The MCWC working in the same building where CPI is located provides informal education to the children from slum areas of Model Town. The record revealed that 25 students enrolled in informal education and 10 students enrolled in government school for admission, while 30 students in pre-school.

4.4.6. Provincial - Non-Formal Basic Education Schools of Literacy Punjab

The Administrative data revealed interventions in the area of Pirwadhai, Rawalpindi to benefit the Afghan Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the year 2019. About 300 children (male 167 and female 133) had been registered in the said year. Psychological support sessions and recreational activities sessions were conducted with them to restore their confidence level. They had been imparted informal education. In some cases crash courses were organized under a speedy literacy programme. The children were afforded hard components including copies, books, recreational and learning materials to develop their soft skill. Their families or siblings were imparted skills in addition to grants to help them earn their livelihood. The cost incurred in this regard is about 10 million.

Further a total of 200 children (2020: male 40 and female 60) and 100 (2021: male 90 and female 10) were enrolled under NFBE schools at Dhok Mustakeem, Rawalpindi to provide support mentioned hereinabove to the street children, including the children from Islamabad as well. The cost incurred was 12 million and 30 million in the year 2020 and 2021, respectively. Further details of the initiatives are as under:

- **Three – year accelerated programme:** Under this programme of informal education, a child is prepared at primary level to pursue formal education in routine.
- **Orphan support programme:** The orphans referred to it by the community are sponsored. The children enrolled in the programme are provided 93 Euro per month upto the age of 24.
- **Child and Women Development Programme:** The street children are enrolled under this programme and are given 93 Euro per month. Approximately 6400 persons have been sponsored, which include 750 street children.

- **Ramazan Food programme:** for distribution of food stuff during the holy month of Ramazan.
- **Qurbani Meat Distribution Programme:** Meat is distributed to under-privileged families on Eid-ul Adha.

4.4.7. Oversight Bodies

a. Parliament of Pakistan

Parliament plays a crucial oversight role in ensuring governments' compliance with international human rights obligations, and translating them into national legislation and policies. Pursuant to the parliamentary mandate to oversee the human rights situation, the National Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs has constituted a Special Committee on Child Rights-CRC. The said Committee is vested with the mandate to *inter alia*, take stock of the overall status of implementation of child rights related laws enacted by the Parliament through presentations by relevant organisations and individual experts of various fields

b. The National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC)

This Commission was constituted by virtue of the National Commission on the Rights of Child Act, 2017. It is an Oversight Body and with reference to legal policy and reforms, the Commission performs an advisory function and recommends proposals on child legislation across the country.^{xlii}

c. Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman)

The Wafaqi Mohtasib is vested with the mandate to diagnose, investigate, redress and rectify any injustice done to a person through mal-administration by means of formal and informal grievance redressal mechanisms. The Office of Wafaqi Mohtasib also addresses the systemic issues through evidence – based recommendations and other available means. Keeping in view the special measures required for the protection and promotion of child rights a Grievance Commissioner for Children (GCC) has been appointed in addition to setting up of an Advisory National Committee on Children.

4.4.8. Civil Society Organizations

a. Edhi Home

It has the capacity of 250-350 children at a time. However, the services to the street children do not fall within the mandate of Edhi Home. Yet the street children are afforded short-term shelter with food (3 times a day) and other immediate services, if required by the children at – risk dropped at Edhi Home by Islamabad Police. The said children are handed over to their parents / guardian or release them after 12-15 hours, even if nobody approaches Edhi Home for their custody. So far about 400 children at-risk have been benefited by the services of Edhi Home, Islamabad. The representative of Edhi Home ICT stated that a few years ago he started imposing a fine of Rs.1000/= on the parents/ guardian of the child beggars and that led to substantial decrease in child beggary in ICT.

Male		Female		Total
Healthy	Disable	Healthy	Disable	
113	3	53	1	170

Table 11: Street children facilitated

b. Pehli Kiran School (PKS) System^{xliii}

It is a network of eight community schools providing education to out of school, destitute children in ‘Katchi Abadi’ (urban slum) communities.

Year	Girls	Boys	Total
2022 (Jan.-May)	43.4	75.6	119
2021	35.25	73.16	108.41
2020	26.75	77.5	104.25
2019	25.34	91.66	117

Table 12: Average Percentage of Enrolments in PKS System

According to the Administration of the PKS, it has a mobile infrastructure that moves with transient, urban migrant communities, and has flexible operations to ensure continuity of the education of its beneficiaries. Efforts are made to deliver in a high-quality low-cost package. The fee ranges between Rs.50/= to Rs.120/= with provision of sibling discount. So far 3560 children have benefitted from its 10 schools. Recently an initiative of imparting vocational training has also been commenced.

The children for PKS are identified by its own team in addition to the children referred by the community. The PKS also ensures birth registration of its students and provides health services with the cooperation of Al-Khidmat Camps and Khadija Foundation. The children are also afforded food/fruits once in a week.

c. Islamic Welfare Pakistan

This organization is a UK-based international relief and development charity working in over 40 countries. Islamic Relief Pakistan is supporting more than 6000 orphans in Pakistan on a one-to-one (OTO) basis, enabling them to meet their fundamental needs. It has initiated a child protection project in Rawalpindi/Islamabad to protect the street children, enrolment in the non-formal and formal education system, family tracing, and reunification and skill development for marginalized families, and abolish beggary. This project also supports the city government/administration of District Rawalpindi in strengthening child care and protection mechanisms.

d. Sultana Foundation

This organization commenced its work in the year 1994 with a 2-Room Primary School for Boys and now it has Primary School, separate High Schools for girls and boys and Special Children School. The High Schools are registered with FDE and affiliated with the Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Islamabad. The special children are regularly examined by specialist doctors and recommended medical treatment is provided to them. All Educational, medical treatment and other facilities like books, uniform and pick and drop services are free for the children. Additionally a Women Vocational Center has also been established for basic education and vocational training skills. The Grievance Commissioner WM visited the school and witnessed girls learning cooking with great interest. The organization also offers diplomas in plumbing to boys.

Level of School	Strength of Students	Average Class	No. of Teachers
Primary School	1039	32	44
Girls High School	670	45	20
Boys High School	570	40	23
Special Children School	70	35	7

Table 13: Level of School Strength of Students Average Class No. of Teachers

In order to cater to the needs of children who cannot attend the formal school, mouqa (on the spot) schools have also been established in places with a high number of out of school children, such as brick kilns.

e. SPARC

The SPARC has three Centers in Islamabad that mobilizes targeted communities and provides day time shelter to the street children with food – once a day, mental health services in terms of psychological counseling. The medical camps are organized there for the screening of the children, diagnosis of diseases and to refer them to hospitals in addition to their vaccination and legal aid.

The total cost incurred is approximately rupees 8 million per year. The organization is supported by the government, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and has its own savings.

The administrative data for the year 2019 revealed that 123 children (51 boys and 72 girls) of the age bracket of 5-11 years had been registered. Medical and psychological counseling services had been provided to 30 and 4 children, respectively. Formal, informal education and vocational training were imparted to 113, 210 and 75 children, respectively.

About 69 children (28 boys and 41 girls) had been registered in 2020 and only informal education was given to them. In 2021, about 1222 children (55 boys and 67 girls) were registered by SPARC. The details revealed services in terms of psychological counseling, formal education, informal education and vocational training to 04, 78, 155 and 296 children, respectively. The medical history of the said children revealed that they had been subjected to verbal abuse, physical abuse, psychological abuse and sexual abuse in 55%, 45%, 55% and 10%, respectively.

Street children registered: 1222

Children experienced abuse: -

- Verbal: 55%
- Physical: 45%
- Psychological: 55%
- Sexual: 10%

Box 9: Administrative Data (year 2021) of SPARC Drop-In Centres in ICT

f. Master Ayub's Park School

The average strength of students is 300, however, during COVID-19 situation the number of students declined to 230. His cause is supported by his own students. Presently, 8-9 senior students of Master Ayub's Park School have volunteered to teach students of the same school.

His cause is also supported by the National Education Foundation (NEF), Turkish NGO and other philanthropists. The support is in terms of bags, text books and other stationery for the students. The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has allocated space for his school in F-9 Park for his school with three portable toilets and some sheds. One of the sponsor installed LED lights there. The first child whom he taught in 1982 is now working in the Ministry of Education.

The Constitution provides for free and compulsory education to all but the Board examination fee is a serious challenge to the children belonging to poor families, it must be waived off.

Box 10: *Statement of a Philanthropist*

Master Ayub was awarded a medal by the Queen Elizabeth, Turkish Government and Civil Defense. He requested for the support to his school in terms of some infrastructure and furniture as presently the children sit on the floor. He urged that the fee of Board examination of students must be waived-off as his students are the poorest of the poor and cannot afford to pay the fee. The National Education Foundation (NEF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with him for the support of his school but that couldn't be implemented as yet.

4.4.9. Helplines

The Ministry of Human Rights launched an emergency helpline 1099 for reporting the incidents of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence, etc. in the country and it provides legal advice, redressal and referral services to the complainants.^{xliv}

i. Point of Concern

Multiple GOs and NGOs/CSOs are working for the protection, welfare and development of street children and have helplines but unfortunately they are working in silos. There is no mechanism for the transfer of these calls to the concerned institution. Just a couple of months ago a University Professor informed the Wafaqi Mohtaisb's Grievance Commissioner of Children that a child with broken chains is on the road near G-14 and should he be rescued urgently. She immediately called 1122 and explained the situation and she was advised to call on 15 helpline. When she called on the 15 she was told that its Rawalpindi 15 helpline and she note down the relevant contact no. for ICT. This is such a pathetic situation, if a victim herself/himself having escaped from a situation would have called, would that victim have the facility to note down the number? The staff of the Grievance Commissioner in the meantime contacted the relevant Police Station to rescue the child and she was told to ask the informer to bring the child to the Police Station. The response of the Police Officer reflected his unprofessional approach and incompetency in handling this serious situation relating to a child at risk. By the time anything could be done to rescue the child he was taken away by some people, who could have been anyone.

4.5. Conclusion

In view of the above, it is clear that there is no comprehensive policy for child protection in the country and a holistic plan for the children in general and street children in particular. However, several piece-meal policy initiatives for the education and training and other facilities for the street children in ICT have been taken (see the figure 13 on page No.65). Nevertheless, the main issues include, *inter alia*, lack of awareness, limited outreach and shortcomings in coordinated efforts to motivate and reach-out to the children in need, especially on the part of the government agencies. It's the State responsibility to ensure protection, welfare and development of the children. Since education up to the age of 16 is free and compulsory, therefore, all concerned agencies, NGOs, /CSOs must endeavor to persuade the children regardless of the fact that they are working, they must get education.

There is a network of government schools across ICT and it is the responsibility of the Area Officer of FDE to ensure that every child in his / her jurisdiction gets admissions in the school even then an overwhelming majority of street children are out of school. Further,

many government organizations and NGOs / CSOs are providing informal education to prepare the students for Board examination. The Area Officer must link – up with such organizations as well as the shops, workshops, restaurant / dhabas and ensure that the street children get into this informal educational system and to be mainstreamed in the formal set-up.

Further, countless youth are working in auto workshops, most of whom are supporting their families hence withdrawing them from those workshops would neither be possible nor benefit their poor families. However, the employers could be obligated to ensure that the child takes formal / informal education. The NAVTTC may motivate the employers to get the skills of children working with them certified for their better perspective while providing some incentives to such employers to help children in this regard.

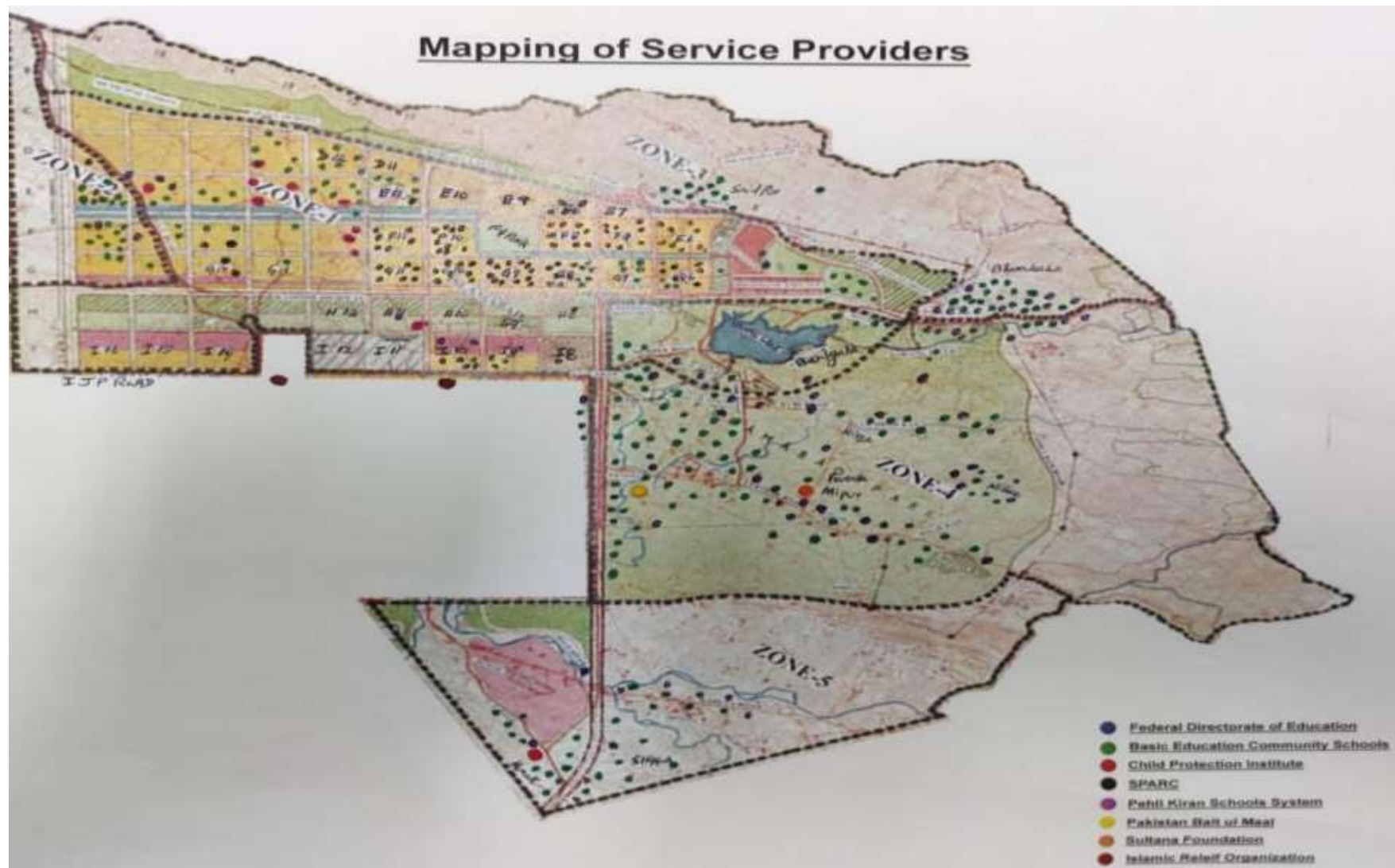


Figure 13: Bird's eye view of the Service Facilities for Children in ICT

5. WAY FORWARD

All stakeholders have recognized the phenomenon of child begging /labour and other forms of economic exploitation of children as one of the most pressing problems in the field of child rights. The research findings reflect that, despite the efforts being made by a number of actors, there are still many shortcomings and challenges in dealing with prevention and combating child begging.

The following recommendations deal with the systemic issues, as identified in the research in prevention and suppression of child begging/labour in ICT. Since the phenomenon of child begging / labour is a common issue across the country, therefore the measures proposed would be of significant assistance to the key stakeholders in initiating reforms in other parts of the country as well:

Sr.No.	Recommendation	Agencies concerned
5.1.	Registration and Profiling of Street Children	
	All children in street situations (living, working, begging, etc.) need to be registered with their complete profile, followed by their birth registration by the competent authority. In this regard a portal / centralized Database, already with NADRA, can be used. The law enforcement agencies, Local Administration and all service providers in public and private sectors and NGOs/ CSOs may be connected with it and be enabled to update it with the profiling / registration of children rescued or assisted by them. This database will be helpful in tracing and recovery of missing children from any part of the country.	M/o Interior, NADRA, Local Administration jointly with the service providers (GOs & NGOs)
5.2.	Legal Reforms	
5.2.1.	The Employment of Children Act, 1991	M/o Law and Justice & M/o Human Rights
a.	The law must define a minimum age for a child to be employed even for light work, as per provisions of ILO Convention 182.	
b.	The employers must be obligated to facilitate the education of children under employment. The ignorance thereof must be an offence punishable with maximum imprisonment of two years and	

	minimum one year or with fine to the extent of Rs.100,000/= and not less than rupees twenty five thousand.	
c.	The child below the age of 18 years must not be removed from the custody of his /her parents for the sake of child labour / begging;	
d.	The penalties under Section 14 of the Act, 1991 must be raised to imprisonment to the extent of 3 years and not less than 1 year with fine of Rupees.200,000/= and not less than rupees 50,000/=.	
5.2.2.	The Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance, 2002	M/o Law & Justice, M/o Interior, M/o Human Rights & FIA
	The internal or domestic trafficking of women and children must be recognized as a punishable offence under the term of “TRAFFICKING”.	
5.2.3.	The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2012 [Act No. XXIV of 2012]	M/o Law & Justice, M/o Federal Education & Professional Training & FDE
	The law must provide punishment to the parents / guardian or person having custody of the child for not facilitating formal / informal education to their children without any valid reasons.	
5.3.4.	The Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Act 2018	M/o Law and Justice & M/o Human Rights
a.	The law must envisage a comprehensive, effective and efficient institutional set-up based around four approaches vis-à-vis., correctional and institutional; rehabilitation; outreach, and prevention approaches.	
b.	Appropriate arrangements for the protection, welfare and development of street children, in the <i>inter alia</i> , following terms must be made:	
i.	The CPI must be located in an easily accessible place.	
ii.	The CPI must have separate sections / blocks for the accommodation of children belonging to all genders and have facilities of informal / formal education and skill development facilities.	
iii.	Each CPI must have a team of doctors, psychologists and nurses.	

iv.	The provisions relating the (a) CPI team; (b) qualification and required expertise / experience of key positions in CPI including <i>inter alia</i> , the DG, CPO, and others; (c) service providers (in-house) or on the CPI panel must be explicitly defined and elaborated in the Rules.	
v.	The Rules must explicitly provide for the rescue of children in need within 24 hours. The delay in rescue must be recorded in writing and verified by the DG, CPI.	
vi.	There must be an explicit timeline for the completion of the process of rescue and assessment.	
vii.	The mechanism must ensure proactive approach of CPI team's officials in identifying the children in need of care by its own team in addition to assessing the cases referred, rather than waiting for the police to drop or the cases to be referred to it.	
viii.	The fee for DNA test of the child in care of CPI must be waived -off.	
c.	There must be Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) with reference to the following:	
i.	Coordination of CPI team with ICT Police; service providers and other emergency responders.	
ii.	Referral of cases where parents / guardians are involving their children in beggary, identified by CPI to ICT Police for legal proceedings against the parents / guardian of child for cruelty to a child under Section 328 and 328-A and in case of vagrancy it must refer the case to Police for immediate action under the Vagrancy law.	
5.3.	Administrative Measures	
5.3.1.	Strict disciplinary proceedings must be taken against the Officials for giving a blind eye to child labour and not taking action against the employers violating the provisions of the Act, 1991.	Local Administration & ICT Police
5.3.2.	Severe punishment must be awarded to corrupt Officials.	M/o Interior & ICT Police
5.3.3.	The existing schools of FDE with capacity to intake children must be utilized for the formal and informal education of the out of school/ street children.	M/o Federal Education & Professional Training & FDE
5.3.4.	To bridge informal technical skills with formal skills, the employers/	M/o Federal

	occupiers of workshops (auto or electric) must be encouraged and incentivized for allowing the underage workers to take-up certification courses.	Education & Professional Training & NAVTTC
5.4.	Ratification of International Human Rights Instrument	
	The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons needs to be ratified by Pakistan, in the best interest of women and children, while considering all relevant factors in this regard.	M/o Foreign Affairs & M/o Human Rights
5.5.	Strengthening the Mechanism of Informal Education and its Transforming into the Formal Educational System	
	The current practice of informal education by CSOs/ NGOs, GOs, and philanthropists must be supported, encouraged and replicated in other areas with high concentration of street children. The University students must be tasked to educate the street children as part of their degree requirement. The Universities in collaboration with said institutions / philanthropists should involve their students. The students could be given compulsory assignment to educate the street children of their areas in consideration of specified credit hours on successful completion of their assignment.	M/o Federal Education & Professional Training, Higher Education Commission, BECSs, CSO/NGOs, GOs, and Philanthropists
5.6.	Awareness - Raising	
	There is need to initiate awareness- raising campaign for:	M/o Federal Education & Professional Training; M/o Human Rights, M/o Information & Broadcasting, ICT Police, Local Administration, Universities, CSO/NGO GOs & Media.
a.	Promotion and protection of the rights of street children to eradicate harmful attitudes, customs and practices against children. This will also lead to changing mind-set of the masses;	
b.	Education of the street children;	

b.	Prevention of the removal of children from their parents' custody for the sake of child labour; and	
c.	To discourage beggary. The people must be sensitized on the beggarization mafia using innocent children for their monetary gains at the cost of their basic rights, <i>inter alia</i> , rights to life, security, dignity, health, education, protection and enabling environment.	
5.7.	Refugees	
5.7.1.	Registration	Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees, UNHCR & NADRA
	The refugees / asylum seekers still unregistered must be registered at the earliest. In case of delay on the part of the government provisional cards must be issued.	
5.7.2.	Provisions of Basic Needs	M/o National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination & M/o Federal Education & Professional Training.
	The refugees, regardless of their status, must be ensured health facilities and formal / informal education to their children.	
5.8.	Capacity Building	
	The officials of CPIs and the relevant Police Officials need to be trained in rescuing the child at-risk.	M/o Human Rights, ICT Police, CSOs/NGOs, GOs and International Development Partners
5.9.	Referral Mechanism	
	A strong referral mechanism with provision for the referral of calls on helplines for quick support to the children in need has to be established.	M/o Human Rights, M/o Interior and International Development Partners

A high degree of commitment by all concerned Agencies / key stakeholders is required for implementation of the above recommendations.

The Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat being an Oversight Body, vested with a mandate to address the systemic issues may provide a platform through the Office of its Grievance Commissioner for Children to bring all key stakeholders onboard and to monitor and evaluate progress in implementation of the above recommendations.

ANNEXURES

I. List of the Participants of Stakeholders’ Focus Group Discussion

S.No	Name	Department / Designation
1	Ms. Syeda Viqar-un-Hashmi	Advisor/ Grievance Commissioner for Children & Research Team Lead, WMS Head Office Islamabad.
2	Mr. Adnan Ahmad	Investigation Officer, WMS.
3	Ms. Faiqa Arshad	Assistant, WMS.
4	Mr. Sajid Hussain	Assistant Private Secretary, WMS.
5	Mr. Shafiq Hussain Khokhar	Director General, NAVTTC, MOFE & PT
6	Mr. Muhammad Shahid	Director, Social Welfare Department, Rawalpindi.
7	Brig (R). Amjad Javaid	Director, Sultana Foundation
8	Ms. Abida Abbasi	Project Coordinator, Sultana Foundation
9	Ms. Asiya Arif	Executive Director, SPARC
10	Mr. Iqbal Khan	SP (Ops) ICT Police.
11	Mr. Irshad Abroo	DSP Investigation, ICT Police.
12	Ms. Tabassum Naz	Deputy Director, FDE.
13	Ms. Rabia Mariam	Assistant Director, PBM.
14	Mr. Shakil Ahmad	Incharge EDHI Homes
15	Syed Abdul Salam	Deputy Director (Ops) NADRA
16	Major (R) Abdul Quddus	Director NADRA
17	Mr. Awais Malik	Child Protection Officer, CPI
18	Mr. Masroor Ahmad	Assistant Director, PBM
19	Mr. Noor-ur-Rehman	Child Protection Coordinator, Islamic Relief

II. List of Tools

- 1. Questionnaires (for semi-structured in-depth interviews)**
 - 1.1. Street Children
 - 1.2. Parents / Community Members
 - 1.3. Service Providers
 - 1.4. Law Enforcement Agencies
- 2. Guidelines of Focused Group Discussions (FGDs)**
 - 2.1. Street Children
 - 2.2. Parents / Community Members
- 3. Administrative Data Templates** (Customized for each category of stakeholders)
- 4. Enumerator’s Daily Field Activity report**
- 5. Geographic Mapping of Field Research in ICT (Zone-wise)**
- 6. MS Excel Statistical tool kit**

III. List of Enumerators

Sr. No.	Name of the Enumerator	Qualification
1.	Ms. Fatima Akbar Khan	M.Phil. International Development Studies
2.	Mr. Shah Hussain	M.Phil. International Development Studies
3.	Mr. Bilal Khan	B.S. International Relations
4.	Mr. Hassan Ali Khan	B.S. International Relations
5.	Ms. Tayyaba Shakeel	B.S. International Relations
6.	Mr. Saad Kiani	B.S. International Relations
7.	Mr. Aurangzeb Nawaz Khan	B.S. International Relations

‘D’

IV. Institutions under Federal Directorate of Education

Zone	Urban 1																	
		Type of institution																Grand Total
Schools		Primary				Middle				Secondary				Higher Secondary				
		Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	
No Schools		2	1	27	30	0	1	6	7	9	9	2	20	8	8	1	17	74
Capacity		4270	3627	15710	23607	7615	7593	947	16155	4861	4606	133	9600	6109	4988	1420	12517	61879
Class Rooms		102	12	429	543	157	150	27	334	123	98	8	229	83	95	28	206	1312
Strenght of Students	Max	4590	540	19305	24435	7065	6750	1215	15030	5535	4410	360	10305	3735	4275	1260	9270	59040
	Min				0				0				0				0	0
Capacity to induct		320	-3087	3595	828	-550	-843	268	-1125	674	-196	227	705	-2374	-713	-160	-3247	-2839

Zone	Urban 2																	
		Type of institution																Grand Total
Schools		Primary				Middle				Secondary				Higher Secondary				
		Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	
No Schools		0	0	30	30	0	1	3	4	8	7	3	18	10	9	0	19	71
Capacity		3020	3569	16475	23064	6521	7037	1092	14650	4326	4286	306	8918	4814	3399	0	8213	54845
Class Rooms		68	88	386	542	119	149	26	294	89	101	6	196	110	76	0	186	1218
Strenght of Students	Max	3060	3960	17370	24390	5355	6705	1170	13230	4005	4545	270	8820	4950	3420	0	8370	54810
	Min				0				0				0				0	0
Capacity to induct		40	391	895	1326	-1166	-332	78	-1420	-321	259	-36	-98	136	21	0	157	-35

Zone	Bhara Kahu																
		Type of institution															Grand Total
Schools		Primary				Middle				Secondary				Higher Secondary			
		Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total
No Schools		4	10	16	30	1	4	11	16	9	11	2	22	6	2	3	11
Capacity		4219	2605	7114	13938	3411	2963	1575	7949	1734	1542	489	3765	1298	329	135	1762
Class Rooms		82	112	230	424	64	73	49	186	41	45	23	109	24	10	2	36
Strenght of Students	Max	3280	4480	9200	16960	2560	2920	1960	7440	1640	1800	920	4360	960	400	80	1440
	Min				0				0				0				0
Capacity to induct		-939	1875	2086	3022	-851	-43	385	-509	-94	258	431	595	-338	71	-55	-322

Zone	Sihala																
		Type of institution															Grand Total
Schools		Primary				Middle				Secondary				Higher Secondary			
		Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total
No Schools		7	10	19	36	2	4	8	14	8	6	1	15	6	5	1	12
Capacity		5158	2895	5606	13659	3504	2454	925	6883	1940	1293	401	3634	1204	568	283	2055
Class Rooms		125	103	186	414	81	55	25	161	44	36	10	90	21	15	6	42
Strenght of Students	Max	5000	4120	7440	16560	3240	2200	1000	6440	1760	1440	400	3600	840	600	240	1680
	Min				0				0				0				0
Capacity to induct		-158	1225	1834	2901	-264	-254	75	-443	-180	147	-1	-34	-364	32	-43	-375

Zone	Nilore																	
		Type of institution																Grand Total
Schools		Primary				Middle				Secondary				Higher Secondary				
		Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	
No Schools		9	6	22	37	2	3	3	8	2	9	1	12	6	2	2	10	67
Capacity		4244	2476	4807	11527	3618	2260	1127	7005	2081	1190	302	3573	1002	208	207	1417	23522
Class Rooms		115	100	182	397	66	57	33	156	45	39	12	96	21	7	9	37	686
Strenght of Students	Max	4600	4000	7280	15880	2640	2280	1320	6240	1800	1560	480	3840	840	280	360	1480	27440
	Min				0				0				0				0	0
Capacity to induct		356	1524	2473	4353	-978	20	193	-765	-281	370	178	267	-162	72	153	63	3918

Zone	Tarnol																	
		Type of institution																Grand Total
Schools		Primary				Middle				Secondary				Higher Secondary				
		Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	Female	Male	Co-Education	Total	
No Schools		3	10	13	26	6	3	1	10	6	9	0	15	5	1	0	6	57
Capacity		6321	4327	2909	13557	4043	2880	61	6984	1758	1273	0	3031	886	87	0	973	24545
Class Rooms		139	117	88	344	77	58	2	137	43	34	0	77	14	4	0	18	576
Strenght of Students	Max	5560	4680	3520	13760	3080	2320	80	5480	1720	1360	0	3080	560	160	0	720	23040
	Min				0				0				0				0	0
Capacity to induct		-761	353	611	203	-963	-560	19	-1504	-38	87	0	49	-326	73	0	-253	-1505

End Notes

ⁱ CMA No.1313/2015 in SMC NO.1 OF 2006 dated 28-05-2015.

ⁱⁱ Compass Children's Charity.

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ⁱⁱⁱ Faran, Huma, Zia and Zaidi, Zohair. (2021). 'The Missing Third'. [Online].

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^v Kids Rights Index is the global ranking that annually measures how children's rights are respected across the globe and to what extent the Member State of UNCRC are committed to improving the rights of their children. This Index consists of five domains vis-à-vis., (1) Right to Life; (2) Right to Health; (3) Right to Education; (4) Right to Protection; and (5) Right to Enabling Environment for Child Rights.

^{vi} Kids Rights Index (2021)

Retrieved from https://www.kidsrights.org/research/kidsrights-index/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw5ZSWBhCVARIsALERCvxLJGuIaR1JVXYmMErNvXtOzFPTro0d6l1te8UC33bLemAKusyXpU8aAjWmEALw_wcB

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^{vii} <https://www.streetchildren.org/about-street-children/>

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^{viii} World Report on Child Labour (2015). Paving the way to decent work for young people.

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^{ix} Statistics shared by the Office of Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees, States & Frontier Regions Division, Government of Pakistan vide letter No.3/7/Relief/CCAR/Misc.202, dated 23/06/2022

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Retrieved from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1651561>

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^{xii} Data shared by ICT Police (15) with the Office of Grievance Commissioner for Children, Wafaqi Mohtasib, Islamabad.

^{xiii} FIR #88/21, dated 07/04/2021. Police Station-Secretariat; FIR #455/21, 445/21 and 382/21, dated 13/07/2021, 07/07/2021 and 18/06/2021, respectively, Police Station Golra, Islamabad.

^{xiv} FIR #555/21, dated 16/09/2021. Police Station-Tarnol, Islamabad.

^{xv} FIR E-tag No.KOH-4/22/2022-2591, dated 22/04/2022, Police Station Kohsar, Islamabad.

^{xvi} Kashif, Fareed (2022). ‘When begging becomes business’.

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^{xvii} UNICEF/UNHCR/Save the Children/World Vision, 2013, p. 3.

^{xviii} Gao, Yunjinao; Yu Yanping; Sheppard, Altkinson, Sally.; and Xiong, Guibin. (2018). ‘A review of the national policies on street children in China’.

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^{xix} The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was ratified by Government of Pakistan on 12 November 1990.

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^{xx} The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) was ratified by Government of Pakistan on 23 June 2010.

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Accessed : 25th May 2018.

^{xxi} The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) was ratified by the Government of Pakistan on 17th April 2008.

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^{xxii} The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Preamble.

^{xxiii} <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/protocol-prevent-suppress-and-punish-trafficking-persons>

^{xxiv} The Government of Pakistan ratified the Worst Form of Child Labour Convention on 11.10.2001.
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^{xxvi} The Government of Pakistan Accessed the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women on 12.03.1996.

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^{xxvii} The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, Article 25(1).

^{xxviii} *Ibid.*, Article 25A.

^{xxix} *Ibid.*, Article 25(3).

^{xxx} *Ibid.*, Article 37(e).

^{xxxi} *Ibid.*, Article 38(e) – (d).

^{xxxii} The information received from the Ministry of Human Rights vide letter No.F.No.8(46)/2022/APHR, dated 30/06/2022.

^{xxxiii} *Ibid.*

^{xxxiv} Section 328-A inserted in PPC, 1860 by virtue of Act X of 2016.

^{xxxv} The Employment of Children Act, 1991 has jurisdiction across the country. However, after eighteenth constitutional Amendment on 19th April 2010, the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Punjab have their provincial legislation relating child labour.

^{xxxvi} *Ibid.*, Part II- Prohibition of Employment of Children in Certain Occupations and Processes.

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^{xl} Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) Admission Policy for Classes Prep to IX for academic session 2022-2023.

^{xli} Data shared by the Federal Directorate of Education with the Advisor / Office of Grievance Commissioner for Children, Wafaqi Mohtasib, Islamabad, vide e-mail dated 28/06/2022.

^{xlii} Ibid.

^{xliii} The term ‘Pehli Kiran’ in Urdu means the first ray of light.

^{xliv} Ministry of Human Rights, Retrieved from

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