

# Strengthening Justice and Security Sector Governance in Pakistan (Rule of Law Programme)

**B0424 - Pakistan - Islamabad**

**REPORTING PERIOD 2024- 2027**

**Narrative**

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## 1. Executive Summary

## 2. Background

## 3. Key Results Achieved

- **Level of Reporting:**

Output level results

**Project Outputs:**

Capacity of justice and security stakeholders (duty bearers) enhanced to deliver inclusive, timely, and accessible services to all people with an emphasis on women and digital technologies

**Contributing Outcomes:**

Outcome 1 By 2027, the people in Pakistan, especially women, children, the most vulnerable and marginalized, have increased access to fundamental rights, gender equality and fundamental freedom through inclusive, accountable, effective and evidence-driven governance systems and rule-of-law institutions at all levels of government, contributing to good governance and stability

**Contributing Outputs:**

PAK\_OUTPUT\_1.2 Justice system is more accessible, efficient and affordable

**Progress Note:**

On security and justice institutional capacity building upskilled and delivered basic and specialized trainings to 602 justice stakeholders (103 judges, 193 court staff, 150 lawyers, 85 DRC members, 57 prison officers, and 12 reclamation and probation officers: 33% women) and 521 law enforcement personals (45 police, 193 ETAN, 283 ANF: 15% women) [E4]. Pre- and post-assessment of the trainings highlight knowledge increase amongst judges 17%, court staff 16%, lawyers 14%, DRC members 22%, prison 4%, reclamation and probation 12%, police personnel 21%, ETAN 35%, and ANF 16% [E5]. These results demonstrate a significant increase in generation of transferable knowledge and skills across justice and law institutions in KP, Islamabad Capital Territory and Balochistan. [IRRF 2.2.1] The programme recognises the transformative potential of digital technologies in the rule of law sector in Pakistan and strategically leverages digital solutions to enhance people's access to justice. In 2024,

the KP Judiciary conducted more than 50720 case hearings using current virtual court systems established with UNDP support benefiting a greater number of people each year (KP: 72 virtual courts and 75 virtual points) [E34] [IRRF E1.3] [IRRF E1.2]. Building on this success, in 2024 UNDP scaled up its virtual court support to Sindh, Baluchistan and Gilgit Balochistan High Courts [IRRF E1.3] [IRRF E1.2] [IRRF 2.2.3]. In parallel, UNDP supported the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) by providing specialized training in digital forensics, cybercrime, and crime scene investigation. A total of 16 ANF personnel were trained as trainers, with cascade training reaching 49 ANF personnel [E4]. To complement specialized training, UNDP provided critical equipment such as Oxygen Forensic Detective Kits, body-worn cameras, and crime scene preservation tools were provided, along with licensed software like Maltego to enhance investigative capacities in cybercrime and organized crime [E25]. These advancements have modernized investigations, improved evidence collection, and strengthened operational efficiency, significantly enhancing accessibility, service delivery, and transparency within the rule-of-law sector for both rights holders and duty bearers. [IRRF E1.3] [IRRF E1.2].

- **Level of Reporting:**

Output level results

**Project Outputs:**

Capacity of women, and the most vulnerable and marginalized (rights holders) strengthened to access referral pathways to justice and security

**Contributing Outcomes:**

Outcome 1 By 2027, the people in Pakistan, especially women, children, the most vulnerable and marginalized, have increased access to fundamental rights, gender equality and fundamental freedom through inclusive, accountable, effective and evidence-driven governance systems and rule-of-law institutions at all levels of government, contributing to good governance and stability

**Contributing Outputs:**

PAK\_OUTPUT\_1.2 Justice system is more accessible, efficient and affordable

**Progress Note:**

Improving legal literacy among communities, particularly women, is a key priority of the programme thus also contributing to SDG Goal 5. To this end, in 2024, the programme continued to achieve significant results. A total of 3721 people (women: 1851) benefitted from legal awareness campaigns in Balochistan and KP including the MDs in terms of enhancing and receiving new knowledge on legal literacy, rights, and gender-sensitive legal access. [E12] The session also raised awareness on the role of dispute resolution councils (DRCs) in KP, leading to a substantial increase in reported cases, from 4,768 last year to 17,792 this year providing fast and cost-effective dispute resolution to the marginalized especially women [E23] [E24]. Four workshops conducted for DRCs and other justice sector stakeholders to discuss strategies for

enhancing the effectiveness of DRCs in resolving disputes and promoting justice at the grassroots level. A total of 206 justice sector actors (women 31) including 170 DRCs benefitted from the workshops. In terms of providing legal assistance, 71 people (women: 62) benefitted in terms of resolving a range of issues in family (52%), civil (23%), guardianship (7%), and succession (2%) cases. [E13] [IRRF 6.2.2] [IRRF 2.2.3]

- **Level of Reporting:**

Output level results

**Project Outputs:**

Justice and security sector institutional facilities enhanced to deliver inclusive, timely, and accessible justice and security services, through women friendly and gender-responsive infrastructure development support with an emphasis on flood resilience

**Contributing Outcomes:**

Outcome 1 By 2027, the people in Pakistan, especially women, children, the most vulnerable and marginalized, have increased access to fundamental rights, gender equality and fundamental freedom through inclusive, accountable, effective and evidence-driven governance systems and rule-of-law institutions at all levels of government, contributing to good governance and stability

**Contributing Outputs:**

PAK\_OUTPUT\_1.2 Justice system is more accessible, efficient and affordable

**Progress Note:**

Significant progress was made in enhancing justice and rule of law infrastructure to ensure inclusive and accessible services. The living conditions of 5,426 inmates, including 257 women, across seven prisons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) were improved through extensive infrastructure refurbishment. These upgrades included the provision of healthcare facilities, basic amenities, and the integration of solar-powered green energy solutions, promoting sustainability and resilience [E6] [E7]. To address overcrowding, a new barrack was constructed at District Tank Prison in KP, increasing the accommodation capacity by 10 in a facility originally designed for 65 inmates but housing 116. This development provided more humane conditions for the inmates [E6]. Additionally, the first-ever training hall for the Excise, Taxation, and Anti-Narcotics Department Balochistan (ETAN-B) was constructed, accommodating 35 trainees, while a residential barrack was built for the KP Police School of Investigation, enhancing capacity to house an additional 30 trainees [E8] [E10]. These facilities are pivotal in strengthening the operational and training capacities of law enforcement agencies. To improve access to justice, five mediation centers were established in district courts across Balochistan. These centers provide faster and cost-effective dispute resolution through tailored, flexible solutions. By offering a confidential and accessible alternative to traditional litigation, these centers benefitted approximately 3.2 million people, including 1.5 million women and 74 transgender individuals [E35]. Furthermore, the office of the Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA) was refurbished

to enhance its operational efficiency and service delivery [IRRF 2.2.1] [IRRF 2.2.3]. These developments highlight the programme's unwavering commitment to creating a more robust, accessible, and inclusive justice and security system in Pakistan, ensuring that institutional facilities meet the needs of all segments of society, particularly marginalized groups.

- **Level of Reporting:**

Output level results

**Project Outputs:**

Policy, legal and regulatory frameworks strengthened to warrant people – centered, equitable, timely, affordable justice and security delivery to all people with an emphasis on women, marginalized and vulnerable groups, and digital technologies

**Contributing Outcomes:**

Outcome 1 By 2027, the people in Pakistan, especially women, children, the most vulnerable and marginalized, have increased access to fundamental rights, gender equality and fundamental freedom through inclusive, accountable, effective and evidence-driven governance systems and rule-of-law institutions at all levels of government, contributing to good governance and stability

**Contributing Outputs:**

PAK\_OUTPUT\_1.2 Justice system is more accessible, efficient and affordable

**Progress Note:**

Developed three policy frameworks to strengthen rule of law institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan, ensuring gender-responsiveness and compliance with national and international standards: Excise, Taxation, and Anti-Narcotics Department Balochistan (ETAN-B) standard operating procedures (SOPs) for streamlining operations [E1]; KP Police five-year gender strategy [E2], KP Police gender responsive policing (GRP) Policy [E3], and SOPs for KP Police gender responsive desks (GRDs) [E9]. The second iteration of the KP Rule of Law Roadmap (2023-2028) was collaboratively developed by KP HDAT and key justice institutions, incorporating significant enhancements to improve its effectiveness and relevance. Endorsed by the Chief Minister on November 28, 2024, this iteration integrates five strategic outcomes: enhanced coordination, reformed legislation, improved institutional effectiveness, capacity building, and increased access to justice. The roadmap includes new focus areas such as the integration of merged districts, community safety, and forensic science services. To support its implementation, comprehensive documents such as institutional sectoral strategies, biannual implementation plans, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and progress reporting templates and Terms of Reference (ToR) for international coordination mechanisms were developed [E26] [E27] [E28] [E29] [E30] [E31] [E32] [E33] [IRRF 2.2.1].

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## 4. Key Challenges Encountered

- **Level of Reporting:**

Output level results

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Capacity of justice and security stakeholders (duty bearers) enhanced to deliver inclusive, timely, and accessible services to all people with an emphasis on women and digital technologies

**Contributing Outcomes:**

Outcome 1 By 2027, the people in Pakistan, especially women, children, the most vulnerable and marginalized, have increased access to fundamental rights, gender equality and fundamental freedom through inclusive, accountable, effective and evidence-driven governance systems and rule-of-law institutions at all levels of government, contributing to good governance and stability

**Contributing Outputs:**

PAK\_OUTPUT\_1.2 Justice system is more accessible, efficient and affordable

**Progress Note:**

The programme faced several challenges during implementation. The Leahy vetting process caused significant delays as it required substantial time for documentation and approval. This requirement was not adequately accounted for in the original work plan, leading to unforeseen delays. The ETAN-B's designated focal person, a senior official with multiple assignments, struggled to dedicate sufficient time to the vetting process, further compounding delays. The lengthy nature of the US-INL's Leahy vetting procedures added to these challenges. Delays in activity completion necessitated a request for a no-cost extension from donors. The initial planning phase underestimated the time required for critical activities, leading to unrealistic timelines. Securing participant nominations from government institutions also proved difficult, as many officers were preoccupied with official duties at their respective posts. The limited number of female officers further restricted female participation in trainings and events, presenting an additional barrier to achieving gender balance in capacity-building initiatives.

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Output level results

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**Contributing Outputs:**

PAK\_OUTPUT\_1.2 Justice system is more accessible, efficient and affordable

**Progress Note:**

The implementation of activities in the merged districts faced significant delays due to the lengthy and complex process of obtaining No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from the relevant authorities. The bureaucratic nature of this procedure posed a major hurdle at the outset of the project, delaying the initiation of key activities in these areas. The time-consuming process often required multiple rounds of review and approvals, resulting in a bottleneck that impacted the overall project timeline. Persistent security concerns in the merged districts compounded these challenges. The volatile security environment, marked by sporadic violence and instability, restricted the movement of programme staff and partners, making it impossible to conduct planned sessions in certain high-risk areas such as Kurram. These security risks necessitated the reallocation of resources and adjustments to planned activities, limiting the programme's reach and effectiveness in some of the most vulnerable communities.

- **Level of Reporting:**

Output level results

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Justice and security sector institutional facilities enhanced to deliver inclusive, timely, and accessible justice and security services, through women friendly and gender-responsive infrastructure development support with an emphasis on flood resilience

**Contributing Outcomes:**

Outcome 1 By 2027, the people in Pakistan, especially women, children, the most vulnerable and marginalized, have increased access to fundamental rights, gender

equality and fundamental freedom through inclusive, accountable, effective and evidence-driven governance systems and rule-of-law institutions at all levels of government, contributing to good governance and stability

**Contributing Outputs:**

PAK\_OUTPUT\_1.2 Justice system is more accessible, efficient and affordable

**Progress Note:**

Operating in the merged areas and districts of Balochistan posed significant challenges due to persistent security concerns. The volatile environment in these regions limited the movement of staff and contractors, delaying the implementation of planned activities and restricting access to certain areas. Security threats necessitated additional precautions, which further extended timelines and increased costs. Procurement processes added another layer of complexity. The procedures for acquiring materials and securing contracts were often cumbersome and time-consuming, impacting the timely delivery of infrastructure projects. These delays were compounded by the need to ensure compliance with stringent guidelines and standards, which required multiple reviews and approvals. Despite these challenges, the programme's adaptive strategies and close collaboration with local partners enabled the completion of key infrastructure initiatives, contributing to long-term sustainability and resilience.

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Output level results

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Policy, legal and regulatory frameworks strengthened to warrant people – centered, equitable, timely, affordable justice and security delivery to all people with an emphasis on women, marginalized and vulnerable groups, and digital technologies

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**Contributing Outputs:**

PAK\_OUTPUT\_1.2 Justice system is more accessible, efficient and affordable

**Progress Note:**

The procurement process to hire experts experienced significant delays due to the need for multiple advertisements of the Terms of Reference (TORs) to ensure the selection of qualified candidates. This protracted process, encompassing advertisement,

evaluation, selection, and onboarding, proved to be both complex and time-consuming, affecting the timely execution of project activities. The review and endorsement of key documents such as the Gender Strategy, Gender Responsive Policing Policy, and SOPs for Gender Responsive Desks encountered notable delays, largely due to frequent transfers and postings of government officials. These disruptions hindered continuity and the provision of meaningful feedback. Additionally, government endorsement procedures, characterized by their inherent complexity, further slowed progress. High turnover in leadership roles and shifting institutional priorities added another layer of challenges, making it difficult to secure consistent support and final approvals for these critical frameworks.

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## 5. Project Risks and Issues

The programme operates in a volatile and complex environment, particularly in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Several risks and issues have been identified that could impact the successful implementation of the programme's objectives. One of the primary risks is the potential for militant attacks targeting civilians, government institutions, or project activities, such as infrastructure development and capacity-building initiatives. This threat stems from the heightened security volatility in the programme's target areas. Such incidents could delay project activities by several months and increase operational costs, particularly if infrastructure is damaged or destroyed. To mitigate this risk, the programme is exploring alternative options, including virtual implementation modalities, engaging local partners with strong on-ground presence, and adhering to UNDP's MOSS. Another critical risk is the difficulty in obtaining NOCs for accessing project sites, particularly in MDs and certain areas of Balochistan. Delays in NOC issuance can halt activities for extended periods, impacting civil works and monitoring and evaluation functions. To address this, the programme has established regular coordination with the Country Office Protocol Officer to streamline the NOC application process and revise activity timelines as needed to accommodate these delays. The risk of natural disasters, such as floods and landslides, is also significant, especially during the monsoon season. These events can restrict access to project areas and delay activities like capacity building and infrastructure development by several months. The programme mitigates this risk by collaborating with the UN Country Team's Technical Working Group on Resilient and Sustainable Reconstruction to develop early warning systems and explore alternative safe routes to project sites. The changing political landscape and shifting government priorities pose additional risks to the programme's policy-level activities and capacity-building interventions. Rapid turnover in government stakeholders can diminish ownership and delay implementation. To mitigate this, the programme actively engages with new government representatives through regular consultations to ensure alignment with evolving priorities and maintain relevance to both duty bearers and rights holders. Operational risks include resource constraints among duty bearers and challenges in maintaining consistent quality in construction activities. Limited capacity in terms of human and financial resources can delay activity implementation and affect the programme's ability to meet its targets. To address this, the programme conducts consultations

with stakeholders to identify capacity gaps and tailors its interventions to meet these needs. Strict monitoring and quality assurance mechanisms are in place for construction activities, including the use of third-party engineering firms for supervision. The programme also faces risks related to gender inclusion and equity. Entrenched cultural and tribal norms can hinder women's participation in decision-making and access to justice. The programme mitigates this by prioritizing gender-responsive planning, conducting mid-term gender analyses, and ensuring an inclusive environment through its Gender Action Plan. Financial risks, including currency fluctuations, inflation, and potential corruption, are also significant concerns. These risks are mitigated through rigorous adherence to UNDP's financial management protocols, periodic health checks on budget spending, and the inclusion of contingency funds in contracts to address cost escalations. Finally, the programme recognizes the environmental risks associated with construction activities, such as air and water pollution. To minimize these impacts, it ensures compliance with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards and incorporates sustainable practices in all infrastructure projects.

## 6. Lessons Learned

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## 7. Conclusions and Way Forward

The Rule of Law Programme has made significant progress in strengthening justice and security sector governance in Pakistan despite operating in a challenging environment marked by political instability, security risks, and bureaucratic complexities. However, achieving sustainable and inclusive outcomes requires strategic actions and continued adaptation to evolving circumstances. To address unforeseen challenges, such as political instability, frequent transfer and posting of officials, and security instability in target areas, the programme must integrate robust contingency planning into its operations. Proactive risk management measures, including alternative implementation modalities and adherence to security standards, will ensure continuity in project activities while safeguarding stakeholders and resources. The use of technology in the justice sector has demonstrated transformative potential in improving access to and efficiency of justice services. Building on successful initiatives like virtual courts and digital case management systems, the programme should expand its investment in technological solutions to enhance justice delivery across all regions, including remote and underserved areas. Strengthened coordination with donors, government institutions, and local partners is essential to maintain alignment with priorities, foster ownership, and enhance the programme's relevance and impact. Establishing structured mechanisms for regular consultation and collaboration will ensure joint decision-making, timely resolution of challenges, and sustained engagement of all stakeholders. Serious efforts in fund mobilization are critical to scaling up successful interventions and addressing resource constraints that may impede progress. The programme should actively engage with existing and potential donors, emphasizing the importance of sustained investment in justice and security sector reforms to achieve long-term stability and development. Furthermore, gender equality and social inclusion

must remain central to all programme interventions. By fostering an enabling environment for women and marginalized groups to actively participate in justice sector initiatives, the programme can ensure equitable access to justice and security services for all. Finally, integrating sustainability into all aspects of the programme, from infrastructure development to capacity building, will help secure long-term benefits. Leveraging environmentally sustainable practices and ensuring alignment with national and international standards will further enhance the programme's impact and legacy. In conclusion, the Rule of Law Programme is well-positioned to continue driving meaningful reforms in Pakistan's justice and security sectors. By addressing risks, leveraging technology, strengthening partnerships, and prioritizing inclusivity, the programme can ensure its efforts lead to a more accessible, equitable, and resilient justice system for all.

## 8. Other Reporting Requirements

- **Reporting Requirements**

### Rule of Law Programme Gender Specific Results - 2024

Improving legal literacy among communities, particularly women, is a key priority of the programme which contributes to SDG Goal 5. To this end, in 2024, the programme continued to achieve significant results. A total of 3,721 people (women: 1,851) benefitted from legal awareness campaigns in Balochistan and KP including MDs by improving and receiving new knowledge on legal literacy, rights, and gender-sensitive legal access. [E12] The sessions also raised awareness on the role of dispute resolution councils (DRCs) in KP, resulting in a substantial increase in reported cases, from 4,768 in 2023 to 17,792 in 2024 providing fast and cost-effective dispute resolution to the marginalized especially women [E23] [E24]. In terms of receiving legal assistance, 71 people (women: 62) benefitted from resolving family (52%), civil (23%), guardianship (7%), and succession (2%) cases. [E13] [IRRF 6.2.2] [IRRF 2.2.3] To combat gender-based violence, the programme trained and upskilled 97 women lawyers, 193 court staff (14 women), and 45 police officers (25 women) to deliver improved legal aid and support services to GBV survivors especially marginalized communities in KP and Balochistan including GBV case management and legal representation. [E4] [E18] [E21] [E22] [IRRF 6.2.1] Notably, the programme's capacity development efforts also contributed to the career progression of women police officers. This year, 4 women police officers trained by UNDP were promoted to senior roles as Additional Station House Officers in KP's merged districts, demonstrating the programme's commitment to empowering women and promoting gender equality in the rule of law sector. [E14] [IRRF 6.2.1]. UNDP also brought together over 250 women lawyers by holding 2 women lawyers conferences in KP and Balochistan, to share experiences, celebrate achievements, and develop solutions for a more inclusive justice sector. Through panel discussions and design thinking sessions, participants identified barriers and recommended strategies to make the justice sector more accessible and safer for women and marginalized groups. [E15] [E16] [E19] [E20] [IRRF 6.2.1]

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