

EMPOWERING THE FUTURE OF PAKISTAN

unicef 
for every child

GENDER STRATEGY
UNICEF PAKISTAN
2024-2027

FOREWORD

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EMPOWERING THE FUTURE THROUGH A GENDER EQUITABLE APPROACH

In our pursuit of a more equitable world for all children, gender equality stands as a cornerstone of progress. While significant strides have been made, there remains much work to be done to ensure that every girl and boy in Pakistan can enjoy the rights, resources, and protection to achieve their full potential. Millions of children, especially girls continue being denied their fundamental rights due to poverty, violence, and limited opportunities. Gender equality isn't just about upholding rights; it's also about fortifying economies and nurturing stable, resilient societies. Empowering girls and women isn't only the right thing to do; it's also the only smart thing to do.

Personally, having grown up in Somalia in the 1970s and 80s, among strong women, I know I would not be the person I am today, nor in the role that I am, had it not been for my paternal grandmother. She made bold decisions in her life and lived a life full of integrity and purpose. She was generous with her time and resources, always making sure the neediest of her family and community were taken care of. She was an entrepreneur, a businesswoman, a community leader, a wise counsel and someone whose opinion and views were sought and mattered. Witnessing and living with such an incredible woman formed and shaped how I view women and their role in society. Her acts still inspire me today, as I seek ways for UNICEF to accelerate our work and the results we deliver for girls and women in Pakistan.

At UNICEF, our commitment to gender equality is unwavering. We collaborate with partners to ensure that every girl and woman in Pakistan can:

- Live free from violence
- Attend and complete school
- Receive comprehensive healthcare
- Choose if, when, and whom to marry

UNICEF's interventions aim to remove barriers, ensuring that gender equality becomes a reality, not just a goal. This Gender Strategy by UNICEF Pakistan sets out the pathway to address deep inequalities holistically and in an integrated manner across our 2023-2027 programme and emergency response, and with specific focus on the neglected, yet transformative, moments in girls' and women's lives, such as the adolescent years.



“Empowering girls and women isn't just the right thing to do; it's the smart thing to do”

Pakistan as a country will only move the needle towards reaching the Sustainable Development Goals once it provides equal opportunities for girls and women, including adolescent girls, and marginalized communities to fully access education, health, social protection, water, and sanitation services in every corner of this country. Women and adolescent girls need equal freedoms and rights to harness their full potential.

UNICEF stands together with the Government of Pakistan and a range of critical partners- including the United Nations and civil society - to advance gender equality and to challenge discrimination at all levels. Grassroots women's and adolescent girls' groups are growing but they need our collective support. The voices of more than 400 adolescent girls and boys; parents; and caregivers will be translated into gender equitable and affirmative actions. Engaging men and boys as allies is crucial to strengthening equitable programming, and fostering a collective effort. Together, we can create a future where every child, regardless of gender, has a fair chance at a bright future.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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UNICEF Pakistan's Gender Strategy 2024-2027 puts the socio-ecological model at the centre of its framework to address inequalities and structural barriers that hamper progress toward gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. It aims to accelerate the implementation of the Country Programme Document (CPD) for 2023-2027. In line with the UNICEF Gender Action Plan 2022-2025, a number of principles guided the development of the strategy and will also guide its implementation. UNICEF aims to take an innovative, life-course, intergenerational perspective to the task of achieving a more gender-equitable society.

UNICEF recognizes that adolescence is a once-in-a-lifetime window of opportunity to equip the next generation of female leaders with essential skills, implant gender-equitable norms, make up for poor childhood health and nutrition, and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. There is mounting evidence that when girls are educated, healthy and skilled, they can contribute more effectively to the workforce and the consumer base, driving economic well-being and healthier families. Numerous studies [1] show that investing in girls' health, well-being, education, and skills development can lead to higher incomes and increased productivity as well as a reduction in harmful outcomes such as child marriage, child and maternal mortality, and child stunting [2].

UNICEF Pakistan outlines key strategic interventions that foster opportunities for girls to take the lead in all issues that concern their wellbeing.

This gender strategy recognizes the critical importance of investing in girls' leadership, voice, and agency. It highlights how societal values and norms directly impact power distribution, often disadvantaging children and adolescents, particularly girls. The new strategy emphasizes scaled-up Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) efforts targeting harmful gender norms. This includes engaging community influencers like leaders and religious figures, as well as boys and men, to shift these gender norms. Mass and social media platforms will be utilized to amplify positive messages. Community structures will be strengthened to ensure accountability and protection for girls, with a focus on making services more accessible. The strategy will also address the needs of married adolescent girls and adolescent mothers.

The strategy will focus on addressing key gender-related barriers identified at the national and provincial levels across Pakistan — some of which include the need for effective implementation of policies; glaring gaps in gender-disaggregated data; a lack of gender-sensitive infrastructure (including for both health and education); and inadequate child protection measures.

[1] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2022). Adolescent Girls – The Investment Case. https://www.unicef.org/media/144956/file/Adolescent_Girls_The_Investment_Case_2023.pdf

[2] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (n.d.). Girls Education. Accessed on February 12, 2024, from <https://www.unicef.org/education/girls-education>

The strategy utilizes three key pathways to change at the individual, household, and societal levels – **the '3Ss'; these are Strengthening, Scaling-up and Sustaining** gender equitable programming approaches across all goal areas. This strategy also takes its inspiration from UNICEF's Gender Policy (2021-2030) and Gender Action Plan (2022- 2025), through an integrated and holistic approach that focuses on adolescent girls. The Goal Areas covered by the strategy are (1) Quality maternal health care and nutrition, and HIV testing, counseling, and care; (2) gender-responsive education systems and equitable access to education for all; (3) addressing violence against girls, boys, and women, as well as harmful practices; (4) equitable Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) systems; and (5) gender-responsive social protection systems and care work. Each outcome in this gender strategy is linked to a Goal Area, and for each outcome, the pathways to change (3Ss) are expanded upon. The outcomes together contribute to the overall intended impact of the strategy.

To move the needle from gender-responsive to gender-equitable programming, there are change levers at the systems level that need to be in place across all sectors and goal areas including health, nutrition, child protection, WASH, and social protection. First, there is a need to shift and transform the prevailing harmful attitudes, ideas, and norms around gender equality, and poverty by engaging with policymakers, political elites (and their constituencies and parties), and programme managers and implementers. Second, there is a need to strengthen the political commitment to, and institutional capacity and accountability for, gender equality. Third, gender-responsive, adequate, and sustainable financing is needed. Fourth, it is important to amplify the voice and capacity of women and adolescent girl leaders, civil society organizations (including women's and children's rights organizations). It is also important to increase women's and girls' representation in all those sectors, institutions, and entities that are responsible for the design and delivery of programmes, as well as coordination and governance mechanisms.

To implement the strategy, a governance and accountability mechanism is defined which specifies the UNICEF country office's responsibilities and approach to strengthen leadership; staffing and capacity; evidence generation; use of artificial intelligence; partnerships; and tracking progress and results.

For each outcome, the key 3S focus areas for UNICEF are described below. UNICEF will:

Goal Area 1 – Outcome 1 – Health:

Strengthen gender equality in the community health workforce to ensure gender responsiveness in the health through interventions at the individual,

community, and systemic levels that aim to empower marginalized groups such as women, adolescent girls, and transgender individuals. The focus of the strategy will be on supporting the lady health worker's program and recruiting female nurses alongside building the capacity of the health workforce on how to address gender norms, gender-responsive approaches, and equitable and respectful services. The strategy will also work to increase gender- and disability-sensitive healthcare facilities and health education including comprehensive adolescent-girl-friendly health services, extending services to schools; increase the meaningful engagement of women and girls to improve health outcomes; leverage polio and mental health interventions; support the use of telemedicine; engage fathers and male caregivers in early childhood development; integrate Gender Based Violence (GBV) identification into healthcare programs, ensuring equitable access to vaccinations by adolescent girls; and address gender-specific mental health needs.

Goal Area 1 – Outcome 2 – Nutrition:

Emphasize gender-equitable and age-appropriate nutrition interventions for adolescent girls, empowering them to participate in all phases of program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well in leadership roles. Integrate gender-responsive approaches at the individual, community, and systemic levels to overcome sociocultural barriers and ensure access to nutritious diets and services. UNICEF will also target malnutrition in all its forms, focusing on children; adolescent girls; and mothers during pre-pregnancy, pregnancy and breastfeeding. SBC strategies include but are not limited to engagement with service providers, duty bearers, religious leaders and influential community leaders to strengthen community based nutrition programmes to overcome social cultural and structural barriers. UNICEF will scale up maternal and adolescent nutrition; promote equitable nutritional care; expand social protection; implement the Parwarish model through the use of role models; utilize digital apps; engage with schools; and increase awareness of the risks of being overweight or obese, diet related non-communicable diseases and body image issues. To sustain progress, UNICEF will support the strengthening of institutional mechanisms & regulatory frameworks that address socioeconomic inequalities, in order to improve the effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of nutrition programmes. UNICEF will cultivate partnerships and advocate for school-based nutrition programming as an incentive to keep girls in school and improve the nutritional status of school going youths.

Goal Area 2 – Outcome 3 – Learning and Skills:

Reduce gender disparities in education by improving girls' access and completion rates across all levels. Efforts will include expanding early learning,

enhancing skills training, and creating safer school environments. Gender-responsive education systems will be advanced through digital platforms and literacy programs. UNICEF will also implement Initiatives to tackle gender-based violence in schools and establish secure learning environments. To strengthen equitable access, UNICEF will invest in evidence-based planning, enhance alternative learning pathways, and promote inclusivity through materials and campaigns by and for girls. Scaling up will involve targeting structural barriers, expanding the Gen-U initiative, empowering youth, and bridging the gender digital divide. To sustain progress, UNICEF will reimagine girls' education through digital platforms, prioritize equitable access to skills development, strengthen accountability, and empower girls in decision-making processes.

Goal Area 3 – Outcome 4 - Child Protection:

Adopt a transformative approach to prevent abuse, violence, exploitation, neglect, and harmful practices by addressing the relevant gender dimensions. UNICEF will generate evidence and analysis of gender dimensions in ensuring that both boys and girls are protected from all forms of violence; and engage communities to challenge restrictive gender norms. UNICEF will collaborate with stakeholders to enhance agency and meaningful involvement of children and to ensure the leadership of adolescents, particularly girls in protection initiatives. To strengthen gender-responsive and equitable child protection programming, UNICEF will address gender norms at the various levels of the socio-ecological model by creating safe spaces for adolescents, particularly girls to enhance their participation and agency; engaging with parents/caregivers; strengthening community-based structures involving the community influencers including the religious leaders; utilizing social, digital and mass media platforms and by applying scalable social and behavioral change strategies to prevent child protection rights violations. To sustain progress, UNICEF will also continue to strengthen the child protection case management and referral system from a gender lens, by ensuring comprehensive protective services are provided to survivors of child protection violations and gender-based violence both in development and humanitarian contexts. This support will cover both child brides and grooms, and will ensure access to justice, particularly for girls and marginalized children. UNICEF will also address any gender disparities in birth registration, while providing technical support to implement a health-interoperable birth registration system.

Goal Area 4 – Outcome 5 – Water & Sanitation, Hygiene and Climate Change:

Prioritize addressing the unique challenges faced by women and adolescent girls in accessing WASH services, as well as their vulnerability to climate change impacts. UNICEF will also empower women and adolescent girls by promoting their leadership in strengthening gender-responsive WASH systems, and climate and environmental action. Initiatives will include conducting assessments to understand gender vulnerabilities; engaging women and girls in policy design and implementation; and supporting economic opportunities like cash for women & adolescent girls in the WASH sector. UNICEF will focus on providing sex-separated WASH facilities and menstrual health services in schools; addressing taboos around menstruation; and on recognizing the efforts of climate change champions, particularly women and youth.

Goal Area 5 – Outcome 6 – Social Policy and Social Protection:

Address gender vulnerabilities, especially focusing on adolescent differently abled girls, within the framework of social protection. UNICEF will also elevate the rights and voices of girls; expand partnerships with women's and girls' rights organizations; and collaborate with national partners to bolster inclusive systems. Research investments will guide programming and prioritize initiatives across multiple sectors. To scale up gender-equitable social protection, UNICEF aims to challenge discriminatory norms, develop targeted initiatives like the Cash Plus program to incentivize girls' education, and provide opportunities for out-of-school girls through online programmes and collaborations with universities. To sustain gender-equitable social protection, UNICEF will advance intersectional programming to address issues like violence against women, adolescent girls, and children; increase investment in gender-equitable strategies within social protection and economic empowerment programs for adolescent girls; and advocate for the inclusion of disabled adolescent girls in cash grant programs and public sector services. UNICEF will promote gender-responsive planning and budgeting including increased investment for identified priorities. Resource allocation will be reviewed to ensure equity and to mobilize resources for social sector services, particularly benefiting the most deprived children and adolescents, including girls.

INTRODUCTION

UNICEF Pakistan's Gender Strategy puts the socio-ecological model at the center of its framework to address inequalities, socio-cultural, and structural barriers that hamper girls' and boys' equitable access to social services. This strategy will uplift the value and agency of adolescent girls through a child-centered, gender-responsive, and inclusive approach across all key sectors where UNICEF is working closely with the Government of Pakistan. The comprehensive strategic frameworks outlined by UNICEF in its Country Programme Document (CPD) for 2023-2027 [3] and the Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2022-2025 [4] are vital blueprints for tackling gender disparities and promoting gender equality in diverse contexts across the country. Within this global framework, national and provincial barriers were identified across Pakistan — some of which include the need for the effective implementation of policies; glaring gaps in gender-disaggregated data; a lack of gender-sensitive educational structures; and inadequate child protection measures. These barriers reflect the urgent need for targeted, culturally cognizant, and inclusive approaches that do not forget differently-abled children, adolescent girls, and women. These approaches aim to dismantle deeply entrenched discriminatory norms based on approved ideals of masculinity and femininity that foster cultural and societal imbalance.

Acknowledging the enduring and cross-generational effects of gender discrimination, this strategy aims to promote a gender-equitable approach to programming across all stages of life. Simultaneously, it advocates for community system-strengthening initiatives, including women-, adolescents-, and girls-led initiatives to enhance the leadership of adolescent girls, recognizing their vulnerability to gender inequalities, and their potential as catalysts for change in the future.

This comprehensive strategy not only addresses the visible outcomes of gender inequality but also

confronts its root causes by involving boys and men as allies; advocating for early-stage funding and policy measures; and measures towards empowering girls to express their agency and opinions.

The realization of the rights of women and girls is key to ending extreme poverty and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that demand bold actions to remove the systemic barriers that prevent women and girls from meaningfully participating in all areas of life.

The strategy has been developed based on a deepening understanding of gender equality within UNICEF through insights gained from past gender action plans; gender program reviews; and thorough consultations at the provincial level with staff, partners, adolescent girls, and transgender individuals. Moving forward, the strategy will remain focused on strengthening, scaling up, and sustaining gender-equitable approaches to programming. Collaborating with the government and other partners, UNICEF will enhance and broaden initiatives to produce, assess, and utilize gender-related evidence and data to track progress and to guide national accountability efforts.

This strategy outlines key interventions that can help UNICEF and its partners work towards an integrated and holistic approach rather than focusing on service delivery only, where everyone benefits and no one is left behind. This strategy positions UNICEF's work as being with, for, and by adolescent girls as it focuses on the critical importance of dismantling the power structures that hold their potential back. It outlines the necessary steps to enhance advancements in gender equality across the five Goal Areas of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and within existing institutional structures. It also emphasizes the organization's role as a partner of the Government of Pakistan and its focus on advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

[3] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2022). Country Programme Document 2023-2027. https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/12516/file/2022-PL36-Pakistan_CPD-EN-ODS.pdf

[4] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2021). Gender Action Plan (2022-2025). https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/7046/file/2021-31-Gender_Action_Plan_2022-2025-EN-ODS.pdf

KEY CONCEPTS [5]

Adolescence Girls

The second decade of life, from the ages of 10-19. Young adolescence is between 10-14 and late adolescence is 15-19. This period between childhood and adulthood is a pivotal opportunity to consolidate any loss/gain made in early childhood. All too often adolescents - especially girls - are endangered by violence, limited by a lack of quality education, and unable to access critical health services. UNICEF focuses on helping adolescents navigate risks and vulnerabilities and take advantage of opportunities.

Discrimination (Gender Discrimination)

Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex or gender which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women or girls, irrespective of their marital status.

Gender

A social and cultural construct, which distinguishes differences in the attributes of men and women; girls and boys; or people with different non-binary gender identities and accordingly assigns different roles and responsibilities.

Gender Norms

Accepted attributes and characteristics of male and female gendered identities at a particular point in time for a specific society or community. They are the standards and expectations to which gender identity generally conforms.

Gender-Stereotyping

Ascribing certain attributes, characteristics, and roles to people based on their gender. Gender stereotypes can be negative (i.e., women are bad drivers, men can't change diapers) or benign (i.e., women are better caregivers, men are stronger).

Gender stereotyping becomes harmful when it limits a person's life choices, such as training and career options, and life plans.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

An umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between females and males. The nature and extent of specific types of GBV vary across cultures, countries and regions.

Gender Equality

The concept that women and men, girls and boys

have equal conditions, treatment and opportunities for realizing their full potential; equal human rights and dignity; and equal ability to contribute to (and benefit from) economic, social, cultural and political development. It is based on women and men being full partners in the home, community, and society. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

Gender Equity

The process and/or state of being fair to men, women, boys, and girls, and particularly the equality of outcomes and results. Gender equity may involve the use of temporary special measures to compensate for historical or systemic bias or discrimination. It refers to differential treatment that is fair and positively addresses a bias or disadvantage that is due to gender roles, norms, or differences between the sexes. Equity ensures that women, men, girls, and boys have an equal chance, not only at the starting point, but also when reaching the finishing line.

Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB)

Government planning, programming and budgeting that contributes to the advancement of gender equality and the fulfillment of women's rights. It entails identifying and reflecting needed interventions to address gender gaps in sector and local government policies, plans, and budgets.

Gender-Responsive Programming and Policies

Intentionally employing gender considerations to affect the design, implementation and results of programmes and policies. Gender-responsive programmes and policies reflect girls' and women's realities and needs, in components such as site selection, project staff, content, monitoring, etc. Gender-responsiveness means paying attention to the unique needs of females, valuing their perspectives, respecting their experiences, understanding developmental differences between girls, boys, women, and men and ultimately empowering girls and women.

Gender-Equitable Programming and Policies

This approach aims to address the root causes of gender inequality and promote the empowerment of women, girls, men, and boys in all aspects of development programming and policies.

[5] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Economic Forum (WEF). (2017). *Glossary of Terms and Concepts*. <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/1761/file/Genderglossarytermsandconcepts.pdf>.



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UNICEF is committed to leaving no one behind and recognizes that gender intersects with multiple risks faced by the poorest and the most marginalized and excluded groups, including a heightened risk of discrimination and neglect related to disability; gender identity; ethnicity; urbanization; migration and displacement; natural disasters; and/or any other reason.

(UNICEF Gender Action Plan 2022-2025)

METHODOLOGY

The UNICEF Gender Strategy for Pakistan (2024-2027) has been meticulously crafted through a structured methodology, which adhered to the ethical considerations needed for such an undertaking. This document describes the systematic process undertaken to develop the strategy, with the goal of addressing gender inequities in the context of the country.

An inception meeting convened in Islamabad in December 2023 marked the commencement of this strategic initiative. This pivotal gathering led to the development of a consensus on UNICEF's expectations regarding the strategy. A comprehensive literature review of Pakistan's gender policies, strategies, and frameworks was conducted which became the point of departure for defining the contours of the UNICEF Gender Strategy. The review covered a variety of materials including, but not limited to, the National Gender Policy Framework; the UNICEF Gender Policy 2021-2030; the Gender Action Plan 2022-2025; the Adolescent Framework for South Asia 2022-2025; and the UNICEF Country programme Document 2023-2027. This process was further enriched by inputs from all UNICEF section chiefs, chief field offices and gender focal points across Pakistan.

The development process for the strategy followed a structured approach; an agenda and stakeholder

roster were meticulously formulated for provincial consultations. Moreover, the strategy development process was enriched by engaging over 400 individuals through consultations across the country, ensuring a diverse range of experiences. The range of stakeholders involved included government officials; UN partners; Civil Society Organisations (CSOs); women's rights organizations; adolescent girls and boys; women and men; transgender persons; and religious leaders. 18 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and 26 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted, providing profound insights from a diverse array of stakeholders across all the provinces in Pakistan.

These interviews were instrumental in capturing voices and perspectives from the grassroots level, which was necessary for the formulation of a comprehensive and contextualized strategy.

The synthesis of insights gleaned from KIIs, FGDs, and provincial consultations was augmented by the active participation of duty bearers; service providers; parents; caregivers; adolescent girls and boys; and the transgender community. This process underscores that a concerted effort was made to identify key gender related socio-cultural and structural barriers; and opportunities that would be addressed through the strategy.



[5] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Economic Forum (WEF). (2017). Glossary of Terms and Concepts. <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/1761/file/Genderglossarytermsandconcepts.pdf>.

CONTEXT- LEGAL FRAMEWORK & COUNTRY GENDER SNAPSHOT

Twenty-nine years have passed since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action following which Pakistan has demonstrated a commitment to gender equality through adherence to various international treaties and the enactment of national legislation. Presently, Pakistan is a party to seven international human rights treaties, with four focusing extensively on gender equality: The Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC), and the SDGs. These treaties hold member states accountable for protecting women's rights and provide essential principles for sustainable development. Still there is a long way to go as societal norms, cultural practices, and structural barriers still pose challenges, which impact the practical realization of gender equality and children's rights in Pakistan. The disparity between legal commitments and actual practices remains a gap that Pakistan is working to bridge.

Acknowledging the enduring and cross-generational effects of gender discrimination, this strategy aims to promote a gender-equitable approach to programming across all stages of life. Simultaneously, it advocates for community system-strengthening initiatives and specific initiatives to enhance the leadership of adolescent girls, recognizing their vulnerability to gender disparities and their potential as catalysts for change in the future. This comprehensive strategy not only addresses the visible outcomes of gender inequality but also confronts its root causes by involving boys and men as allies; advocating for early-stage funding and policy measures; and empowering girls to express their agency and opinions.

COUNTRY GENDER SNAPSHOT

- In the Global Gender Gap Index, the country stands **142nd** out of 146 countries and is **133rd** out of 160 [6] countries on the Gender Inequality Index.
- Gender equity gaps are estimated to cost Pakistan an estimated **PKR 500** billion annually- closing this

gap could boost the country's GDP by **\$30 billion** [7].

- The country lags in terms of the advancement of female leadership in the government; the corporate sector; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); and entrepreneurship.
- Widest gap in mobile ownership at **35% (52% of women own mobile compared to 81% of men)**. 31% of female mobile internet users were only using someone else's phone to get online, compared to only 7% of men. **43% women** are less likely to use the internet than men, and only 26% of women in Pakistan have internet access, compared to 47 percent of men.
- **Pakistan ranks 6th globally in child marriage.**
- Almost half of the **6 million** children born annually over the last decade were unintended. Maternal mortality, neonatal health- the entire eco-system of reproductive health places the burden on women.
- **Adults (parents and teachers) often justify the corporal punishment of children** as necessary for the socialization of children on 'proper' conduct, while children tend to accept it as a customary form of discipline.
- The impacts of **violence against women and children** continue throughout the course of life, in terms of emotional impact and mental health consequences (including suicidal thoughts), as well as physical impairment.
- The sex ratio at birth ranks **Pakistan 141st out of 146** globally and, as the world gets closer to gender parity in health, the country lags at 132nd [8].
- **Women are also less literate** than in other South Asian countries and are deprived of access to information, markets, and financial or social security.

KEY FACTS ON ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN PAKISTAN

- The adolescent girl (aged 10-19 years) population constitutes **22%** of the total female population and is projected to continue growing until 2023
- **54%** of girls get pregnant before their 18th birthday, with wide regional differences
- **88%** of adolescent girls aged 10-17 years are living in poverty in all its dimensions
- **46%** of girls are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Almost **47%** women and girls have a basic level of ICT skills
- **54%** of girls are out of school- upper secondary
- **18%** of girls are out of school- lower secondary
- **54.7%** adolescent girls are anemic
- **51%** of adolescent girls aged 15-19 years consider a husband to be justified in hitting or beating his wife for at least one of four specified reasons
- **52%** of women own mobile compared to 81% of men. **31%** of female mobile internet users were only using someone else's phone to get online, compared to only **7%** of men

Source: UNICEF. (n.d.). Adolescent Girl Country Profile: Pakistan, Spotlighting the situation of adolescent girls and the urgent need to invest in their well-being, voice, and agency in every country

[6] World Economic Forum (WEF). (2023). Global Gender Gap Report. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2023/in-full/benchmarking-gender-gaps-2023/>

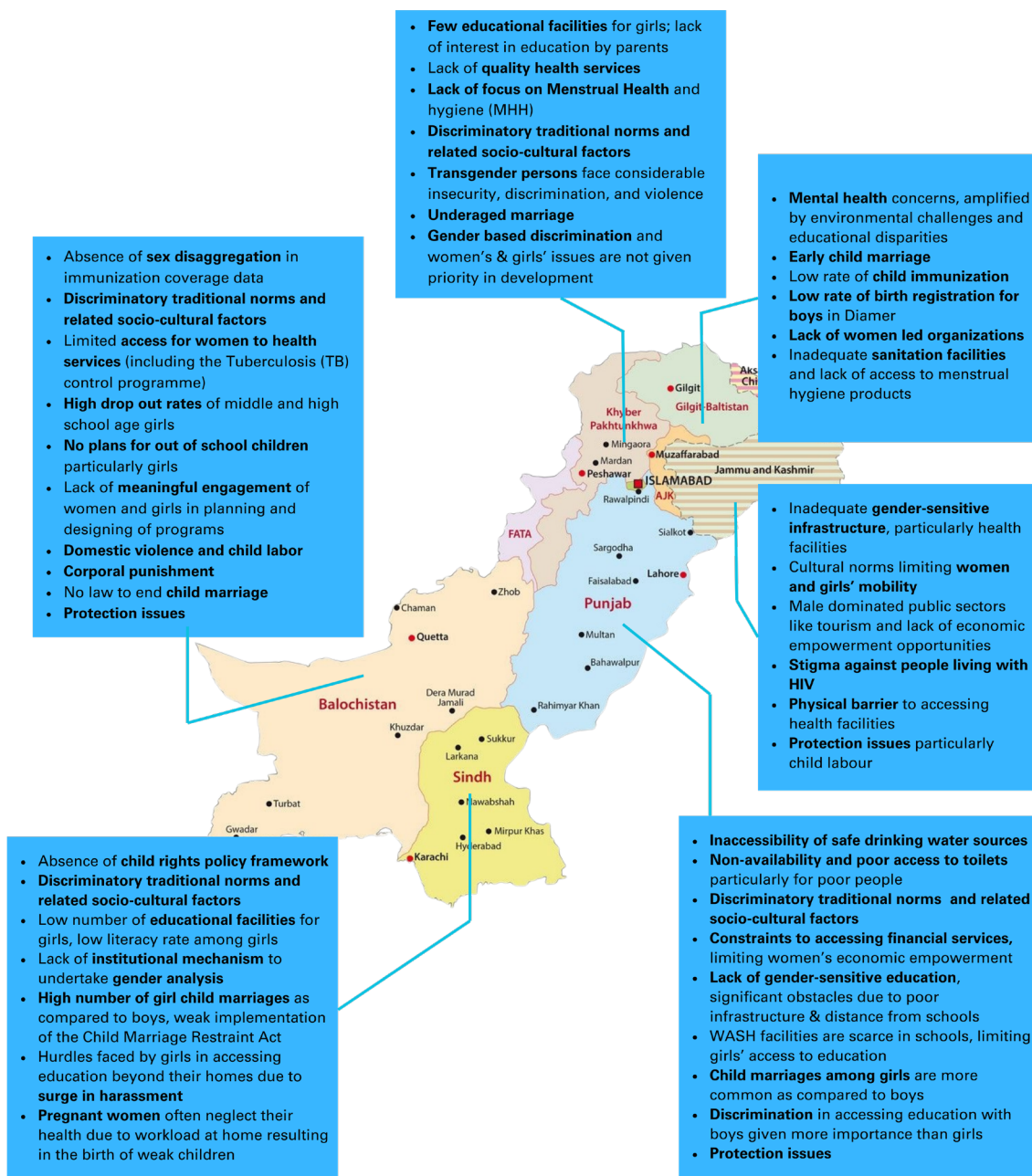
[7] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2022-2023). Development advocate Pakistan: Gender equality in Pakistan - Climatic & Politico-Economic Stressors. Volume 9, Issue 4, December 2022 - January 2023.

[8] IBID (WEF, 2023)

CONTEXT- GENDER BARRIERS IDENTIFIED BY PROVINCES



During provincial consultations, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions, numerous gender barriers have been identified as hindering gender-equitable programming. Particularly affected are individuals constrained by social, cultural, and traditional norms, as well as limitations in the availability, accessibility, affordability, and appropriateness of services, structures, and mechanisms at the community, district, and provincial levels. These issues are intertwined with challenges related to social norms and the lack of access to relevant services or materials. Key social norms perpetuating the marginalization of women, adolescent girls, and transgender individuals include restrictions on mobility, inadequate resource allocation, and the normalization of abuse.



PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE UNICEF GENDER STRATEGY

UNICEF will put women and adolescent girls, in all their diversity, at the heart of everything it does and will work closely with men and boys as allies. A rights- and values-driven strategy will be implemented in programming; UNICEF and its partners will actively strive to address the fundamental structural obstacles to equality. This will involve tackling power dynamics, gender roles, norms, and relationships at all societal levels and stages of life. Additionally, the strategy aims to strengthen an enabling environment, promoting equality and non-discrimination, while engaging boys and men in advocating for and practicing gender equality. The following are the guiding principles for UNICEF's programmes towards achieving gender equity:

- 1. UNICEF will facilitate opportunities for adolescent girls including those living with different abilities to lead and advocate** for the change they aspire to see by amplifying their voices and agency across all its initiatives, especially in areas like school-based and digital platforms. To achieve sustainable transformations in gender norms, systems, and structures, it is crucial to empower and support the next generation to actively engage in and drive advancements toward equality in their families, and communities at the national and provincial levels. UNICEF will support research and evidence-based advocacy for gender-responsive social policies and service packages that work best for different populations of women and adolescent girls in different contexts and invest in generating new data sources and evidence; such as independent evaluations and girl-led surveys and studies.
- 2. UNICEF will work with men, boys, and implementing partners to address harmful masculinities** that impact boys' education, health, and behavior. Involving boys and men across all dimensions, UNICEF aims to promote positive masculinity, strengthen gender-equal relationships, and prevent gender-based violence.
- 3. UNICEF will integrate innovation** into its gender equality initiatives to ensure adolescent girls, boys, and transgender people have equal opportunities to safely and actively engage with, lead, and contribute to digital technology and innovation.
- 4. UNICEF will scale up gender responsive social and behaviour change strategies** by addressing deeply rooted social, cultural, and traditional beliefs, biases and stereotypes towards children and adolescent girls at the household, community and society levels. The SBC approaches used will include, but will not be limited to, improving, strengthening, maintaining, and sustaining community engagement to foster social dialogue to challenge traditional gender roles; public advocacy for legal reforms to strengthen gender equality through advocacy groups of experts to address gender based violence and discrimination at federal and provincial level; and developing institutional capacity to enable women and adolescent girls led networks, platforms, and organizations to address gender equality and norms in their respective communities, while recognizing men and boys as allies to promote positive masculinity fostering supportive relationships.
- 5. UNICEF will work not only to prevent and respond to gender-based violence but will break the cycle** of and promote healing from the intergenerational legacies of all forms of violence. While violence prevention and response are core tenets of UNICEF's work in the child protection sector, violence is a barrier to change across all of the organization's work. UNICEF will adopt a multisectoral strategy to address gender-based violence, using sector-wide and survivor-centred approaches in all Goal Areas.
- 6. UNICEF will enhance its collaborations and partnership with women and adolescent girl-led platforms, networks and organizations and influential adolescent & young individuals.** This will elevate their voices as catalysts for change and as partners in initiatives and advocacy efforts at various levels – local, national, provincial, and district within UNICEF's operations and those of its partners.
- 7. UNICEF will promote women's and girls' leadership in strengthening community, social, and economic systems** that play a critical role in protecting and empowering them, embracing innovative financing models and technology to secure long term gender equitable development.
- 8. UNICEF will take a life course and intergenerational perspective.** Programming will focus on all periods of children's life course (from birth to adulthood), to acknowledge and redress cumulative disadvantage, as well as multiple entry points for potential change. Dialogue and communication between generations is also critical.

MOVING THE NEEDLE TOWARDS A GENDER EQUITABLE APPROACH- KEY CHANGE PATHWAYS- 3Ss

In light of the multisectoral challenges to achieving gender equality and achieving the SDG 5 goals in particular, UNICEF Pakistan is taking a systematic approach to accelerating progress. This is reflected in UNICEF's programme design; institutional and organizational mechanisms; accountability mechanisms; and in relationships with partner organizations which deliver services at the community level. There is a critical need to invest in the well-being, voice, and agency of adolescent girls in Pakistan, especially in light of the fact that they are a substantial and growing demographic that requires focused attention within UNICEF's gender strategy.

The five-year Gender Strategy for UNICEF Pakistan 2024-2027 (GS) has been prepared with greater ambition than ever before and with the aim of applying the '3 Ss' where the challenges are most acute, the potential gains are greatest, and where the UNICEF is best placed to add value and catalyze progress. The 3 Ss are **Strengthening, Scaling up and Sustaining** gender equitable programming approaches across all Goal Areas and with a dedicated focus on targeted programming for adolescent girls.

This Gender Strategy takes its inspiration from UNICEF's Gender Policy (2021-2030) and Gender Action Plan (2022-2025) – both of which emphasize the need for structural and normative change as requirements to transform the underlying drivers of gender inequality. Both also embrace an intersectional, integrated, and holistic approach, using a socio-ecological lens across all Goal Areas, which are: (a) Quality maternal health care and nutrition, and HIV testing, counseling, and care; (b) gender-responsive education systems and equitable access to education for all; (c) addressing violence against girls, boys, and women, as well as harmful practices; (d) equitable WASH systems; and (e) gender-responsive social protection systems and care work. This requires strengthened gender analysis; gender-sensitive data; and reporting, monitoring, and research to inform evidence-based programming priorities and practices. The investment will be made into gender-equitable approaches across programs and partnerships that can target discrimination at the life stages at which it can best be addressed. This includes the socialization

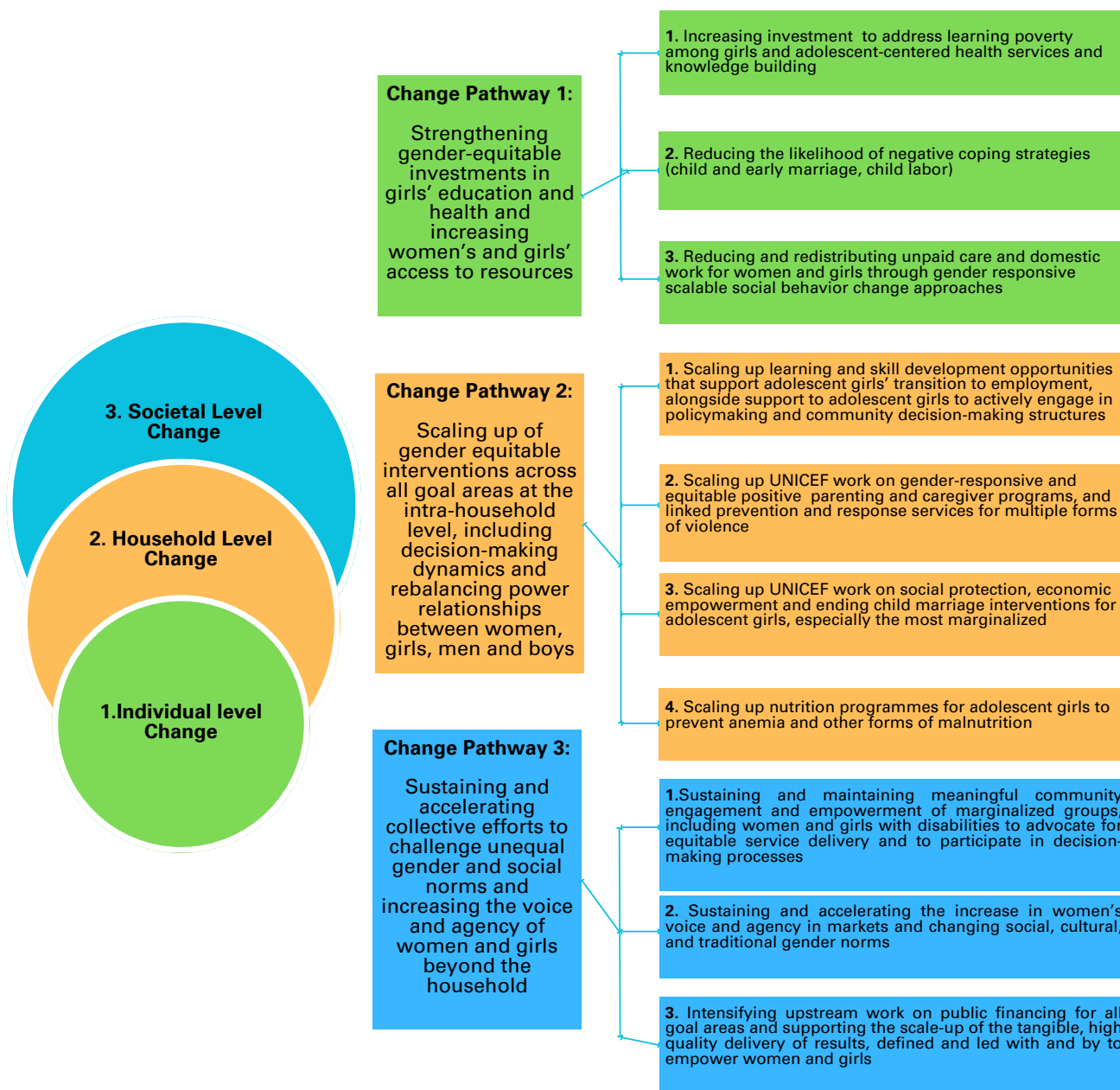
of children from birth through adolescence, and through unpacking how gender norms, institutional structures, and discriminatory policies can systematically perpetuate gender inequality and social injustice. Gender norms and discrimination heighten the risk of unwanted pregnancy; HIV and AIDS; and malnutrition. Especially in emergency settings and in places where menstruation remains taboo, girls are cut off from the information and supplies they need to stay healthy and safe.

The gender strategy is structured in a socioecological framework with three levels – namely, individual, household and societal that places child, adolescent girls and women at the center of the framework (the individual level), in adapting the framework, it centers them at the individual level, as both women, adolescent girls and children face specific, gendered vulnerabilities, discriminations and inequalities which often make them worse off, relative to men and boys. At each of these three levels, there is a corresponding change pathway through which gender-responsive interventions can contribute to gender-equitable change, through specific design, implementation and financing features.

The foundation is strengthened by systemic change levers, which are factors identified by existing evidence that can enhance the gender responsiveness of social protection systems. These three levels and their corresponding pathways for change are interconnected, supporting and complementing one another. They are not viewed as strictly chronological or sequential. Instead, change can occur at different times or simultaneously at multiple levels, with change at one level potentially influencing change at another. This interconnection also highlights the importance of research, which needs to be conducted at each level and at the points where different levels intersect.

To move the needle from gender-responsive to gender-equitable programming, there are change levers as mentioned below, at the systems level that need to be in place across all sectors and goal areas including health, nutrition, child protection, WASH, and social protection.

GENDER EQUITABLE CHANGE PATHWAYS ACROSS THREE LEVELS OF A SOCIOECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK, AND SYSTEMIC CHANGE LEVERS- 3Ss



Systemic Change Levers

1. Progressive social and gender norms and ideas held by policymakers and implementers
2. Political commitment to gender equality, institutional capacity and accountability
3. Adequate, sustainable and gender-responsive budgeting and financing
4. Participation and engagement of gender equality and child rights advocates in decision-making and policy-making processes together with and for adolescent girls and women

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IMPACT

By 2027, Pakistani women and adolescent girls and their voices will be amplified towards empowered life, through UNICEF programmes and partnerships, that have strengthened, sustained and scaled up gender equitable programming across all goal areas and the respective outcomes across both the development and humanitarian dimensions by leveraging delivery platforms, networks, and capacities at the individual, community, institutional, and systemic levels.

Goal Area 1: Every child, including adolescents, survives and thrives with access to nutritious diets, quality primary health care, nurturing practices, and essential supplies

OUTCOME 1: HEALTH

By 2027, Children, adolescents, and women in Pakistan, especially the most vulnerable and deprived, have access to, and utilize quality, gender-responsive and sustainable health services, within the framework of Universal Health Coverage

Gender equitable programming for health is indispensable in addressing the multifaceted healthcare needs of systems, marginalized communities, and individuals (primarily women, adolescent girls, and transgender people). Recognizing the pervasive gender disparities in healthcare access and outcomes, UNICEF will be supporting the Lady Health Workers (LHWs) program and recruiting female nurses with a focus on capacity building of the health workforce on how to address gender norms, gender-responsive approaches, and equitable respectful services; ensuring gender- and disability-sensitive healthcare facilities and health education including comprehensive adolescent girls friendly health services. At the individual level, interventions will focus on empowering women and girls by enhancing access to tailored healthcare services and addressing their specific health concerns. Community-level initiatives aim to foster inclusivity and gender equity through robust health education programs and targeted outreach efforts.

UNICEF commits to advancing gender equality and moving the needle towards empowerment of girls and women as a key responsibility of everyone in the organization.

HIGHLIGHTING SUCCESS: UNICEF Pakistan Programme Gender Results 2023

- **249,904 (121,029 girls & 128,875 boys) were reached by the total zero dose coverage intervention** due to the recruitment of female vaccinators, LHWs and Community Midwives (CMWs)
- **Over 800,000 adolescent girls** received weekly iron folic acid tablets
- **Over 2,159,000 women and girls** were provided with improved sanitation and hygiene services, open-defecation free villages, safe water supplies and hygiene promotion services across the country
- **Over 786,000 girls and women** were reached with Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) services in emergencies
- **266,542 girls** were provided with access to quality pre-primary and primary education to redress gender inequalities and remove structural barriers
- Foundational learning was improved through higher quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) services for **60,710 girls**
- **10,476 girls** in Balochistan, KP and Sindh were reached by using digital technologies through the Sindh Learning Passport which provided access to digital content and remote teaching
- **34 districts** were targeted for the provision of mental health and psychosocial support through strong community systems in Pakistan
- **130,000 adolescent girls** were reached through strengthened partnership with the Pakistan Girls Guide Association
- **2,240,361 women and 1,235,381 girls** were provided access to primary health services during emergencies through UNICEF-supported health facilities
- **8,489 out-of-school adolescent girls** were reached through a hybrid innovative model for integrated accelerated learning, skills training, and labor market linkages
- The **Pakistan's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) was updated with a focus on gender inclusivity**, including age disaggregation and child poverty; the data supports improved resource allocation at the district level

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By championing gender equitable programming across these interconnected levels, UNICEF Pakistan will take a systems-strengthening approach, including in the recruitment, training, and remuneration of front-line workers; this will help to prioritize the expanded coverage of quality, dignified maternal and newborn health services, including for pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers, as well as access to quality nutrition and immunization services for adolescent girls and women in all settings.

To strengthen gender-responsive and equitable health interventions, UNICEF will:

- **Support and strengthen the capacities of the LHW programme to address gender norms:** Provide comprehensive training and resources to enable frontline healthcare workers to reach marginalized communities, especially women and girls.
- **Recruit & train female nurses:** Actively recruit and train female nurses to bridge the gender parity gap in healthcare provision, particularly in rural areas, to ensure equitable respectful services for women's and girls' unique needs.
- **Ensure adolescent girls-, women- and disability-friendly healthcare centers:** Advocate and implement policies and infrastructure improvements in primary healthcare centers to meet the specific needs of women and girls.
- **Prioritize continuity for gender-responsive projects:** Allocate resources to sustain projects demonstrating positive gender indicators, enhancing healthcare outcomes for women and girls.
- **Implement comprehensive gender-responsive health education:** Address the diverse needs of both boys and girls to promote health literacy and empowerment specifically on immunizations, HPV, and HIV prevention. Strengthen the role of the health sector for menstrual hygiene awareness through focused and age-appropriate messaging through LHWs, teachers, community women networks, and school health programmes.

To scale up gender-responsive and equitable health interventions, UNICEF will:

- **Expand the LHW programme:** Introduce internships for adolescent girls to foster future leadership in healthcare.

- **Extend health services to schools:** Establish comprehensive healthcare services in educational institutions to ensure access for students, particularly girls as one stop shop services.
- **Promote the leadership of women and adolescents girls in health program design:** Promote women's and girls' leadership in healthcare program design and implementation to address gender disparities effectively.
- **Leverage polio efforts for other services:** Utilize existing infrastructure and expertise to deliver additional essential health services for women and girls. Engage with men and boys as allies in these efforts.
- **Gender analysis and capacity strengthening of health sector:** Undertake gender audits to help make healthcare policies and practices more gender sensitive. Build the capacity of government counterpart departments and the implementing partners to undertake gender analysis of health and utilize key learnings to design gender responsive health interventions.

To sustain gender responsive and equitable health interventions, UNICEF will:

- **Introduce gender-focused telemedicine:** Implement telemedicine initiatives to address gender disparities in rural healthcare access.
- **Engage fathers in early childhood development:** Encourage paternal involvement in family planning and caregiving roles to improve maternal and child health outcomes.
- **Include GBV identification in health programs:** Integrate GBV identification and response protocols into healthcare programs to support survivors sensitively.
- **Focus on gender-responsive immunization:** Ensure equitable access to vaccinations, including HPV by addressing gender-based barriers through targeted outreach.
- **Leverage mental health:** Engage parents and caregivers in mental health support and continue to lead the development of novel data collection methods to capture sex - disaggregated data on the burden and determinants of adolescent mental health.

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OUTCOME 2: NUTRITION

By 2027, Children, adolescents, and women in Pakistan, especially the most vulnerable and deprived, access, and utilize, quality, equitable, gender-responsive, and sustainable evidence-based services and adopt appropriate nutritional behaviors and care practices to address all forms of malnutrition and, adopt appropriate nutritional behaviors and care practices to address all forms of malnutrition

Gender transformative nutrition interventions are crucial for addressing the diverse and complex health needs of adolescent girls at the individual, community, and systemic levels. By integrating gender-responsive approaches into nutrition programming, UNICEF will effectively tackle structural and sociocultural barriers and promote equitable access to nutritious diets, services, and healthy lifestyles. At the individual level, empowering adolescent girls with knowledge and skills through targeted education and media campaigns fosters informed decision-making and promotes healthy behaviors. Community-level interventions focus on engaging with fathers, caregivers, religious leaders, influencers, and reputable role models to challenge gender norms and promote gender-equitable childcare practices. Meanwhile, the systemic-level strategies involve the development and implementation of comprehensive nutrition policies and programs that address the unique needs of adolescent girls, ensuring sustained progress toward gender equity in nutrition outcomes, as well as advocacy and technical support on gender-responsive policies, strategies, and regulatory frameworks. Through concerted efforts across these levels, gender transformative nutrition initiatives aim to create a supportive environment that empowers adolescent girls to thrive and achieve optimal health and well-being.

To strengthen gender-responsive and equitable nutrition for adolescent girls, UNICEF will:

- **Strengthen the capacities of the health front-line workers to address gender norms in nutrition** and to reach marginalized communities, especially women and girls.
- **Address structural and sociocultural barriers in nutrition practices and intra-household power**

dynamics through implementing Social and Behavior Change (SBC) interventions.

- **Engage religious leaders and social influencers** in promoting gender-equitable childcare and engage fathers in caregiving roles.
- **Focus on maternal and adolescent nutrition friendly facilities** by developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy focusing on integrating gender-responsive and age-sensitive approaches.
- **Support in-peer-group formulation for adolescent nutrition** through participation, learning, engagement and empowering their own voice.
- **Support gender responsive, community-based nutrition programs** through robust community engagement to address social norms affecting nutrition.
- **Strengthen advocacy on gender responsive social protection to address malnutrition among adolescent girls.** BISP Nashunuma is one such model for equitable household investments in children's health and nutrition; gender-responsive social protection contributes to intergenerational well-being, especially for girls, by breaking the vicious cycle of poverty and supporting safe transitions to adulthood.

To scale up gender-responsive and equitable nutrition for adolescent girls, UNICEF will:

- **Scale up nutrition programmes for adolescent girls and mothers** to prevent, malnutrition in all its forms including anemia, excess weight, and obesity in school-age children and adolescents through school- and community-based approaches, as well as through the large-scale fortification of staple foods with essential nutrients for the household. This will benefit both adolescents and women.
- **Scale up the nurturing care (Parwarish) model,** aligning with the UNICEF global parenting strategy and strengthen enabling environments through father and mother support groups and through family-friendly policies, with a focus on paid parental leave; family friendly practices in garment industries and workplace breastfeeding support; affordable and accessible quality childcare; and child benefits.

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- **Enhance adolescent girls' understanding of nutritious diets** and healthy lifestyles using social and mass media platforms for digital engagement and widespread dissemination.
- **Use reputable sportswomen as role models** to promote healthy living.
- **Provide training to develop apps for adolescent health**, recipes, and mental well-being, designed by and for adolescent girls.

To sustain gender-responsive and equitable nutrition for adolescent girls, UNICEF will:

- **Put in place and institutionalize coherent and systematic approaches and systems that address socio-economic inequalities**, to improve the effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of nutrition programmes.
- **Implement school-based nutrition projects with a focus on adolescent girls**; screening programs; and weekly iron and folic acid supplementation in schools and discourage consumption of unhealthy foods in and around schools. Promote physical activities among adolescent girls. Strengthen/establish school clubs to promote nutrition and healthy lifestyles in schools. UNICEF will work with the regulatory authority, duty bearers against the advertisement, donation, and distribution of unhealthy food and beverages that target adolescent girls and children.
- **Sustain and strengthen gender-responsive institutional mechanisms and regulatory frameworks** that address socio-economic inequalities to address the triple burden of malnutrition.

Goal Area 2: Every child, including adolescents, learns and acquires skills for the future

OUTCOME 3: LEARNING AND SKILLS

By 2027, education system in Pakistan has improved capacities to deliver inclusive, equitable, gender-responsive, resilient quality education and skills development, including transferable skills, especially to children and youth, and particularly to girls

UNICEF is strategically positioned to reduce gender disparities in education by improving access and completion rates across all levels, from pre-primary

to secondary education. This involves expanding early learning, enhancing skills training, and creating Alternative Learning Pathways (ALPs) to address the global learning crisis. Efforts will also be focused on fostering safer and more supportive school environments.

to ensure an inclusive environment for marginalized children and adolescents. UNICEF will advance gender-responsive education systems through digital platforms and literacy education to narrow the gender digital gap.

Priority initiatives include comprehensive strategies to tackle school-related gender-based violence and establish secure learning environments, both physical and online, for all children and adolescents.

The Early Childhood Development (ECD), Inclusive Comprehensive Education (ICE), and ALPs programs have been identified as instrumental to advancing gender equity and require sustained funding and expansion across all provinces.

UNICEF aims to enhance the reach of the Gen-U initiative, emphasizing a life cycle approach to education. This approach begins at the post-secondary level, targeting the 15-19 age cohort to enhance labor productivity and prepare individuals for the evolving demands of the future workforce. Recognizing the significance of cognitive, socio-economic, communication, and digital skills this initiative seeks to bolster the country's human capital and foster economic growth.

To strengthen gender-responsive and equitable education systems and learning, UNICEF will:

- **Invest in evidence-based, gender- and disability-responsive education sector planning** and monitoring; in the strengthening of national capacities in data, delivery and accountability for results; and in strengthening linkages with social protection systems to reach the most vulnerable.
- **Focus on out of school adolescent girls** by enhancing support for ALPs in education, skills development, and employability, particularly for out-of-school adolescents with a focus on girls.
- **Provide gender inclusive and disability friendly writing supplies and materials**, including child-appropriate images, to promote inclusivity.
- **Shift social norms towards girls' education** by launching large-scale social behavior change interventions.

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- **Implement multi-sectoral interventions** to support the enrollment of out-of-school children, especially adolescent girls.

To scale up gender-responsive and equitable education systems and equitable access to learning and skills, UNICEF will:

- **Enhance learning accessibility by addressing structural barriers faced by adolescent girls**, children with disabilities, migrant and displaced children, and other marginalized groups. Support the development of gender-responsive curricula to promote inclusivity and ensure equitable educational opportunities for all.
- **Introduce a life cycle approach to education and skill development** by scaling up the Gen-U initiative, starting from the post-secondary level, focusing on labor productivity and future workforce needs.
- **Provide space to adolescent girls and young people** to co-create solutions, contribute to policy development, and engage in governance.
- **Bridge the gender digital divide** by supporting education departments in designing and delivering technology-facilitated blended and distance learning programs.
- **Expand job opportunities for women and young girls** by collaborating with government departments and chambers of commerce for economic empowerment and enhancing their roles in decision-making.

To sustain gender-responsive and equitable education systems and equitable access to learning, UNICEF will:

- **Reimagine education including through new digital delivery platforms and 21st century skills development.** UNICEF will work together with public and private partners to support initiatives that respond to current realities, to ensure an inclusive, gender-equitable and empowered future for all children and adolescent girls. UNICEF will also respond to current realities, to ensure an inclusive, gender-equitable, and empowered future for all children and adolescent girls.
- **Ensure girls' active participation and equal access to fields of STEM** to facilitate safe transitions to rewarding employment opportunities. This includes focusing on preparing them for the demands of the twenty-first-century workforce.
- **Foster accountability among adult stakeholders and institutions** to develop and ensure opportunities for

the systematic inclusion and participation of girls. This involves empowering girls to engage in designing, advocating for, owning, and implementing solutions to address the issues affecting their communities and their lives.

Goal Area 3: Every child, including adolescents, is protected from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and harmful practices

OUTCOME 4: CHILD PROTECTION

By 2027, Children including adolescents, are better protected from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect, and child marriage

UNICEF is broadening its focus to prevent abuse, violence, exploitation, neglect, and harmful practices by adopting a transformative approach that takes into account the gender dimensions. Efforts include generating evidence and analysis of gender dimensions in ensuring the protection of children, from all forms of violence, and engaging communities to challenge restrictive gender norms. Collaboration with stakeholders aims to enhance the agency and meaningful involvement of children and ensure the leadership of adolescents, particularly girls in protection initiatives. National datasets on child protection are weak. Data can support positive social and behavioral change efforts from the individual to systemic levels.

UNICEF aims to challenge restrictive gender norms and promote gender-equitable practices through collaboration with girls, boys, young people, parents, caregivers, role models, communities, religious leaders, the private sector, and other stakeholders. Similarly, the country office has also emerged as a 'rising star' in the UNICEF-UNFPA Global Programme to End Child Marriage. All efforts will be grounded in supporting the enhanced agency of adolescent girls and boys, ensuring their safe and meaningful involvement in protection initiatives while fostering life skill-building activities. Concurrently, promoting more equitable gender norms through support for social movements and engagement with communities and leaders, both male and female, will cultivate an enabling environment for the success of adolescents. All efforts will be grounded in supporting the enhanced agency of adolescent girls and boys and ensuring their safe and meaningful involvement in protection initiatives while fostering life skill-building activities. Concurrently, UNICEF will promote more equitable gender norms through

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support for social movements and engagement with communities and leaders, both male and female, will cultivate an enabling environment for the success of adolescents, particularly girls.

To strengthen gender-responsive and equitable child protection, UNICEF will:

- **Strengthen gender analytics to inform child protection programmatic priorities**, by advocating to maximize the utilization of available data sources such as the CLS, PSLM, MICS, etc; conducting secondary data analysis and building evidence on the effectiveness of population-level preventive interventions aimed at reducing child protection violations and negative child protection outcomes. It would also include partnering with women's and girls' rights networks and organizations and engaging men and boys, as well as broader communities, in promoting positive masculinities and shifts away from discriminatory social norms.
- **Strengthen community structures** (including but not limited to men's and boys' engagement) **to mitigate the risks of gender-based violence** in both development and humanitarian contexts.
- **Respond to child marriage through gender-responsive child protection case management and the referral system** by providing multi-sectoral protective services. UNICEF will also work to prevent child marriage by strengthening collaboration through community-based child protection structures, adolescent groups, and engagement with other sectors such as education, social protection, and WASH.
- **Monitor and address all gender gaps in birth registration.**

To scale up gender-responsive and equitable child protection, UNICEF will:

- **Shift the norms of acceptable behavior** on ending child marriage; domestic child labor; the perpetuation of violence; non-reporting and/or intervening to prevent violence; and child labor through scalable SBC strategies including engagement with communities, parents, caregivers, and faith-based leaders.
- **Scale up gender-responsive social and behavioral change strategies** including meaningful community engagement, positive parenting, engaging with faith-based leaders, and empowering girls and boys to protect themselves through life skills for safer environments both

offline and online.

- **Focus on gender-responsive reporting on ending child marriage** by engaging regularly with media officials to deepen understanding among the public and increase awareness.
- **Develop provincial gender-responsive budgets and actions plans** to end child marriage and domestic labor.
- **Develop provincial strategies for the engagement of boys and men** to address GBV and child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA).

To sustain gender-responsive and equitable child protection, UNICEF will:

- **Incorporate into curricula, life skills to mitigate risks of all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse** (both online and offline), and where and how adolescent girls and boys can access support.
- **Respond to child protection rights violations, including child marriage and GBV** by providing protective services through the child protection case management referral system (including services linked with social protection, health, mental health and SRH, nutrition, GBV, and education).
- **Create safe spaces for adolescent and caregivers particularly mothers** in both development and humanitarian contexts, that offer opportunities for peer connection, life skills, positive parenting skills building, career counselling, and basic services, as well as referrals to other services (such as counselling, legal support, GBV response).
- **Implement gender responsive social behavioural change strategies** to promote positive practices in gender norms that reduce child protection violations (child marriage, child labour, corporal punishment, sexual abuse). UNICEF will also work with the private sector to improve awareness around various child protection rights violations.
- **Prioritize investment in comprehensive, quality, and age-appropriate services for survivors of GBV**, strengthening linkages between child protection and the GBV system, and strengthening of the social service workforce that are providing services while also focusing on ensuring improved and non-discriminatory access to justice, particularly for girls and marginalized children and adolescents. Female representation must be ensured in the social service workforce for child protection. This includes prioritizing gender-

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responsive and survivor-centred specialized child justice strategies.

Goal Area 4: Every child, including adolescents, uses safe, resilient water, sanitation and hygiene services and lives in a safe and sustainable climate and environment

OUTCOME 5: WATER & SANITATION, HYGIENE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

By 2027, people in Pakistan, especially the vulnerable and marginalized, children and adolescents, are using safely managed, equitable, inclusive, gender-responsive, sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene services, including during humanitarian situations

Women and girls face distinct challenges in accessing WASH services, often experiencing disproportionate negative impacts from inadequate policies and systems. Poor WASH access exposes them to violence, hinders education, and limits economic opportunities. The burden of WASH-related tasks also restricts their participation in other activities.

UNICEF will prioritize equity and inclusion, aiming to strengthen gender-responsive WASH systems and empower communities to achieve affordable and sustainable services. Promotion of gender-responsive, disability-inclusive, and child-friendly WASH services, including menstrual health, will be emphasized in education and health facilities.

UNICEF under this strategy will prioritize supporting adolescent and youth leadership, particularly that of girls, in climate and environmental action. This includes enhancing the resilience of girls and women to climate change effects by facilitating their access to and management of natural resources. UNICEF also aims to amplify their role as a change agent for environmentally sustainable socioeconomic models.

Additionally, UNICEF will expand community decision-making models that promote the inclusive participation of women and youth, acknowledging their potential as leaders and entrepreneurs in market-based approaches to WASH systems. .

UNICEF will use an equity lens to ensure universal and fair access to climate-resilient, safe, and affordable drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene

for everyone, with a particular focus on addressing the needs of women and girls. This involves targeted investments, progressive social policies, and comprehensive programming centred on promoting the rights, development, and leadership of adolescent girls. Moreover, it is crucial that all adolescent girls have access to basic drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene services.

To strengthen gender-responsive and equitable WASH services & climate change interventions, UNICEF will:

- **Prioritize addressing the unique challenges faced by women and adolescent girls** regarding access to safe drinking water, toilets and WASH services by conducting context-specific, sex-disaggregated and localized assessments to identify the underlying factors and the gendered nature of climate and disaster risks.
- **Engage adolescent girls and organizations led by women** in designing and implementing all climate and disaster related policies, plans and interventions at the local, national, provincial and district levels.
- **Implement cash-for-work initiatives in the WASH sector and/or support small businesses focused on products like soap, sanitary pads, and masks** to create economic opportunities for women. These initiatives have the potential to be transformative, not only by enhancing women's social standing but also by positively impacting their livelihoods and health.
- **Support women and adolescents/youth as climate change champions** through the Pakistan Girl Guides Association and other youth and WASH clubs, for community level plantation campaigns.

To scale up gender-responsive and equitable WASH services & climate change interventions, UNICEF will:

- **Establish and support platforms for girls and young women to voice their priorities** for a gender-sensitive response to climate-related WASH issues, facilitating dialogue with decision-makers.
- **Expedite action and foster cross-sectoral partnerships to implement gender-equitable solutions** by addressing climate-related WASH

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challenges. UNICEF will design programs that can reduce the distance traveled and time spent on water collection for women and girls, thereby freeing up time for education, leisure, or other activities and mitigating exposure to the risk of violence.

- **Scale up successful models of community decision-making** that promote the equitable participation of women and young people and that recognize their potential as leaders and entrepreneurs in market-based approaches to WASH systems.

To sustain gender-responsive and equitable WASH services and climate change interventions, UNICEF will:

- **Provide sex-separated WASH facilities and menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) services in schools** by working with the education, health, and women's machineries.
- **Tackle taboos around menstruation** by rolling out SBC communication campaigns.
- **Showcase the work of climate change adolescent girl champions** and recognize their work through awards by organizing district, provincial, and national level exhibitions.
- **Consult women and girls on their knowledge and practices to construct WASH facilities** that respond to age, gender, disability, and culturally specific considerations.
- **Promote women's and adolescent girls' leadership in the design and management of new community sanitation facilities.** Such initiatives will measure the changes in girls' confidence, self-efficacy and school attendance when it is safer, easier, and more dignified for them to use the toilet and address their MHH needs.

Goal Area 5: Every child, including adolescents, has access to inclusive social protection and lives free of poverty

OUTCOME 6: SOCIAL POLICY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

By 2027, children, adolescents, and their families, especially vulnerable and marginalized, benefit from equity sensitive and child-friendly policies,

programmes and budget allocations based on high quality evidence and strengthened accountability

In UNICEF, social protection encompasses four primary areas of focus: social transfers, which may entail targeted cash transfers or in-kind assistance; social insurance, such as health insurance schemes; labour-market policies and initiatives, such as employment guarantee programs; and the provision of non-cash social welfare services.

Social protection interventions serve not only as a mechanism for addressing economic risks but also for tackling social vulnerabilities, including issues of social exclusion, discrimination, and human rights violations. In addition to its roles in protection, prevention, social protection is recognized as a catalyst for transformative change, supporting multisectoral efforts and yielding transformative outcomes in certain contexts. Gender-responsive and equitable social protection addresses the specific sets of gendered needs and risks encountered by women, adolescent girls and transgender people. Achieving these objectives necessitates taking a progressive approach tailored to diverse contexts. While strides have been made in this regard, continued efforts are imperative to fully realize the potential of gender-responsive social protection.

Social protection has expanded across Pakistan, notably through initiatives like the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and BISP Nashunuma, demonstrating significant potential to alleviate income poverty and mitigate food and economic insecurity.

These programs effectively address financial barriers to accessing social services and promote positive development outcomes, particularly for women and girls. Gender-responsive social protection can catalyze gender-transformative change through the full course of life via three key mechanisms: a) Promoting gender-equitable household investments in children's education and health; b) assisting households in managing risks and shocks; and c) enhancing women's and adolescent girls' access to, ownership of, and control over resources.

To strengthen gender-equitable social protection, UNICEF will:

- **Elevate the rights and voices of girls, particularly adolescent girls,** through intentional efforts to develop multi-sectoral and collaborative social protection programs.

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- **Expand partnerships with women's and girls' rights organizations** and networks across various operational areas, particularly in humanitarian settings.
- **Partner with national partners, to bolster inclusive, gender-responsive, and shock-responsive social protection systems.** These interventions prioritize the empowerment of girls and women, facilitating enhanced access to education, health, and social services, including responses to GBV.
- **Increase investment in research, including implementation research,** to guide programming and prioritize initiatives across multiple sectors.

To scale up gender-equitable social protection, UNICEF will:

- **Develop targeted programmes targeting discriminatory gender norms, such as the Cash Plus initiative** which encourages girls to remain in secondary education or education bonds for girls to complete their higher secondary education.
- **Design initiatives that challenge norms around women's mobility, paid work, and decision-making** around the use of resources, and/or build 'hard' and 'soft' skills (including negotiation skills) alongside cash transfers and digital financial literacy.
- **Focus on out-of-school girls, through online programmes** provided through national universities with the collaboration of the social

protection section to provide opportunities to widen reach.

- **Scale up gender responsive social protection initiatives for adolescent nutrition.**

To sustain gender-equitable social protection, UNICEF will:

- **Advance intersectional programming to address issues such as violence against women and children** and promote more gender-equitable social norms during early childhood and adolescence.
- **Increase investment in programmes that combine gender-equitable strategies** within social protection and adolescent girls' economic empowerment programmes.
- **Advocate for the differently abled population of adolescent's girls as key beneficiaries in cash grant programs;** and public sector allocations for inclusive services for the disabled population especially with a focus on female population across the public domain.
- **Promote gender-responsive planning and budgeting including increased investment for identified priorities. Review gaps and advocate for equitable resource allocation,** and advocate for the resource envelope of social sector services in favour of the most deprived children and adolescents and encourage increased investment on girls.

LIFTING THE VALUE OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

The “Adolescent Girl Country Profile for Pakistan” [9] offers a comprehensive insight into the status of adolescent girls in the country, covering vital aspects such as population dynamics, legal frameworks, and access to health and nutrition. Notably, the adolescent girl population aged 10-19 is steadily increasing, currently represents 22% of the total female population, and is projected to rise until 2023. Health and nutrition indicators reveal challenges, with a birth rate of 54 births per 1,000 adolescent girls aged 15-19 and inadequate fulfillment of family planning needs using modern methods. There is a lack of data on reproductive agency and menstrual hygiene management issues, even though 23% of adolescent girls face barriers to participation in daily activities during menstruation due to inadequate facilities and support. Approximately 26.2 million children are out of school and three out of every four (75%) 10-year-olds are unable to read and comprehend age-appropriate text.

Girls aged 5-16 experience a higher out-of-school rate at 52.6% (13.8 million), underscoring gender and structural barriers that hinder their educational participation and which highlight the need for targeted interventions. At this crucial juncture where UNICEF is working towards meeting the SDG targets by 2030, the organization possesses both comparative advantage and the capacity to effectively address the comprehensive needs of adolescent girls. The UNICEF Pakistan’s Gender Strategy for 2024-2027 is designed to accelerate progress in collaboration with various stakeholders, including government bodies, CSOs, NGOs, women and girl-led organizations, and adolescent girls themselves. This strategy aims to implement multi-sectoral initiatives that holistically address the diverse needs of adolescent girls, ensuring that even the most marginalized communities are reached and no one is left behind.

Zooming in, the UNICEF Pakistan Gender Strategy will focus on five key adolescent girls’ areas for acceleration as follows:

- **Adolescent girl-centred health services:** This area involves implementing initiatives such as the mass HPV vaccine rollout alongside partnerships and the leadership of women’s and girls’ organizations; HIV prevention and treatment services; and the

provision of reliable, age-appropriate health information for both adolescent girls and boys.

- **A life free from anaemia and malnutrition:** Nutrition programs tailored for adolescent girls will be scaled up to prevent anaemia and other forms of malnutrition.
- **Learning skills and agency to lead her life:** Women and girls will be empowered through gender-responsive digital teaching and learning by investing in teacher training on gender-responsive digital pedagogy; removing gender bias and stereotypes from curricula; the introduction of digital books, and learning materials; and by supporting STEM education and digital skills development for girls. UNICEF will also focus on ECE to improve school readiness; the expansion of equitable and quality ALPs at basic education levels; and the nurturing of school-community linkages to increase on-time enrolment, reduce dropouts, and ensure completion and transition for all students. Out-of-school girls will be empowered through learning, building 21st-century skills, and building agency for self-determination. Learning and skill-building opportunities will be expanded to support adolescent girls’ transition to employment, coupled with initiatives to empower them to actively participate in policymaking and community decision-making processes.
- **Ending child marriage and safety and protection from gender-based violence:** UNICEF will support gender-responsive parenting; caregiver programs; efforts to end child marriage; and response services for various forms of violence against adolescent girls.
- **Economic empowerment and social protection, including in humanitarian contexts to have power over her life:** This includes girl-centred cash-plus services and programming for adolescent girls including for climate resilience; financial inclusion and skills; and access to care and support policies and programs. This area of intervention of the Gender Strategy is critical to preventing child marriage, alongside UNICEF’s existing portfolio of work on child marriage.

[9] United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). (n.d.). Adolescent Girl Country Profile: Pakistan, Spotlighting the situation of adolescent girls and the urgent need to invest in their wellbeing, voice, and agency in every country

LIFTING THE VALUE OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

Long term dividends by investing in adolescent girls

- Girls with knowledge, skills, and leadership opportunities will make decisions about their lives and fulfill their potential; this will delay/avoid child marriage and pregnancies at a young age
- Adolescent girls, especially the most vulnerable from religious minorities and rural areas will be able to access quality health and nutritional services through multi-sectoral approaches
- Reduced burden of disease and mortality rates, contributing to healthier communities
- A prosperous future through access to digital platforms and technological innovations
- Increased investment in the frontline workforce (health workers & social services), including child protection workers in order to prevent and respond to child protection rights violations and deliver adolescent-friendly services
- Economic growth and poverty reduction
- Increased intergenerational prosperity
- Physical and emotional well-being

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We need schools that teach us practical skills, not just theory. Skills-based institutions could really help us girls prepare for the future

(Sadia, Adolescent Girls Advocate from Khairpur, Sindh)



GOVERNANCE MECHANISM FOR GENDER STRATEGY - LEADING BY EXAMPLE

In its pursuit to achieve the impact envisioned under this Gender Strategy, UNICEF reaffirms its commitments in Pakistan to implement gender-responsive and equitable programming strategies. Consequently, UNICEF will align its investments in building gender capacity with commitments to resourcing and accountability. Furthermore, it will move beyond mere process measures focused on tracking results, striving instead to foster an enabling environment and an inclusive culture that enables the organization to lead by example inside and outside. UNICEF Pakistan will accelerate and expand its work to support adolescent girls and will leverage programming using existing frameworks in the health, nutrition, education, WASH, child protection and social protection sections.

In line with global guidance, UNICEF Pakistan will not only contribute towards dedicated annual reports to the Executive Board and work closely with the Gender Thematic group and report on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women processes but will also implement explicit accountabilities for senior managers regarding gender results. Furthermore, mechanisms will be established to ensure that there is a costed gender action plan at the national and provincial level. Senior leadership is expected to set the example by demonstrating a visible, public commitment to gender equality goals through their actions.

A) Leadership, Accountability & Governance

To strengthen gender architecture at the UNICEF Country Office, it will:

- **Establish a UNICEF Gender Taskforce** within the UNICEF Pakistan Country Office to oversee the implementation of the gender strategy. This task force will be chaired by the Country Representative/ Deputy Representative with strong support from the Gender & Development Specialist, gender section, and gender focal points from the programmes and will include section chiefs and chief field offices from the Pakistan Offices. The standing agenda point will be progress updates on adolescent girls programming in the country office. The task force will convene meetings every two months to:
1. **Provide guidance and direction to UNICEF's core Gender Focal Points** where each section contributes and supports the execution of the

Gender Strategy.

2. **Develop a costed Gender Action Plan including for adolescent girls** and programming for provinces and each section.
3. **Strengthen UNICEF gender architecture** by Developing, implementing and continually improving training packages to ensure that this strategy is understood and adopted by all.
4. **Monitor and assess the progress made by each programme section** in relation to their planned activities and will keep track of the 15% allocation of funding for gender equitable programming including the percentage expenditure on adolescent girls' programming.
5. **Identify challenges and obstacles faced by each programme section** and offer the essential technical support needed to resolve these issues effectively.
6. **Gain a clear understanding of the financial needs of each program section** and work with the partnership unit to mobilize the necessary resources to ensure the successful execution of the costed gender action plans of the program sections.

B) Staffing and Capacity

UNICEF Pakistan will allocate resources towards broadening access to values-based gender training and capacity-building initiatives for staff across all organizational domains including development, humanitarian, research, communications, management, and human resources. This investment will encompass various strategies such as GenderPro credentialing, e-learning platforms, and the expansion of mandatory gender training and learning opportunities. Furthermore, UNICEF will incorporate gender competencies into the design of its strategies for hiring, recruitment, and accountability processes to foster a sizable and proficient gender cadre at the country and field office level, alongside sectoral specialists equipped with gender expertise.

C) Evidence Generation for Informed Gender Equitable Programming

UNICEF will strategically invest in expanded and innovative research and data collection endeavors to gain a deeper understanding of the intersections between gender- and age-related discrimination and

GOVERNANCE MECHANISM FOR GENDER STRATEGY - LEADING BY EXAMPLE

other forms of exclusion and vulnerability. Through collaborative research partnerships and evidence synthesis initiatives, UNICEF will both draw from and contribute to research conducted by partners, while also assisting the sectors and field offices in conducting rigorous, ethical research and gender analysis. Emphasizing the utilization of research and evaluation to advance gender equality, UNICEF will prioritize the adoption of feminist evaluation approaches across its operations.

D) Partnerships:

UNICEF will continue to work closely with other UN agencies (e.g., UNFPA, UNDP, UNWOMEN, UNHCR, ILO, WHO etc.), bilaterals, and other civil society and grassroots partners within the UN gender working group to ensure consistency and coordination, and will leverage programming using existing frameworks. UNICEF will initiate a series of dialogues on gender-responsive budgeting with other UN agencies and will emphasize adolescent girls' needs. UNICEF Pakistan will continue to stress that GBV risk mitigation, prevention and response should be integrated in emergency preparedness and response plans and activities. UNICEF recognizes both the value and limitations of financial benchmarks and commits to continued improvements in its funding mechanisms. This will be accomplished through gender-responsive procurement and partnership systems that increasingly disburse to woman- and girl-led organizations.

To implement this strategy UNICEF will work in close partnership with ministries and line departments, human rights institutions, and other partners, such as civil society and adolescent girls themselves. This will catalyze more integrated programmatic interventions and mobilize increased investments in women and adolescent girls in the country at the national, provincial and district levels. UNICEF will increase its resource allocation for gender equitable programming to 15%.

E) Tracking Progress and Results

In line with UNICEF's dedication to gender equality, UNICEF Pakistan will capture its notable

achievements in promoting gender equality within annual reports. The gender section will work in close collaboration with the Planning, Monitoring and Data Section to link the Country Office gender results to the UNICEF Gender Action Plan (GAP 2022-2025) [10], in alignment with the Country Programme Document 2023-2027 [11] and Country Programme Management Plan 2023-2027 (CPMP) and in support of its contributions to achieving the SDGs. A detailed set of 'Core Standard Indicators' and 'Gender Tagging' will be tracked through an internal working group comprised of all sections, including the planning, monitoring, and evaluation functions. Incorporating artificial intelligence at UNICEF will leverage upon AI technologies to analyze data and identify gender disparities, designing interventions that address specific needs identified through AI insights, and ensuring that AI systems are developed and deployed in a way that is inclusive and promotes gender equality. This could include using AI-powered tools for gender-sensitive data collection, analyzing patterns of gender inequality, and developing AI-driven solutions to address systemic barriers to gender equity. Regular joint field monitoring with gender focal points and periodic program reviews will be conducted to assess progress on output-level results and facilitate necessary adjustments. Additionally, the annual reporting will include disaggregated indicators to ensure comprehensive monitoring of outcomes.

UNICEF, in collaboration with its partners, will enhance the national capacity for monitoring gender indicators through the child and adolescent rights lens, by leveraging sectoral management information systems, studies, and reviews. This will entail working closely with research organizations, as well as NCSW, NCRC, UN partners, and the national and provincial Bureau of Statistics to collect and analyze data through initiatives like the MICS and periodic situation analysis updates. Furthermore, UNICEF will provide support to national and provincial governments and their partners in strengthening and utilizing program monitoring and oversight systems to ensure operational efficiency and results-based management.

[10] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2021). Gender Action Plan. https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/7046/file/2021-31-Gender_Action_Plan_2022-2025-EN-ODS.pdf

[11] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Pakistan. (2022). Country Programme Document 2023-2027. https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/12516/file/2022-PL36-Pakistan_CPD-EN-ODS.pdf

CONCLUSION

In Pakistan, the future lies in the hands of children, adolescent girls, women, and marginalized communities. With the unveiling of this Gender Strategy, UNICEF is poised to spearhead transformative change. Drawing on our unique position within the UN system and formidable comparative advantage, UNICEF will harness technical expertise and forge partnerships across sectors to rapidly scale up gender-equitable programming, with a special focus on adolescent girls, their leadership and empowerment. Centered on the voices of girls themselves, UNICEF will work to strengthen, scale up and sustain gender equitable approaches under the health; nutrition; learning and skills; WASH; child protection; and social protection sections. This will empower women and girls with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities needed to shape their own destinies by 2027, propelling Pakistan towards economic prosperity. Through innovative approaches that engage men, boys, and allies, UNICEF will pave the way for unprecedented change, leaving no one behind. The time for action is now, and together with its partners, UNICEF stands ready to take bold, affirmative steps towards a brighter, more equitable future for all.



The gender strategy development process was enriched by the voices of over 400 individuals reached through various consultations, focus group discussions, key informant interviews and engagement efforts across the provinces. This extensive outreach ensured that the strategy was informed by a diverse array of experiences and viewpoints, enhancing its relevance and potential for impact. UNICEF will make sure that their voices are translated into affirmative actions by implementing this strategy for the equitable future of all.

LIST OF CORE STANDARD INDICATORS- GAP

Annex 1: List of GAP related CSIs under Goal Areas

CSI Code	Core Strategic Indicator (CSI)
Goal Area 1: Every child survives and thrives	
1.1.3	Number of health workers receiving the skills and support for delivering essential maternal, newborn and child health services through UNICEF-supported programmes
1.1.4	Level of strength of the primary health care system, achieved with UNICEF support
1.3.3	Extent of policies and services for elimination of dual mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis
1.4.2	Scale of integration of adolescent health priorities, including sexual and reproductive health, in primary health care services or through school and digital platforms
1.5.1	Scale of integration of mental health services into primary health care, including through school and digital platforms
1.7.2	Extent to which programmes to prevent overweight and obesity in school-age children and adolescents are implemented by the government
1.7.3	Extent to which gender-responsive programmes to prevent anaemia in adolescent girls and boys through school- and community-based approaches are implemented
1.7.4	Extent to which integrated anaemia prevention and nutrition counselling is integrated in pregnancy care programmes for women
Goal Area 2: Every child learns	
2.1.1	Extent to which the education system is inclusive and gender equitable for access to learning opportunities
2.1.4	Number of out-of-school children and adolescents who accessed education through UNICEF-supported programmes
2.2.5	Extent to which the systems for learning and skills development are gender-responsive
2.2.6	Level of institutionalisation of holistic skills development to support learning, personal empowerment, environmental sustainability, active citizenship, social cohesion and/or employability and entrepreneurship
2.2.8	Number of children who accessed education through digital platforms through UNICEF-supported programmes
2.2.10	Number of adolescents and young people who participate in or lead civic engagement initiatives through UNICEF-supported programmes
Goal Area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation	

LIST OF CORE STANDARD INDICATORS- GAP

3.1.3	Number of children who have experienced violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect reached by health, social work or justice/law enforcement services through UNICEF-supported programmes
3.1.7	Percentage of UNICEF-targeted women, girls and boys in humanitarian contexts provided with risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions to address gender-based violence through UNICEF-supported programmes
3.1.8	Number of children and adults who have access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian, development, protection and/or other personnel who provide assistance to affected populations
3.2.7	Number of UNICEF-targeted children, adolescents, parents and caregivers provided with community-based mental health and psychosocial support services
3.3.1	Number of girls and women who receive prevention and protection services on female genital mutilation through UNICEF-supported programmes
3.3.2	Number of people engaged through community platforms in reflective dialogue towards eliminating discriminatory social and gender norms and harmful practices that affect girls and women through UNICEF-supported programmes
3.3.4	Extent to which the country implements evidence-based, costed and funded action plans or strategies with monitoring and evaluation frameworks to end child marriage
Goal Area 4: Every child lives in a safe and clean environment	
4.1.6	Number of women and adolescent girls reached whose menstrual health and hygiene needs are addressed through UNICEF-supported programmes
4.1.7	Number of people in humanitarian contexts reached with appropriate drinking water services, through UNICEF-supported programmes
4.1.8	Number of people in humanitarian contexts reached with appropriate sanitation services, through UNICEF-supported programmes
4.2.1	Extent to which a costed and inclusive WASH financing strategy has been prepared and implemented with UNICEF support
4.3.2	Extent to which children, adolescents and young people are engaged in action and advocacy to address climate change, unsustainable energy use and/or environmental degradation with UNICEF support
Goal Area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life	
5.2.2	Level of gender-responsiveness of social protection programmes

There are five mandatory gender CSIs that all COs are required to report on. They are as follows:

1. H.2.5: Extent to which at-scale programmes addressing gender discriminatory roles and practices among children are implemented
2. H.2.6a: Extent to which at-scale capacity-development programmes for front-line workers focusing on gender equality are implemented
3. H.5.2: Level of performance on organizational standards for UNICEF Gender Action Plan implementation
4. H.5.5: Extent to which gender-based violence risk mitigation actions are being implemented
5. H.9.8: Extent to which transformative child rights policies and programmes that promote gender equality have been identified and financed with UNICEF support

LIST OF CORE STANDARD INDICATORS- GAP

Annex 2. Draft Adolescent Girl Scorecard Indicator List

This is an initial draft to be further developed. UNICEF will seek to add indicators that come from adolescent girls themselves. Country offices may wish to supplement the core data with additional indicators and disaggregated data as relevant and available.

Population and enabling environment

- Adolescent girl population (thousands)
- Share of total population (%)
- Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI)

Outcome 1: Adolescent girls have safe access to responsive health and nutrition, including mental health, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and access to quality menstrual health and hygiene information and services

- Adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 girls 15-19)
- Skilled birth attendant (girls 15-19) (%)
- ANC4 (girls 15-19) (%)
- Demand for family planning satisfied with modern methods (girls 15-19) (%)
- Informed decision making, reproductive health (girls 15-19) (%)
- Menstrual hygiene management (girls 15-19) (%)
- HIV incidence (per 1,000 uninfected girls 10-19)
- Depression /anxiety (girls 15-19) (%)
- Thinness (girls 10-19) (%)
- Overweight (girls 10-19) (%)
- Anaemia (girls 15-19) (%)

Outcome 2: Adolescent girls enjoy freedom from violence, exploitation, and abuse – online and offline, and harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation (FGM), and child marriage

- Child marriage before 18 (%)
- FGM prevalence (girls 0-14) (%)
- Intimate partner violence prevalence (girls 15-19) (%)
- Acceptability of intimate partner violence (girls 15-19) (%)

Outcome 3: Adolescent girls have safe access to quality secondary level learning and skills building opportunities

- Girls' out-of-school rate, lower secondary (%)
- Girls' out-of-school rate, upper secondary (%)
- Girls' completion rate, lower secondary (%)
- Girls' completion rate, upper secondary (%)
- Girls' reading proficiency (%)
- Girls' math proficiency (%)

Outcome 4: Adolescent girls have the economic security to participate meaningfully in their future economic pathways

- Child poverty (1+ deprivation (girls 0-17) (%)
- Not in education, employment or training (NEET) (girls 15-19) (%)
- Engagement in unpaid domestic and care work (girls 10-14) (%)



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