



# External Evaluation of the Humqadam Partners for Change project

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## Abstract

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The three-year Humqadam project aimed to reduce VAWG & CEAM and was implemented by Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Center.

Humqadam Partners for Change Project was implemented in six districts in Pakistan from June-2021 to August 2024. The evaluation was conducted in Lahore (Punjab), Mardan (Khyber Pakhtunkhawa), Quetta (Baluchistan), and Benazirabad (Sindh) districts of Pakistan.

This evaluation is commissioned by Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre.

Disclaimer: The Evaluation Report has been developed by an independent evaluator. The analysis presented in this report reflects the views of the author and may not necessarily represent those SG, its partners or the UN Trust Fund"

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## List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

BCSW- Balochistan Commission on the Status of Women

CBOs – Community Based Organizations

CEAM – Child Early Age Marriage

CEFM – Child Early & Forced Marriage

CNIC – Citizen National Identity Card

CSOs – Civil Society Organizations

CSW – Commission on the Status of Women

DCHD – Democratic Commission for Human Development

DV – Domestic Violence

EAD – Economic Affairs Divisions

EAM – Early Age Marriage

F – Female(s)

FGDs – Focus Group Discussions

GBV – Gender Based Violence

KIIs – Key Informant Interviews

KP – Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

M – Male(s)

M&E – Monitoring & Evaluation

NCHR – National Commission for Human Rights

NCSW – National Commission on the Status of Women

NICs – National Identity Cards

NOCs – No Objection Certificates

PCSW – Punjab Commission on the Status of Women

PWD – Persons with Disability

RRN – Rapid Response Network

SAFE – Securing Activists for Freedom and Empowerment of Women and Girls

SAIs – Social Action Initiatives

SALT – Stimulate, Appreciate, Learn & Transfer

SG – SG Women’s Resource Centre

SOPs – Standard Operating Procedures

SWD – Social Welfare Department

TOC – Theory of Change

TORs – Terms of Reference

UC – Union Council

UN – United Nations

UNEG – United Nations Evaluation Group

UN Trust Fund – United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

EVAW – End Violence against Women

VAWG – Violence against Women & Girls

VFF – Violence Free Family

WAF – Women’s Action Forum

WHO – World Health Organization

WHRDs – Women Human Rights Defenders

## Executive Summary

Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) remains a global issue, severely impacting women's health, autonomy, and self-esteem. In Pakistan, domestic violence (DV) and child early-age marriages (CEAM) are deeply entrenched in cultural norms, socioeconomic inequalities, and systemic gender disparities. The COVID-19 pandemic and the 2022 floods further exacerbated these issues, creating economic and social conditions that intensified domestic violence and heightened the risk of CEAM. Limited access to shelters, legal aid, and healthcare systems left survivors, particularly in low-income and rural communities, further marginalized. Civil society organizations addressing VAWG faced additional challenges, including increased scrutiny and restrictive regulations, hindering their ability to advocate for systemic reforms and provide essential services.

Despite these barriers, Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Center (SG) has led impactful initiatives, including the Humqadam – Partners for Change project, designed to eliminate VAWG through community mobilization, policy advocacy, and grassroots empowerment. The project aimed to create a robust, well-equipped support system for women and girls at risk of VAWG, with a focus on DV and CEAM. Its key objectives included enhancing access to services and information through a mobile application, improving community attitudes toward VAWG, fostering stakeholder networks, and advocating for gender-responsive policy and institutional changes.

Implemented over three years (June 1, 2021, to August 31, 2024, with a three-month no-cost extension), the project initially operated in six districts of Pakistan—Benazirabad, Hyderabad, Mardan, Swat, Quetta, and Vehari—though Vehari was later replaced by Lahore. Upon completion, the project was evaluated to assess its effectiveness, impact, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, and overall contribution to combating GBV. The evaluation aimed to measure progress against established indicators, document lessons learned, and provide actionable insights into the project's strengths, challenges, and achievements.

Findings, lessons learned, and recommendations from the evaluation will be shared with SG, the UN Trust Fund, and other relevant stakeholders. These insights aim to inform future project designs, build on successes, address identified challenges, and strengthen strategies for combating GBV.

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative research to provide a comprehensive assessment of the project's impact. A Post-Test Only Without Comparison Group design was used to evaluate outcomes at the end of the project in the absence of a baseline or control group. This approach focused on immediate outcomes, capturing changes in perceptions, behaviors, and knowledge directly attributable to the project.

Data collection utilized both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data included project reports, baseline and endline surveys, and training documentation, while primary data was gathered from community women and men, GBV survivors, community facilitators, community-based organizations, SG staff, and duty bearers such as Women Commission representatives

and service providers. Methods included community surveys, semi-structured interviews with Violence-Free Families campaign beneficiaries, focus group discussions (FGDs), and key informant interviews (KIIs).

A robust analysis approach combined qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative analysis employed thematic coding to identify recurring themes, such as perceptions of VAWG, behavioral changes, and implementation challenges, while quantitative analysis utilized descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation, and visual representations to summarize trends and explore relationships. Data disaggregation by gender and district provided insights into regional variations and gender-specific impacts, ensuring a nuanced understanding of the project's effectiveness. Triangulation further enhanced reliability by aligning data across multiple sources.

The evaluation faced challenges such as sampling constraints, recall bias, duty bearer availability, logistical issues, and access difficulties in remote areas. Resource limitations required focusing on a representative sample from four districts, while triangulated methods reduced recall bias. Strikes, socio-political disruptions, and mobility constraints in districts like Quetta and Lahore necessitated dynamic adjustments to the data collection process. Adaptive strategies, such as flexible scheduling, local enumerator engagement, ensured data collection proceeded effectively despite these challenges.

Key findings from the evaluation based on the project goal and outcomes are as follows:

**Project Goal:** *Project Goal: Women and girls at increased risk of domestic violence or child/early age marriages and unable to access response mechanisms because of COVID-19 have enhanced access to robust community support in Vehari, Mardan, Swat, Quetta, Hyderabad and Benazirabad districts.*

*Improved guidance tools in the above districts and Peshawar, Jafferabad, Karachi, Shabdakot, Mirpurkhas, Muzaffargarh, Okara, Toba Tek Singh and Kasur.*

*COVID-19 appropriate protection system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sind, Punjab and Baluchistan by June 2024*

Humqadam Project aimed to enhance community support for women and girls at risk of DV and CEAM while strengthening response mechanisms, guidance tools, and policy advocacy across multiple districts. The project surpassed its outreach goals, engaging 31751 women, exceeding the target of 17,310, through 900 CEAM awareness sessions and 120 DV sessions in all six districts. Among 440 surveyed women across four evaluation-selected districts, 96% attended CEAM sessions, and 91% attended DV sessions, demonstrating increased awareness of legal rights, abuse recognition, and available support services.

To build community-based support systems, the project trained 260 community facilitators (131 female, 129 male) to act as links between at-risk women and institutional services. Additionally, 600 survivors received assistance, with 88 accessing comprehensive legal, psychological, and counseling services. In the four evaluation-selected districts, 42 survivors accessed formal support services, reflecting the project's direct impact on survivor assistance.

Community engagement activities, such as Gup Shup sessions (38% participation) and community orientations (34%), provided safe spaces for women to share concerns and seek guidance.

Despite these achievements, challenges remained in confirming long-term enhanced community support. No longitudinal follow-up was conducted to determine whether participants felt more supported by their families, communities, or institutions post-awareness sessions. While Lady Health Workers (LHWs) were identified as key stakeholders, their engagement was limited, restricting their role in strengthening community-based response mechanisms. The sustainability of trained community facilitators post-project was also not documented, leaving uncertainties about continued community support beyond implementation.

The project introduced two key response resources: the Referral Directories and the Humqadam App. The Referral Directories were designed to help survivors navigate GBV and DV support services and were distributed among CBOs, facilitators, duty bearers, and parliamentarians. However, there is no documented evidence confirming direct distribution to community women, potentially limiting grassroots-level access. The Humqadam App, launched in May 2024, aimed to provide a resource directory, legal information, and GBV case guidance with offline accessibility. However, awareness and usage of the app were low, with only 118 of 440 surveyed women (26.8%) aware of it, and no confirmation of downloads or usage, making its impact on improving access to support unclear. This indicator remained partially achieved at a low level.

Despite political and governance challenges, the project successfully tabled three major policy actions:

**Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024:** Aimed at GBV prevention and response mechanisms, with Rs. 260 million allocated in the provincial budget for implementation.

**Balochistan Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill 2024:** Addressing child marriages, which account for 45% of marriages in Balochistan (UNESCO study).

**KP Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Policy and Draft Law:** Developed in collaboration with civil society and government stakeholders, incorporating a gender-sensitive approach to support women with disabilities.

However, engagement in VAWG prevention and response in Sindh and KP faced setbacks due to administrative hurdles and the dissolution of provincial assemblies, delaying legislative progress. Although three key policy actions were tabled and discussed, they are still awaiting approvals.

The Humqadam Project successfully raised awareness, strengthened survivor support systems, and advanced policy advocacy on VAWG and CEAM. While some challenges remained in sustaining community support and policy approvals, the project laid a strong foundation for continued progress in gender equality and violence prevention. Overall, the project's effectiveness can be rated as medium, given its strong achievements in outreach and policy

engagement, despite some limitations in sustaining community support and adoption of guidance tools.

**Outcome 1:** *Women & Girl survivors and those at risk of VAWG, especially Domestic Violence and Child/Early Age Marriages, in districts Mardan, Swat, Benazirabad, Hyderabad, Lahore and Quetta have improved access to strengthened community-based support for prevention, protection and redress by June 2024.*

Outcome 1 was achieved at a medium level as the project successfully met Indicators 1.1 and 1.3, but failed to achieve Indicator 1.2. The project demonstrated strong achievements in facilitating access to response mechanisms (Indicator 1.1) and strengthening community engagement through Social Action Initiatives (SAIs) (Indicator 1.3). Under Indicator 1.1, the project exceeded targets by providing access to legal, protective, and community-based support services. Participation in exposure visits, awareness sessions, and legal aid services was high, with over 85% of participants finding these interventions useful. Similarly, under Indicator 1.3, the project far exceeded expectations by conducting 240 SAIs and engaging 4,618 participants (2,877 women and 1,741 men), significantly strengthening community awareness and action against VAWG, DV, and CEAM.

However, Indicator 1.2, which aimed to ensure 33% of participating families were verified as violence-free, was not achieved. While evidence showed reductions in physical (60.6%) and verbal violence (48.4%), the goal of completely eradicating violence in these households was not met. The Violence Free Family (VFF) campaign raised awareness and encouraged commitments to gender equality, but the project lacked clear evidence that 33% of families became entirely violence-free.

**Output 1.1:** *Communities in 30 villages of six districts have improved attitudes regarding women & girls' rights and increased knowledge of laws and protection mechanisms for VAW/G by June 2024.*

The output 1.1 is assessed medium to high in effectiveness. The Humqadam Project effectively raised awareness of VAWG, legal protections, and gender rights, engaging 22,983 individuals, exceeding its target of 17,310. The project successfully mobilized community members, facilitators, duty bearers, and institutional stakeholders, leading to positive shifts in attitudes and awareness. However, regional disparities were observed, with Mardan (48.7%) and Lahore (30%) showing higher knowledge retention due to exposure visits and service accessibility, while Quetta (14.5%) and Benazirabad had lower awareness gains due to tribal justice systems, feudal structures, and limited female education. Additionally, only 310 out of 679 surveyed participants (45.59%) reported enhanced knowledge of legal frameworks, and male engagement remained low (25.48%), indicating gaps in widespread legal literacy.

Indicator 2 (VFF Pledges Signed) was achieved at a High level, with 1,677 pledges signed against a target of 1,200 and a strong household confirmation rate of 87%, reflecting high community engagement in rejecting violence and promoting gender equality. Indicator 3 (Birth Registrations for Girls) also achieved High effectiveness, with 800 registrations completed,

meeting the project target and demonstrating behavioral change in securing legal identity for girls.

Overall, Output 1.1 is assessed as Medium to High in effectiveness, with strong achievements in pledge commitments and birth registrations, but variations in legal knowledge retention and structural barriers in certain regions limiting full impact.

**Output 1.2:** *Female and male community facilitators equipped with requisite knowledge, skills and links to key service providers, response mechanisms and district officials better able to change attitudes and practices, prevent and address VAW/G in their communities.*

Output 1.2 was assessed as medium. While the training provided valuable knowledge, built skills, and enabled practical implementation, challenges in participation rates, structured learning evaluations, and real-world application of certain concepts resulted in moderate effectiveness overall.

The training engaged and equipped community facilitators with knowledge and skills to address VAWG, DV, and CEAM in their communities. Participation was strong in most areas, with 225 out of 240 facilitators (94%) attending sessions on the negative gendered impact of COVID-19, making it the most successful component of the training. This session covered gender discrimination, access to services, and the pandemic's impact on VAWG, while also providing facilitators with practical engagement tools such as the SALT approach, Gup Shup sessions, and the Humqadam app. However, the lack of pre- and post-training assessments limited the ability to formally measure learning outcomes.

Training on VAWG, legal remedies, and response mechanisms reached 213 out of 240 facilitators (89%), effectively covering legal frameworks, survivor support, law enforcement processes, and institutional referral mechanisms. Many facilitators found the knowledge on criminal vs. civil cases, FIR processes, and survivor support pathways valuable, but some struggled with understanding complex legal concepts within the available training time. Exposure visits to key institutions, such as police stations and shelters, were beneficial but took place nearly a year after the training, reducing their immediate reinforcement effect. Furthermore, no structured learning assessments were conducted, making it difficult to evaluate the depth of knowledge gained.

The lowest participation was recorded in training on SAIs, with only 160 out of 240 facilitators (66%) attending. However, those who did attend successfully implemented SAIs, including radio programs, civic documentation campaigns, and awareness sessions on DV and CEAM. 17 out of 21 interviewed facilitators confirmed executing SAIs, showing that the training had a tangible impact on community engagement. However, challenges such as difficulty grasping advocacy and lobbying concepts, cultural resistance, and time constraints affected participants' ability to fully apply their learning. Once again, the absence of structured assessments limited the ability to measure progress objectively.

***Outcome 2: State and other response and protection mechanisms are more gender-responsive, appropriate and effectively implemented in four provinces by June 2024.***

Outcome 2 is assessed as having a medium level of achievement, with notable progress in engagement, policy advocacy, and awareness-raising but gaps in final implementation, legislative adoption, and impact measurement. Under Indicator 2.1, SG's advocacy efforts led to multi-party consensus on the Balochistan Child Marriage Restraint Bill, signed by five political parties, and its Cabinet approval, but the Assembly's dissolution delayed its passage. Similarly, in KP, SG led two key consultations on the KP-PWD Bill, refining it with a gender-responsive approach and submitting it to the Law Ministry, but progress stalled due to the absence of a Social Welfare Minister. Under Indicator 2.2, SG engaged 128 duty bearers through networking meetings, exceeding the target, but no structured assessments were conducted to measure their actual awareness gains. 83 LHWs were trained in four districts, with 64% in Quetta reporting improved understanding of GBV and 77% committing to applying their learning, but no pre- and post-assessments limited impact evaluation. Additionally, 117 Nikahkhawans were trained, with 70% improving legal awareness, 62% better understanding responsibilities, and 60% recognizing their role in social change, with 10 refusing to perform underage marriages, demonstrating real-world application, though regional inconsistencies persisted. Under Indicator 2.3, the Humqadam GBV Response App was launched late in the project, and while all 20 interviewed duty bearers had downloaded it, only 10 (50%) actively used it, making it unclear whether 30% of duty bearers engaged in the project were using the app, as no quantitative tracking existed. Overall, while SG effectively influenced policy discussions, engaged key stakeholders, and improved awareness, gaps in legislative approvals, structured assessments, tracking mechanisms, and full implementation result in medium achievement of Outcome 2.

***Output 2.1: Women's commissions, women's departments and policy makers better equipped to improve institutional response and prevention measures around VAW/G especially in COVID-19 and other emergency contexts by June 2024***

This output was achieved at medium level. The project successfully identified key service provision gaps and produced three policy briefs, fulfilling the quantitative target of the indicator. Legislative advocacy efforts in KP and Balochistan resulted in significant policy progress, with the PWD policy brief submitted to the Law Ministry, the Child Marriage Restraint Act amendment approved by the Cabinet, and the Women Protection Bill receiving strong political support. However, formal legislative approval remains pending, limiting full policy implementation. Despite this, the systemic and institutional reforms initiated through these efforts have set a strong foundation for future legal advancements.

***Output 2.2: Improving Responses of VAW/G Service Providers and Duty-Bearers***

The output 2.2 is achieved at medium level. The Humqadam Project effectively enhanced gender sensitization among service providers and duty bearers, improving their awareness of VAWG, legal frameworks, and survivor-centered response mechanisms. The project trained 83 LHWs, 117 Nikahkhawans, and engaged 120 duty bearers through networking meetings.

Among LHWs, 64% of 22 participants in Quetta training reported gaining new knowledge on GBV, VAW, and legal protections. Among 117 Nikahkhawans, 70% reported increased awareness of legal provisions, while 77% (out of 23 FGDs participants) acknowledged a better understanding of VAWG and CEAM. Additionally, 15 Nikahkhawans (out of 23 participants of FGDs) confirmed regularly verifying the age of brides using CNICs, demonstrating practical application of their training.

The project also engaged 120 duty bearers, with 19 out of 20 KIIs confirming strong awareness of GBV and its systemic causes. 17 out of 20 duty bearers had undergone previous gender sensitization trainings and applied their learnings in legal enforcement, survivor-centered response, and advocacy.

Some behavioral changes were observed, such as Nikahkhawans refusing to perform underage marriages and duty bearers recognizing GBV beyond physical violence to include psychological and systemic abuse. Institutional changes were noted, including introducing SOPs for handling GBV cases and developing survivor-centered service protocols. Success stories highlighted interventions to prevent child marriage and improve GBV case handling in shelters and crisis centers.

However, gaps remain due to the absence of pre- and post-training assessments, systemic cultural resistance, and limited tracking of long-term institutional changes. Late engagement of duty bearers also restricted deeper capacity-building efforts.

### **Output 2.3: *Enhancing Access to Preventive and Response Services/Tools***

Output 2.3 was achieved at low level. The creation of Referral Directories containing the information of sixteen districts and the launch of the Humqadam App in May 2024, both aimed at improving access to GBV preventive and response services. The app provided essential features such as a comprehensive resource directory, legal information, guidance on handling GBV cases, and offline accessibility, addressing connectivity challenges in remote areas. Stakeholders praised the app's potential to fill critical gaps in the VAWG ecosystem. For instance, Chairperson of NCSW, emphasized its role in supporting survivors who lack family backing, while Secretary of the Women Development Department, highlighted its ability to consolidate information and foster collaboration between government and civil society. Chairperson of BCSW noted its success in bridging gaps between survivors and service providers.

Despite this positive feedback, the app faced significant challenges, including delays in its rollout, limited publicity, and insufficient awareness among key stakeholders, which restricted its adoption and impact. Additionally, the short period after the app's launch made it difficult to comprehensively assess its effectiveness and reach. While the development of the Humqadam App and Referral Directories represented significant progress, their potential was constrained by implementation barriers. This underscores the need for timely execution, robust awareness campaigns, and continued stakeholder engagement to maximize the tools' effectiveness in enhancing access to GBV services.

## **Recommendations for SG, Practitioners and Donors**

**1. Expand Male Engagement Strategies:** While the Humqadam project successfully involved men through pledges and workshops, their participation remained limited. Future initiatives should introduce structured programs targeting men and boys, such as youth engagement in schools, mentorship programs, and community role models who advocate for gender equality and violence prevention. Collaborating with religious scholars, local elders, and male influencers can help challenge harmful gender norms and reinforce positive masculinity to prevent early-age marriage and domestic violence.

**2. Strengthen Digital Literacy and Technology Integration:** The Humqadam App was developed as a digital support tool for survivors, but low adoption (26.8% awareness) limited its impact. To maximize its effectiveness, future projects should enhance digital literacy among women, especially in rural areas, ensuring they understand and can access online legal, psychological, and emergency services. Additionally, incorporating real-time chat support, survivor case tracking, and integration with helpline services can make digital interventions more responsive and accessible for those in crisis.

**3. Prioritize Localized and Context-Sensitive Interventions:** The project's Gup Shup sessions and awareness campaigns were effective but faced resistance in conservative communities, limiting engagement. Future programs should conduct region-specific assessments before designing interventions, ensuring they align with local socio-cultural contexts. Partnering with local NGOs, community elders, and women leaders will help in adapting strategies to specific regions, making interventions more widely accepted and sustainable.

**4. Build Resilience into Project Design:** External disruptions like COVID-19 and the 2022 floods affected the project's implementation, demonstrating the need for crisis-responsive program models. Future initiatives should incorporate emergency preparedness measures, including contingency funds for survivors, decentralized community-led support structures, and digital service delivery mechanisms. Training community facilitators and local institutions to handle crisis situations will ensure uninterrupted survivor assistance and advocacy.

**5. Enhance Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:** The project played a key role in policy advocacy, particularly in tabling the Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024 and the Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill, but legislative delays slowed progress. To amplify policy influence and advocacy, future initiatives should broaden collaborations beyond civil society organizations to include private sector stakeholders, academia, and media. These partnerships can increase pressure on policymakers, ensure consistent advocacy efforts, and create broader awareness campaigns on VAWG.

**6. Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Accountability:** Training sessions for duty bearers, law enforcement officials, and service providers improved gender-sensitive responses, but sustaining these practices requires institutionalization. Future programs should work toward embedding gender-responsive Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) into local institutions, ensuring that police, health workers, and legal officers continue applying best practices beyond

project timelines. Establishing monitoring frameworks to track institutional performance will reinforce accountability and effectiveness in handling VAWG and CEAM cases.

**7. Maintain and Strengthen Survivor-Centric Models:** While Humqadam effectively provided legal aid, psychosocial support, and safe spaces for survivors, economic empowerment was missing, limiting survivors' ability to rebuild independent lives. Future interventions should incorporate economic rehabilitation efforts, including vocational training, small business grants, financial literacy programs, and employment linkages. Supporting survivor-led advocacy groups and peer support networks will further reinforce long-term empowerment and resilience.

**8. Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Systems:** The project successfully measured short-term outcomes, but long-term impact tracking was limited. Future initiatives should introduce longitudinal studies to assess whether behavioral changes, community support systems, and policy implementations remain effective post-project. Developing a real-time data tracking system can provide insights into survivor follow-ups, institutional responses, and the effectiveness of intervention programs, ensuring continuous learning and adaptation of strategies.

By implementing these recommendations, SG and donors can build upon Humqadam's successes while addressing gaps in sustainability, economic empowerment, and institutional accountability. Strengthening multi-sector collaboration, community ownership, and digital inclusion will further enhance gender equality and violence prevention efforts.

## Introduction of the Project

### Background and the Context

VAWG is a pervasive issue affecting all regions of the globe, cutting across cultures, socioeconomic classes, and geographic boundaries. It is a profound health problem, sapping women's energy, compromising with their physical health and eroding their self-esteem.<sup>1</sup> In the developing world, VAWG—especially DV—is notably more prevalent and acute, largely due to the socioeconomic challenges that exacerbate gender inequality and the disempowerment of women. Limited access to education, poverty, and cultural norms often perpetuates cycles of abuse making it difficult for women to seek justice or protection.

A particularly concerning manifestation of VAWG in many developing countries is child early and forced marriage (CEFM), which remains common and is often not perceived as harmful. In many communities, CEFM is ingrained in cultural traditions and considered socially acceptable, despite its devastating consequences on girls' physical and emotional well-being, education, and autonomy.<sup>2</sup>

Pakistan, like many other countries in South Asia, continues to struggle with widespread domestic violence and harmful practices like Child Early Age Marriage (CEAM<sup>3</sup>). These practices are often largely under-reported due to social stigma, fear of reprisal, and cultural norms that normalize violence against women and girls. As a result, many cases remain unresolved, leaving women with little recourse for justice. Domestic violence is often seen as a private family matter, not something to be addressed through legal or institutional channels.

The Domestic Violence Policy Brief of 2023 by the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) quotes the HRCP 2020 report, that *“over 90% of Pakistani women have faced domestic violence in their lifetime.”*<sup>4</sup> This statistic underscores the urgent need for stronger legal frameworks, better enforcement of existing laws, and comprehensive efforts to shift societal attitudes toward gender-based violence. Without significant changes in both policy and public perception, violence against women and girls will continue to be a deeply entrenched issue in Pakistan and beyond.

This situation was further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, during which both globally, and in Pakistan, there was a marked increase in VAWG, particularly DV. Historical patterns indicate that women and other marginalized groups are disproportionately affected during crises, due to unequal gender and power dynamics that shape access to and control over resources. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the socioeconomic conditions of

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<sup>1</sup> *“Gender Based Violence against Women-A Comparative Perspective”* by Saumya Singh, *Women Chapter 2021*.

<sup>2</sup> Addressing Data Gaps on Child, Early and Forced Marriage in Humanitarian Settings:  
<https://www.savethechildren.org/content/dam/usa/reports/ed-cp/cefm-in-humanitarian-settings.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Generally, the term used is 'Child, Early, and Forced Marriages (CEFM).' However, in the project document, the term 'CEAM' is used. This is because, in the previous paragraph, the term appeared within a quote and was retained as originally stated.

<sup>4</sup> Domestic Violence Policy Brief, 2023, NCHR

countries worldwide, with the most severe effects felt by marginalized and low-income segments of society. In this context, VAWG has surged dramatically. The pandemic, through its exacerbation of economic stress, isolation due to lockdowns, and the breakdown of social support systems, has created conditions that heighten the risk of domestic violence.<sup>5</sup>

On April 6, 2020, UN Secretary-General António Guterres expressed grave concern over a "horrifying global surge" in domestic violence directly linked to the lockdowns implemented by governments to curb the spread of COVID-19. He highlighted the growing difficulty women faced in accessing essential support services, including shelters, help lines, and legal assistance, which are crucial for survivors of gender-based violence. With resources being diverted to address the public health emergency, many services for GBV victims were overwhelmed or disrupted, leaving countless women and girls trapped in unsafe environments with limited avenues for escape or help.<sup>6</sup>

According to a 2023 report by the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), approximately 63,000 cases of gender-based violence (GBV) were reported in Pakistan in the three years following the pandemic. Of these, 80% were related to domestic violence, and 47% of married women reported experiencing sexual abuse. It has further been highlighted that this data is based on reported cases; the actual number could be much higher.<sup>7</sup>

In countries like Pakistan, where domestic violence is already underreported due to cultural norms and a lack of adequate legal protection, the pandemic further amplified these challenges. The socioeconomic strain resulting from job losses, economic instability, and restricted mobility disproportionately affected women in low-income households, who were already vulnerable to abuse.

Mental health professionals in Pakistan, providing online therapy sessions also reported that there has been a rise in the cases of domestic abuse in the wake of the lockdown, *'Domestic abuse has already been a haunting problem in Pakistan; more cases are surfacing in this time of anxiety and depression for all.'* Evidence suggests that financial, domestic and health pressures have increased domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence. Pakistan is no exception where incidents of domestic violence have been occurring at an alarming rate.<sup>8</sup>

The situation was further aggravated by the devastating floods of 2022, which caused widespread destruction across Pakistan. These floods led to a sharp rise in inflation, widespread job losses, food insecurity, displacement, and homelessness, disproportionately affecting already vulnerable communities. The resulting economic hardship compounded frustrations and anxieties, particularly within low-income households, leading to a marked increase in violence and abuse, especially in the domestic sphere.

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<sup>5</sup> Gender and Pandemic: URGENT CALL FOR ACTION – Advocacy Brief 4, Government of Punjab, UNODC

<sup>6</sup> [UN chief calls for domestic violence 'ceasefire' amid 'horrifying global surge' | UN News](#)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1741020>

<sup>8</sup> Gender and Pandemic: URGENT CALL FOR ACTION – Advocacy Brief 4, Government of Punjab, UNODC

Research conducted by SG in 23 districts, along with extensive literature on Pakistan, revealed the significant challenges faced by women trapped in abusive households, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic-induced lockdowns, followed by the devastating floods, severely disrupted VAWG response mechanisms and essential services, including legal aid, health care, counselling for survivors of violence, shelters, police stations, and the judicial system. These disruptions left survivors of abuse and those at risk with limited access to the support they desperately needed.<sup>9</sup>

During these crises, many survivors could only rely on a small network of individuals, such as community members or local resource persons, to help them access information and services. This highlighted the critical importance of having readily available local support systems to provide immediate assistance in times of crisis. While online services and hotlines became crucial lifelines during the pandemic, they posed challenges for institutions like legal aid providers, particularly in areas with limited digital infrastructure or where women lacked access to technology.

Additionally, the extended closure of schools due to the pandemic and floods, coupled with ongoing financial hardships, raised concerns about the increase in child and early-age marriages (CEAM). Families facing economic strain saw early marriage as a way to reduce financial burdens, further exacerbating the risks to young girls' health, education, and future opportunities.<sup>10</sup> These factors underscore the need for targeted interventions that addressed both the immediate and long-term effects of crises on women and girls, and to ensure access to the services and protections needed to escape cycles of violence and exploitation.

In addition to the socioeconomic and cultural challenges that already present significant obstacles, Pakistani civil society and rights organizations are increasingly contending with a shrinking civic space. Over the past several years, these organizations—particularly those focused on human rights and gender equality and minority rights have come under heightened scrutiny and surveillance from state authorities. This intensified oversight has led to an environment of suspicion and control, where civil society groups find it difficult to operate freely or advocate for vulnerable populations without fear of reprisal. These observations were drawn from meetings conducted by the Pakistan Human Rights Defenders Network and the Joint Action Committee over the past couple of years.

One of the primary hurdles facing civil society organizations (CSOs) is the growing web of regulatory requirements imposed on their activities. Complicated processes of getting No Objection Certificates (NOCs), stringent reporting standards, and delays in project approvals by the Economic Affairs Division (EAD), has created a burdensome environment for these organizations. This has made it difficult for them to execute projects effectively and on time,

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<sup>9</sup> Hum-Qadam- Partners for Change Project Proposal

<sup>10</sup> *COVID-19-A threat to Progress against Child Marriage*, UNICEF March 2021

particularly those aimed at addressing critical issues like human rights, VAWG, minority protection and freedom of religion.<sup>11</sup>

The shrinking space for civil society not only hampers the delivery of much-needed services but also undermines advocacy efforts aimed at addressing systemic inequalities, including those affecting women and marginalized communities. In a country where civil society has historically played a crucial role in advancing social justice, these restrictions are particularly damaging. Without a robust and independent civil society, efforts to tackle deep-rooted issues like gender-based violence, child marriage, and human rights abuses are severely curtailed.

Pakistan has grown less safe every year since the Taliban reclaimed power in Afghanistan in August 2021. Pakistan is facing a deadly escalation in militant violence — 757 people were killed and nearly as many injured in the first eight months of 2024, according to the data provided by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS). Militants are especially active in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, both of which border Afghanistan.<sup>12</sup>

On August 10, the Taliban captured two officers, including one army and a police officer, in the nearby mountains of Swat and released their videos. Later, both were freed after a committee of local elders met the militants. The incident sent a wave of fear among residents, who had witnessed the worst form of terrorism in the past. On August 12, scores of people staged street protests in different areas against the recent resurgence of militants. They stated that they would not allow anyone to disrupt their peace, which was achieved after significant sacrifices, with residents facing disgrace, displacement, and loss of life.<sup>13</sup>

The murder of Dr. Shahnwaz Kumbher on September 17, 2024, based on a false blasphemy accusation, sent a wave of fear and alarm through civil society in the Sindh Province. The situation was further aggravated by a police assault on the Rawadari March, on October 13, outside the Karachi Press Club. This peaceful protest, which brought together intellectuals, artists, writers, and various civil society groups, aimed to spotlight the rising threat of religious extremism in Sindh and to demand justice for Dr. Kumbher, who was allegedly killed in an extrajudicial encounter by the Sindh Police under the guise of blasphemy charges. The Rawadari March sought to bring attention to these critical issues, calling for an end to the persecution of individuals under dubious blasphemy accusations.<sup>14</sup>

The incident is placing immense pressure on individuals and organizations dedicated to the protection and promotion of civil liberties and human rights of the marginalized sections of society. As a result, these advocates are becoming increasingly vigilant, recognizing the growing risks associated with their work. The environment of heightened scrutiny and fear is compelling many activists, journalists, and civil society groups to exercise extreme caution, aware that their

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<sup>11</sup> Baloch, H., & Dawar, Y. (2023). *Shrinking Spaces for Civil Society in Pakistan*. Heinrich Böll Foundation.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.dw.com/en/pakistan-why-are-militant-attacks-on-the-rise/a-70197380>

<sup>13</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/killings-abductions-fuel-fear-taliban-return-north-west-pakistan>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2024/10/22/pakistans-perilous-path>

efforts to champion fundamental rights and freedoms may now carry even greater personal and professional risks. This atmosphere of unease is hindering open dialogue and advocacy, further shrinking the space for civil society in the region.

### ***SG's Ongoing Commitment to Eliminating and Preventing VAWG***

Over the past five years, SG has been actively working on various projects aimed at eliminating and preventing VAWG. These initiatives included:

- **Drivers of Change**, which focused on addressing the root causes of GBV.
- **Women Acting for Change**, which empowered women to take leadership roles in their communities.
- **Humsathi** (Intervention Research for Ending Child/Early Age Marriage), which conducted research and interventions to end child marriage.
- **Securing Activists for Freedom and Empowerment of Women and Girls (SAFE)**, which provides support and protection to activists fighting for women's rights.
- **Naya Qadam** (Family Planning), aimed at improving reproductive health and family planning services.

In 2021, with the collaboration and support of the United Nations Trust Fund (UN Trust Fund), SG launched and implemented the Humqadam – Partners for Change project. This initiative was designed to bring together stakeholders and community partners to create sustainable change, focusing on empowering women and girls and preventing GBV. Through these projects, SG is making significant strides toward shifting societal norms, advocating for policy reform, and offering support to survivors of violence.

## Description of the Project

The Humqadam project aimed to provide women and girls with access to a robust, well-equipped support system around VAWG, with a particular emphasis on DV and CEAM. Key objectives included enhancing access to information and services through a dedicated mobile application, improved community attitudes and practices related to VAWG, fostering stronger networks among key stakeholders, and advocating for gender-responsive changes in laws, policies, and institutional practices.

Table 1: Description of the Project

<b>Organization</b>	Shirkat Gah
<b>Project title</b>	Humqadam – Partners for Change
<b>Project duration</b>	1/6/2021 to 31/8/2024
<b>Budget and expenditure</b>	Budget \$500000 Expenditure \$473,723.64
<b>Geographical areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhanced access to robust community support in six targeted districts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ KP: Mardan &amp; Swat</li> <li>○ Sindh: Benazirabad &amp; Hyderabad</li> <li>○ Baluchistan: Quetta</li> <li>○ Punjab: Vehari – which was later changed to Lahore due to non-issuance of NOCs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• improved remote guidance tools in 16 districts and more COVID-19 appropriate protection systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ KP: Mardan, Swat and Peshawar</li> <li>○ Baluchistan: Quetta and Jaffarabad</li> <li>○ Sindh: Benazirabad, Hyderabad, Karachi &amp; Larkana</li> <li>○ Punjab: Rawalpindi, Vehari, Lahore, Multan, Okara, Toba Tek Singh &amp; Kasur</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Specific forms of violence addressed by the project</b>	<p>The different forms of violence that are addressed by this project included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• intimate partner physical and sexual violence,</li> <li>• non-partner physical and sexual violence,</li> <li>• violence against the girl child,</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• early/child marriage,</li> <li>• forced marriage,</li> <li>• ‘honor’ crimes</li> </ul>
<b>Main objectives of the project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Well-equipped support system:</b> access by women and girls to a strong well-equipped support system of local female and male facilitators as a first line of support around VAWG especially DV and CEAM;</li> <li>• <b>Improved knowledge, attitudes and practices:</b> by conducting awareness campaigns, mass messaging, and rewarding behavioural changes resulting in improved community attitudes and practices such as Violence Free Families;</li> <li>• <b>Sensitized stakeholders:</b> development of a network of key stakeholders in 30 communities/villages of districts Mardan, Swat, Benazirabad, Hyderabad, Vehari and Quetta.</li> </ul>
<b>Key assumptions of the project</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community members will become more sensitive to and reject VAWG if they are properly mobilized and sensitized by facilitators and activists.</li> <li>2. Facilitators and activists will be effective if they have the necessary knowledge and tools to help women and girls in distress.</li> <li>3. Local state institutions can be influenced to become more gender-responsive.</li> <li>4. Laws and policies will be improved through advocacy and institutional reforms led by women's commissions and state bodies.</li> </ol>
<b>Description of targeted primary and secondary beneficiaries</b>  <i>* Detailed numbers in table below/annex 1</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Primary Beneficiaries</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Women &amp; Girls: The primary beneficiaries of the project were women and girls. In particular, the project aimed to provide necessary support for women and girls’ survivors or those at risk of VAWG and CEAM, across the targeted communities of Lahore, Quetta, Hyderabad, Benazirabad, Mardan and Swat districts.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Secondary Beneficiaries</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Women &amp; Men Community Facilitators: SG, in consultation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>with various stakeholders, especially the Commissions on the Status of Women in KP and Sindh, trained and developed a pool of community facilitators (women and men) as a first line of support in the 6 target districts (2 each in Sindh and Khyber-Pakhtunkhawa, 1 each in Punjab and Baluchistan).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Men &amp; Boys – Community Members: SG engaged boys, men, women &amp; girls of the target communities in awareness raising campaigns to prevent and address VAWG such as radio messaging and pledges of Violence Free Families</li> <li>○ Duty Bearers, State &amp; Private Service Providers and Institutions: Gender sensitization trainings and campaigns with duty-bearers and private service providers; and collaborations with women’s institutions to advocate and institutionalize gender-responsive state measures to prevent and redress VAWG, especially in Sindh and KP.</li> <li>○ Community Based Organizations &amp; Implementing Organizations: With the support of grassroots organizations, across all targeted districts, Shirk at Gash conducted the various activities and interventions under the Humqadam project.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key implementing partners and stakeholders</b></p>	<p>SG – Women’s Resource Centre was the implementing organization of the Humqadam – Partners for Change project, funded by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women. The project was carried out by SG office staff, alongside teams of male and female facilitators trained in each district.</p> <p>The key stakeholders of the project included</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Project Implementing team</li> <li>(2) Women and girls</li> <li>(3) Field facilitators (females and males) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Received Capacity building on Personal status law, documentation and violence against women laws</li> <li>• Part of awareness campaigns esp. the Violence Free Family Campaign</li> <li>• Women and girls’ survivors of violence facilitated in the project</li> </ul> </li> <li>(4) Men and boys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Received Capacity building on Personal status law,</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<p>documentation and violence against women laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of awareness campaigns esp. the Violence Free Family Campaign</li> </ul> <p>(5) Duty Bearers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Received gender sensitization trainings</li> <li>• Part of the exposure visits and those that have conducted awareness sessions in the field</li> <li>• Duty bearers here include local government officials, marriage registrars, health officials including medico legal officers, lawyers, police for policy dialogues.</li> </ul>
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### Theory of Change and Strategic Focus of the Project

The following section describes the **Strategy and theory of change (or results chain) of the project with a brief description of project goal, outcomes, outputs and key project activities**

#### Theory of Change

##### Long-term Goal

Achieve a local and state ecosystem that rejects VAWG and is responsive to the needs of women and girls, leading to systemic improvements in gender equality and protection of women's rights.

##### Inputs

#### 1. Training and Knowledge Sharing

- Equip community facilitators, change-makers, Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs), and gender equality activists with knowledge, skills, and tools to assist women and girls in distress.
- Provide education on navigating state and local systems related to gender justice.

#### 2. Institutional Capacity Building

- Work with local state institutions, women's commissions, and other state initiatives to increase gender responsiveness.
- Advocate for the institutionalization of better responses and gender-sensitive policy changes.

##### Outputs

#### 1. At the Community Level:

- a. More community members are aware of and reject VAWG.
- b. A sufficient number of facilitators and activists are trained and equipped to support women and girls.

- c. WHRDs and gender equality activists are better able to navigate systems to assist women in distress.
- 2. At the State Level:**
- a. Local state institutions, women's commissions, and related bodies adopt more gender-responsive practices.
    - o Laws and policies are improved to better protect women and girls from violence and discrimination.

### Outcomes

- 1. Change in Community Ecosystem:**
- o Increased community rejection of VAWG.
  - o Greater community mobilization against VAWG.
  - o More effective support systems for women and girls in distress.
- 2. Change in State Ecosystem:**
- o Local institutions become more gender-responsive.
  - o State initiatives help institutionalize improved responses at the community level.
  - o Advocacy efforts lead to necessary legal and policy changes.

### Impact

A sustainable shift in both community and state ecosystems towards gender equality, where violence against women and girls is actively rejected, and institutional support mechanisms effectively protect and empower women and girls.

### Strategic Focus of the Project

The project employed a three-pronged strategy designed to tackle violence against women and girls (VAW/G) by changing both local ecosystems and the larger institutional environment. The strategy recognizes that overcoming VAW/G requires integrated changes at the community, service provider, and policy levels.

**1. Changing Local Ecosystems:** The intervention focused on shifting local attitudes, behaviors, and support systems within selected communities to make them more responsive to the needs of women and girls.

**a) Establishing and Strengthening Local Facilitators:**

- **Cohorts of Facilitators:** The project established and mentored cohorts of community-embedded facilitators, including former and current councilors, civil society organization members, and both men and women, who were equipped to assist women and girls in distress
- **Counseling and Referrals:** Facilitators provided advice, counseling, and referrals for services related to DV and CEAM, ensuring privacy, confidentiality, and safety through the use of project-developed protocols and tools.

## **b) Engaging Communities:**

- **Community Mobilization:** Facilitators regularly engaged with community members through Social Action Initiatives (SAIs and Gup-Shup (chit-chat) sessions, using the SALT (Stimulate, Appreciate, Learn & Transfer) approach to sensitize and mobilize people around VAWG.
- **Use of Infotainment:** Creative and engaging modalities were employed to raise awareness and support for preventing VAWG while adhering to COVID-19 precautionary measures.

## **2. Enhancing Remote Access to Information and Guidance:**

Recognizing the need for accessible information and resources, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent floods, the project emphasized creating digital tools for remote access to practical information on rights and services.

### **a) Updating and Upscaling the App:**

- **Accessible Information:** The app provided information about rights, services, and emergency contacts, including help lines, shelters, legal aid, and healthcare services, with step-by-step guidance on how to prevent or address VAW/G.
- **Target Audience:** The app, available in English and Urdu, was adapted for non-Android phones, recognizing that many women might not have access to smart phones. It served women and girls, civil society organizations, Women Human Rights Defenders (W/HRDs), lawyers, and duty-bearers.

**3. Institutionalizing Gender-Responsive Measures:** The project aimed to influence the broader policy and institutional environment to ensure gender-responsive mechanisms are in place, well-implemented, and accessible to women and girls.

### **a) Sensitizing Local Service Providers:**

The project worked with key local service providers, including marriage registrars, police, shelter staff, and health outreach workers, to build their capacity to identify and respond to cases of domestic violence and CEAM.

Four multi-stakeholder district committees were strengthened to institutionalize responses at the district level, improving the effectiveness of interventions and referrals.

### **b) Engagement with Government Institutions and Policy Advocates:**

**Women's Commissions & Government Bodies:** The project collaborated with women's commissions and departments, particularly in Sindh and KP, to monitor and implement gender-responsive policies.

**Parliamentary Engagement:** The project worked with women's caucuses and provincial parliamentarians to advocate for gender-responsive policy changes, such as the Gender Mainstreaming Standing Committee in Punjab.

**c) Replicating Success for Broader Impact:**

By connecting community-level interventions with macro-policy-level advocacy, the project aimed to generate evidence for upscaling successful initiatives. This connection strengthened W/HRDs and expanded access to justice, ultimately benefiting women and girls at risk of or surviving VAW/G.

**Illustration 1: Result Chain of the Project:**  
*Illustration of project goal, outcomes and outputs*

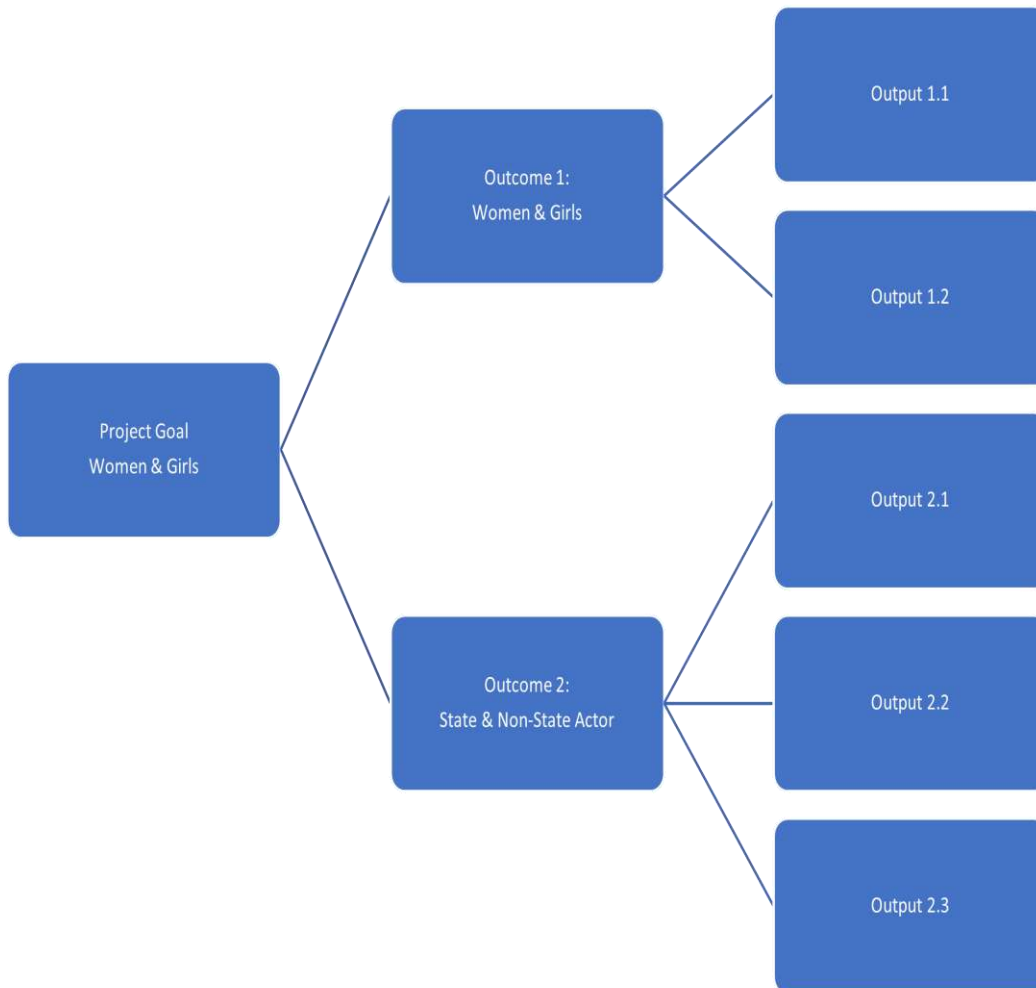


Table 2: Result Chain of the Project

<p><b>Project Goal:</b> Women and girls at increased risk of domestic violence or child/early age marriages and unable to access response mechanisms because of COVID-19 have enhance access to robust community support in Vehari, Mardan, Swat, Quetta, Hyderabad and Benazirabad districts.</p> <p>Improved guidance tools in the above districts and Peshawar, Jafferabad, Karachi, Shahdadkot, Mirpurkhas, Muzaffargarh, Okara, Toba Tek Singh and Kasur.</p> <p>COVID-19 appropriate protection system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sind, Punjab and Baluchistan by June 2024</p>		
<p><b>Outcome 1</b></p> <p>Women &amp; Girl survivors and those at risk of VAWG, especially Domestic Violence and Child/Early Age Marriages, in districts Mardan, Swat, Benazirabad, Hyderabad, Vehari and Quetta have improved access to strengthened community-based support for prevention, protection and redressal by June 2024</p>	<p><b>Output 1.1</b></p> <p>Communities in 30 villages of six districts have improved attitudes regarding women &amp; girls’ rights and increased knowledge of laws and protection mechanisms for VAW/G by June 2024</p>	<p><b>Activities contributing to Output 1.1</b></p> <p>1.1.1: Community awareness sessions on health &amp; legal implications of and prevention of EAM and forced marriages</p> <p>1.1.2: Community awareness sessions on DV; how &amp; where to report and available services</p> <p>1.1.3: Theatre, VFF &amp; other campaigns, Mass media messaging focused on DV &amp; EAM</p> <p>1.1.4: Community Orientations &amp; Gup Shup (Chit chat) of community women and men on DV EAM and VFF</p> <p>1.1.5: Birth registration campaigns esp. of girl as a means to guard against EAM</p>
	<p><b>Output 1.2</b></p> <p>Female and male community facilitators equipped with requisite knowledge, skills and links to key service providers, response mechanisms and district officials better able to change attitudes and practices, prevent and address VAW/G in their communities.</p>	<p><b>Activities contributing to Output 1.2</b></p> <p>1.2.1: Training and orientation of facilitators on gender understanding the gendered impact of COVID Orientation of project (2) Understanding the gendered impact of COVID-19 (Link to VAWG, health, education and economics)</p> <p>1.2.2: Trainings and refreshers on VAW/G, Family laws &amp; reproductive health implications, best practices for prevention and dealing with cases; Exit strategies from abusive marriages; Financial protections for</p>

		<p>women in marriage contracts</p> <p>1.2.3: Trainings and refreshers on Social Action Initiatives; communication &amp; negotiation; introduction of Violence Free Families</p> <p>1.2.4: SAI's carried out in the field</p> <p>1.2.5: Network/linking /referral activities/actors through visits to: Shelters, CSW committees; women department offices; SWD offices and institutions; Police; Courts; Prosecutor's office; health practitioners, hospitals providing medico-legal facilities; Legal aid providers etc.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 2:</b></p> <p>State and other response and protection mechanisms are more gender-responsive, appropriate and effectively implemented in four provinces</p>	<p><b>Output 2.1:</b></p> <p>Women's commissions, women's departments and policy makers better equipped to improve institutional response and prevention measures around VAW/G especially in COVID-19 and other emergency contexts by June 2024</p>	<p><b>Activities contributing to Output 2.1</b></p> <p>2.1.1: Online &amp; physical networking/ consultations with Women's Commissions, women's departments, other government officials on existing gaps &amp; bottlenecks for effective response/service provision around VAW/G</p> <p>2.1.2: Orientation of commission staff/other officials on telephone app as well as lacuna and obstacles to effective implementation of women protection laws &amp; services</p> <p>2.1.3: Formulate mitigating Policy Options for COVID-19/other emergency situations for provinces esp. KP &amp; Punjab; Advocacy promoting these &amp; already formulated options in Sindh (<b><i>changed to working with Baluchistan commission as Sindh commission not available.</i></b>)</p>
	<p><b>Output 2.2:</b></p> <p>Improved responses of VAW/G service providers and duty-bearers (police, shelter, legal aid, help lines &amp; local government) in six districts by June 2024</p>	<p><b>Activities contributing to Output 2.2</b></p> <p>2.2.1: Networking meetings with CSW District Committee members, local duty-bearers, legal aid providers, police, shelter staff, elected/former councilors and community facilitators</p> <p>2.2.2: Sensitization of health outreach workers and councilors (e.g. LHW/Vs) on survivor recognition &amp; Support</p>

		<p>2.2.3: Session with Marriage Registrars and Union Council secretaries/local government officers on family laws and their responsibilities</p> <p>2.2.4: Formation and strengthening of 2 districts Sindh CSW GBV Committees &amp; strengthening of 2 KP CSW District Committees on effective monitoring &amp; implementation of laws &amp; policies (<b>changed to working with Baluchistan Commission as KP &amp; Sindh Commission not available.</b>)</p>
	<p><b>Output 2.3:</b></p> <p>Duty-bearers, women, girl survivors &amp; at risk in 6 districts and CSOs and W/HRDs in 16 districts, and have enhanced information and tools to access preventive and response services/authorities by June 2024</p>	<p><b>Activities contributing to Output 2.3</b></p> <p>2.3.1: Updating, expanding &amp; adapting for non-android phones of VAW/G Humqadam telephone App</p>

## Project Evaluation

As the Humqadam – Partners for Change project concluded in August 2024, this evaluation was conducted by an external evaluator, Tanveer Jahan, engaged by SG, to comprehensively assess the project’s effectiveness, impact, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, and overall contribution to the fight against GBV. The evaluation identified key successes, challenges, and lessons learned, providing a foundation for shaping future interventions by SG to address GBV and related issues.

### Purpose of the Evaluation

The primary purpose of this evaluation was to assess progress against established indicators, measure the impact of the project, and document lessons learned. This evaluation will enable SG to better understand the project's strengths, weaknesses, challenges managed, risks addressed, and successes achieved.

This evaluation of the Humqadam Project will inform future initiatives addressing GBV and gender equality by identifying effective strategies, guiding resource allocation, and scaling programs. It will support policy advocacy, enhance training for community workers, and foster collaboration in GBV prevention. Insights into behavioral changes will promote community-

driven efforts and improved support systems, while highlighting areas for advancing gender equality and challenging harmful norms.

The evaluation findings, lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations will be shared with key stakeholders, including SG, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women (the donor), and other relevant partners. The evaluation served as a critical reflection on both achievements and obstacles, guiding more effective strategies for tackling GBV in subsequent initiatives.

The evaluation of the Hum-Qadam Project will have significant implications, influencing future program design, policy development, stakeholder capacity, and community practices related to GBV and gender equality.

**Program Improvement:** Insights into what worked and what didn't will help refine future intervention strategies and enable better-informed decisions on resource allocation and program scaling.

**Policy Influence:** Evidence on GBV and CEAM impact can strengthen advocacy for stronger legal protections and attract funding to replicate successful practices, potentially shaping broader policies on women's rights.

**Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing:** Documented best practices can inform future training for community workers and duty bearers, fostering a collaborative approach to GBV prevention and survivor support.

**Community and Behavioral Impact:** Findings on sustained behavior changes, particularly among men and boys, will encourage community-led norms and improved access to support systems, promoting resilience and long-term protection for women and girls.

**Gender Equality and Human Rights:** Evaluation results will highlight areas to strengthen gender-responsive approaches and support shifts in gender norms, aiding in the long-term reduction of violence and the promotion of gender equality.

### **Decisions to be taken after the Evaluation is Completed**

Several decisions will be made to apply the insights gained across future interventions. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) will use findings to design targeted initiatives addressing these issues in their communities.

SG will leverage the findings in advocacy efforts, engaging policymakers to address identified policy gaps. Insights will be presented at relevant forums to foster legislative reforms aligned with community needs.

These findings will be integrated into SG's larger programmatic portfolio, specifically those addressing VAWG, DV, and CEAM. This integration will help SG refine its approach to these issues, strengthening its impact. Additionally, as key implementing partners in this project, local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) will use the evaluation findings to design local

initiatives that address VAWG, DV, and CEAM in a more comprehensive manner, enabling them to tackle these issues more effectively at the community level.

The evaluation also highlighted the need for improved service delivery. SG will collaborate with healthcare providers, legal aid services, and law enforcement to enhance their capacity for responding to VAWG, DV, and CEAM cases. Findings will refine intervention strategies, guide program scaling, and inform training for community workers and duty bearers. Evidence-based practices will foster collaboration in GBV prevention and survivor support. I

Documented best practices will guide future interventions and stakeholder training. By integrating these lessons, SG aims to achieve transformative and lasting impact in its future initiatives.

### Objectives of the Evaluation

The main objective of this evaluation was to assess the overall impact of the Humqadam – Partners for Change project in empowering women and girls to prevent and respond to VAWG and CEAM in their families and communities. More specifically the objectives of the evaluation were:

1. To assess the entire project (June 2021 – May 2024) in terms of:
  - Effectiveness: The extent to which the project achieved its objectives.
  - Relevance: The alignment of the project with the needs of beneficiaries and the context.
  - Efficiency: The optimal use of resources in achieving the project goals.
  - Sustainability: The likelihood that the project’s outcomes will continue after its conclusion.
  - Impact: The broader changes brought about by the project on women, girls, and communities.
  - Knowledge Generation: The contribution of the project to generating new insights or models for addressing VAWG and CEAM.
2. To evaluate the project against two cross-cutting criteria:
  - Gender Equality: How well the project advanced gender equality.
  - Human Rights: How the project upheld and promoted human rights in its approach and outcomes.
3. To identify key lessons learned and promising or emerging good practices in ending violence against women and girls, to inform future projects and contribute to knowledge generation in this field.

## Scope of Evaluation

**Timeframe:** The evaluation covers the entire project duration from 1 June 2021 to 31 August 2024.

**Geographical Coverage:** The evaluation focuses on assessing four selected districts out of the six where the project was implemented. Each of these four districts represents one of the provinces, allowing the evaluation to capture a diverse range of provincial contexts and local challenges. This approach ensured that the evaluation results are representative of provincial realities and are sensitive to the unique social, economic, and cultural dynamics present across Pakistan.

The districts chosen include Quetta (Baluchistan), Mardan (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Lahore (Punjab), and Benazirabad (Sindh).

**Target Groups:** The evaluation focused on both primary and secondary beneficiaries, as well as broader stakeholders involved in or impacted by the project.

**Primary Beneficiaries:** Women and girls' survivors or those at risk of VAW/G and CEAM in the communities of Lahore, Quetta, Benazirabad and Mardan.

**Secondary Beneficiaries:** Women and men community facilitators, implementing CBOs representatives, Health professionals, Marriage registrars and UC secretaries, Government officials (duty-bearers and service providers) and men and boys in the communities.

## Key Evaluation Questions

The following key questions have been formulated in each evaluation category after careful review by the SG and evaluation teams. These included, but are not limited to, the mandatory questions prescribed in the TORs.

Table 3: Key Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Criteria	Mandatory Evaluation Questions
<p><b>Effectiveness</b>  <i>A measure of the extent to which a project attains its objectives / results (as set out in the project document and results framework) in accordance with the theory of change.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs (project results) achieved and how?</li> <li>2. What factors contributed to or hindered the achievement of these goals, outcomes, and outputs?</li> <li>3. How were any challenges addressed during project implementation?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Relevance</b>  <i>The extent to which the project is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group and the context.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. To what extent do the achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls?</li> <li>5. Were project strategies and activities relevant and appropriate to the needs of women and girls?</li> <li>6. Was the project able to adjust to any changes in context and needs of the primary beneficiaries during the project?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Efficiency</b>  <i>Measures the outputs - qualitative and quantitative – in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which refers to whether the project was delivered cost effectively.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. To what extent was the project efficiently and cost-effectively implemented?            (The evaluator will consider if activities were implemented on time, fidelity of implementation to planning (incl. budget) and whether activities were designed to make the best use of financial and human resources.)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Sustainability</b> <i>is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of a project are likely to continue after the project/funding ends.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. To what extent will the achieved results be sustained, especially any positive changes in the lives of women and girls (project goal level) after project end?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Impact</b> <i>assesses the changes that can be attributed to a particular project relating specifically to higher-level impact (both intended and unintended).</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. To what extent has the project contributed to ending violence against women, gender equality and/or women’s empowerment (both intended and unintended impact)?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Knowledge generation</b> <i>Assesses whether there are any promising practices that can be shared with other practitioners.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. To what extent has the project generated new knowledge, identified promising or emerging practices in the field of EVAW/G that should be documented and shared with other practitioners?</li> <li>11. Has the project contributed to developing new methodologies or tools in EVAW/G intervention, prevention, or</li> </ol>

	<p>survivor support? If so, how can these be adapted for broader application?</p>
<p><b>Gender Equality and Human Rights</b></p>	<p>Cross-cutting criteria: the evaluation should consider the extent to which human rights based and gender responsive approaches have been incorporated through-out the project and to what extent.</p> <p>12. To what extent have human rights based and gender responsive approaches been incorporated throughout the project?</p> <p><i><b>Note:</b> Evaluator must incorporate an assessment of human rights and gender responsiveness throughout the evaluation questions above; ensuring the evaluation approach and methods of data collection are gender responsive (e.g. women and girls must feel safe to share information); specify that the evaluation data must be disaggregated by sex and other social criteria of importance to the project's subject.</i></p>

## Description of Evaluation Team

The evaluation was conducted by a team of 9 members, along with 21 enumerators responsible for data collection from the field. The following table provides details of the key personnel involved in the evaluation.

Table 4: Description of Evaluation Team

Name	Gender	Profile	Role in Evaluation
Tanveer Jahan	F	A seasoned human rights advocate with over 35 years of experience, specializes in capacity building, program development, training courses development and project/program evaluation.	<b>Lead Evaluator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing the evaluation framework</li> <li>• Training and guiding the data collection team</li> <li>• Monitoring the data collection process</li> <li>• Leading data analysis</li> <li>• Produced the inception and initial evaluation reports, incorporated feedback from key stakeholders</li> <li>• Produced the final comprehensive evaluation report</li> </ul>
Sanam Kubra Siddiqui	F	A development professional with 18+ years of experience in the NGO and corporate sectors, specializing in project planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.	<b>Data Analyst</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing data from KIIs, surveys, and FGDs</li> <li>• Organized, structured, and cleaned the data to ensure its accuracy and readiness for analysis</li> <li>• Working closely with the lead evaluator to identify emerging themes and patterns for the evaluation findings.</li> </ul>
Muhammad Ayub	M	A High Court lawyer and former Regional Coordinator for KP at the Democratic Commission for Human Development (2012–2022), with expertise in paralegal capacity-building.	<b>KP Coordinator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Led a five-member data collection team (four female and one male)</li> <li>• Responsible for team coordination, quality assurance, and conducting KIIs with duty bearers and FGDs</li> <li>• Coordinated and supervised the team which conducted surveys as well as interviews with VFF.</li> </ul>

Amina Khan	F	DCHD Focal Person in KP for SAFE Project. Have experience in conducting interviews and collecting data from the field	Conducted survivors' interviews and taking notes for FGD and KIIs in Mardan.
Saima Gul	F	A management professional with over 10 years of experience in national and international organizations, specializing in research proposal development, project coordination, results-based management, and stakeholder engagement.	<p><b>Sindh Coordinator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Led the data collection process, overseeing coordination, supervision, quality assurance, and managing a four-member data collection team (three female and one male)</li> <li>• Conducted KIIs with key stakeholders and facilitated FGDs</li> <li>• Overseeing the data collection process, ensuring the quality and accuracy of the collected data</li> </ul>
Sher Zaman	M	A seasoned human rights defender with 25+ years of experience advocating for marginalized communities in Pakistan. Currently the Manager of Social Auditing at STEP Services, he specializes in compliance audits to ensure adherence to human rights standards as well as evaluating organizational practices for legal and ethical compliance.	<p><b>Baluchistan Coordinator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Led the data collection process, supervising a six-member team of enumerators (five female and one male)</li> <li>• Responsible for coordination, quality assurance, and conducting KIIs with key stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p>The enumerators carried out community surveys and conducted interviews with VFF representatives.</p>
Zargoona Barrech	F	High Court advocate in Baluchistan with extensive experience in legal advisory and consultancy roles across various sectors. She has served on multiple boards and held key positions in both governmental and development organizations.	Conducted KIIS with key stakeholders with Sher Zaman and Survivors interviews in Quetta
Arshia Zaineb	F	With over 15 years at the Democratic Commission for Human Development, she has extensive experience in coordinating and implementing projects, compliance audits for fair trade, surveys, and data management.	<p><b>Punjab Coordinator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arshia managed a team of six individuals (five female and one male) for community surveys and interviews with VFF representatives</li> <li>• Supported the Lead Evaluator, in conducting KIIs as well as</li> </ul>

			facilitating FGDs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for overall coordination of the evaluation with the SG project team, ensuring seamless execution and collaboration in the evaluation process</li> </ul>
Rana Sikandar Hayat	M	Finance Manager at STEP Services	Review of SG financial reports of the project

Table 5: Timeline of the Entire Evaluation Process and Key Deliverables

Stage of Evaluation	Key Task	Responsible	Number of days required	Tentative Timeframe
<b>Inception stage</b>	Briefings of evaluators to orient the evaluators (Kick off meeting)	Evaluation Task Manager	<b>10 days</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2024</b>
	Desk review of key documents	Lead Evaluator		
	Finalizing the evaluation design and methods	Lead Evaluator		
	Submit draft <b>Inception report</b>	Lead Evaluator		<b>24<sup>h</sup> September 2024</b>
	Review <b>Inception Report</b> and provide feedback	Evaluation Task Manager, Stakeholder Group and UNTF Evaluator/s	<b>10 days</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b>
	Incorporating comments and revising the <b>inception report</b>	Lead Evaluator	<b>39 days</b>	<b>November 12<sup>th</sup> 2024</b>
	Submitting final version of <b>inception report</b>	Lead Evaluator		
	Review final <b>Inception Report</b> and approve	Evaluation Task Manager, Stakeholder Group and UNTF	<b>8 days</b>	<b>By 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b>
Data Collection Phase	Visit to the field for community survey, KII and FGDs	Evaluation Teams	<b>5 days</b>	<b>By 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2024</b>

<b>Data Analysis Stage</b>	Data feeding, sorting, Analysis	Data Analyst	<b>4 days</b>	<b>By 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b>
<b>Synthesis and reporting stage</b>	Analysis and interpretation of Findings	Lead Evaluator	<b>7 days</b>	<b>By 7<sup>th</sup>, December 2024</b>
	Preparing a <b>first draft report</b>	Evaluator/s		
	Review of the draft report with key stakeholders for quality assurance. (Validation Meeting)	Evaluation Task Manager, Stakeholder Group and UNTF	<b>2 Days</b>	<b>By 10<sup>th</sup> December</b>
	Consolidate comments from all the groups and submit the consolidated comments to evaluation team	Evaluation Task Manger		
	Incorporating comments and <b>Preparing second draft evaluation report</b>	Evaluation Team	<b>2 Days</b>	<b>By 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025</b>
	Final review and approval of report	Evaluation Task Manager, Stakeholder Group and UNTF	<b>2 Days</b>	<b>By 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025</b>
	Final edits and submission of the <b>final report</b>	Evaluator/s	<b>2 Days</b>	<b>By 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>

## Evaluation Design and Methodology

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research to provide a comprehensive assessment of the project’s impact.

### Evaluation design

The Post-Test Only Without Comparison Group design was applied to evaluate the Humqadam Project by assessing outcomes at the end of the project without using a control or comparison group.

The main objective was to assess the immediate outcomes and impact of the project activities by examining results after project implementation. This design is particularly useful for capturing perceptions, behaviors, and knowledge changes attributable to the project, even in the absence of a baseline or control group.

SG conducted both a baseline and an end line evaluation for the VFF campaign, providing valuable data to assess the campaign’s impact on participants’ attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge regarding gender rights.

To leverage this data within the broader Humqadam Project evaluation, the VFF Campaign's findings were integrated as a critical case study, highlighting how targeted interventions contribute to the project's overarching goals. This approach enabled the evaluation to showcase both the specific outcomes of the VFF Campaign and how these outcomes align with or complement the project's broader objectives, such as community empowerment, reducing violence, and promoting gender equality.

By incorporating these insights, the baseline and end line data from the VFF Campaign offered a micro-level analysis that contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the Humqadam Project's overall impact, effectiveness, and sustainability across different areas and target groups.

## Data Sources

### Secondary Data Sources

**Project Documentation and Reports:** Key documents provided by SG during the project's inception phase included the project proposal, logical framework, quarterly progress reports, annual reports, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reports.

**Baseline and End line Surveys:** Baseline and end line survey data from the VFF campaign was available as a critical resource for measuring changes in community attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors.

**Training and Awareness Documentation:** Training workshop reports, training assessments by participants, facilitator and trainer notes, and community awareness session reports.

### Primary Data Sources

**Key Informants and Stakeholders:** The evaluation team collected primary data directly from various stakeholders involved in the project. These included:

- **SG Implementation Team:** Project staff who coordinated and managed activities
- **Community-Based Organization (CBO) Representatives and Community Facilitators:** Local implementing partners and facilitators who played a pivotal role in engaging the community, conducting outreach, and implementing project activities
- **Community Members:** Women, men in communities and families involved in the VFF campaign, including project beneficiaries and Violence Free Families themselves
- **GBV Survivors:** Survivors of violence offered critical insights into the project's impact on providing support mechanisms, safety resources, and knowledge on legal protections and rights
- **Duty Bearers:** Key local officials and service providers involved in enforcing laws and providing support, including Women Commissions' representatives, LHWs, Nikahkawan/Registrars/Union Council Secretaries, representatives from the Women Development Department, and Protection Center Staff.

The evaluation team accessed these primary data sources with the support of SG district teams.

### Description of data collection methods and analysis

This evaluation utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive assessment of the project's impact, capturing participant experiences and measuring changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices.

#### Qualitative Methods:

- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Conducted to gain in-depth insights into participants' perceptions of the project's impact, behavioral changes, challenges, and community dynamics.

The evaluation team conducted FGDs in all four districts only with Nikahkhawans. Nikahkhawans are a homogeneous group with a specific role in preventing child and early-age marriages. Conducting FGDs with them allowed the evaluation team to gather the collective wisdom of one of the most relevant duty bearers in the effort to prevent early-age marriages.

- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):** Targeted interviews with individuals possessing specialized knowledge of the project, like staff, partner CBO representatives, community facilitators and duty bearers. These interviews focus on the project's strategic and operational aspects.
- **Content Analysis:** Examination of project documents and reports to identify themes, trends, and patterns, supporting findings from FGDs and KIIs.

#### Quantitative Methods:

- **Surveys/Questionnaires:** Administered to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding gender-based violence and child marriage. Structured questionnaires, including Likert scale items and multiple-choice questions, were used in one-on-one interviews with a convenience sample to ensure diversity across age, gender, and location.

### Analysis of Data

#### Qualitative Analysis:

- **Thematic Analysis:** A combination of deductive and inductive coding approaches was used to identify and analyze recurring themes across qualitative data from FGDs, KIIs, and content analysis. Codes were developed based on existing frameworks and emerging insights from participants. This process was followed by the development of broader themes, such as:
  - Perceptions about VAWG, DV, and CEAM
  - Impact of knowledge and awareness
  - Behavioral and attitudinal changes
  - Challenges and barriers to implementation

- **Level of Precision:** Qualitative analysis focused on capturing nuanced, contextualized insights and will not require a numerical scale. Themes were categorized based on frequency, intensity, and importance as identified in the data.
- **Quantitative Analysis**
  - **Descriptive Statistics:** Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize and interpret the data. Key measures such as frequencies, means, and percentages provide an overview of the responses, allowing for a clear understanding of general trends and participant characteristics.
  - **Cross-Tabulation:** Cross-tabulated data was used to examine relationships between different variables and to explore how various factors may influence the outcomes of interest.
  - **Visual Representations:** Data findings are presented visually through charts, graphs, and tables. Visual representations help to simplify complex data, making key insights more accessible and easier to interpret. This included comparisons across demographics and variables that reflect the project's key areas of focus, such as awareness of VAWG, DV, and CEAM, along with perceived changes in support systems and community attitudes.
  - **Comparative Analysis:** The findings from the data analysis are compared with the project's goals, objectives, and targets. By aligning the survey data with the project's intended outcomes, the evaluation assesses the level of awareness, effectiveness, and impact achieved for both primary and secondary beneficiaries. This comparative analysis provides insights into how well the project has addressed VAWG and CEAM and its effectiveness in creating awareness, facilitating behavioral changes, and strengthening support systems within the targeted communities.
- **Precision and Coding**
  - **Quantitative Precision:** For quantitative methods, data was collected with a high level of precision, using structured, validated survey tools. Likert scale responses were analyzed quantitatively, and regression analysis assessed the significance of any changes or patterns.
  - **Qualitative Coding:** Codes were developed based on the project's key themes, as well as new insights identified during data analysis. Both deductive (theory-driven) and inductive (data-driven) codes were used to ensure the analysis captures both pre-determined objectives and emerging participant perspectives.
- **Triangulation and Validation:** To enhance the reliability and validity of the analysis, triangulation was employed by comparing findings across different data sources (e.g., KIIs, FGDs, surveys). This ensured that the insights derived from qualitative data align with quantitative results, providing a comprehensive view of the project's impact.

## Disaggregated Analysis

Furthermore, the analysis was disaggregated by both gender and district to provide a nuanced and contextualized understanding of the project's impact and achievements across various regions and among different gender groups. This dual breakdown offers detailed insights into:

- **Gender-Specific Impact:** By analyzing data separately for different genders, the evaluation uncovers how the project has affected women, men, and other gender identities differently. This highlights any disparities in outcomes, identifies gender-specific challenges or successes, and assesses whether the interventions were equally effective for all gender groups.
- **District-Level Variation:** Disaggregating data by district reveals regional variations in the project's effectiveness. This approach helps to understand how the project has been received in different geographical contexts and how local factors may have influenced its success or limitations.

By integrating these two dimensions into the analysis, the evaluation is able to provide a comprehensive view of the project's performance. This enables a more precise assessment of where the project has succeeded and where it may need to be adjusted. Insights gained from this detailed breakdown are crucial for identifying specific areas that require improvement, tailoring future interventions to better meet the needs of different gender groups and regions, and scaling successful strategies effectively.

## Sampling Methods

**Geographic Coverage of the Project:** The project was implemented in 30 communities of six districts of four provinces:

Province Baluchistan: District Quetta

Province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: District Swat and Mardan

Province Punjab: District Lahore

Province Sindh: Hyderabad and Benazirabad.

Below are the details of project implementation districts and their respective communities

Table 6: Project Implementation Districts and Communities

Quetta	Mardan	Swat	Lahore	Hyderabad	Benazirabad
1. Bashirabad II, Nawa Killi,	1. Mian Gul	1. Islampur	1. Green Town UC-236	1. Gul Muhammad	1. Khair Shah
2. Qambarni Road Sariab	2. Cham Dheri	2. Kpkrai	2. Johar Town UC-116	Jakro	2. Long Khan Keerio
3. Kili Paind Khan	3. Naray	3. Chail Shagai	3. Makhan Colony	2. Sahib Khan Mirani	3. Usman Keerio
4. Kili Ismail Pashtoon Bagh	4. Chamtaar	4. Hajiabad	Kahna Nauh UC-250	3. Allah Bachayo Meerbahar	4. Mir Jan Kashkheli
5. Aminabad/ Khaliqabad	5. Sharif Abad	5. Shaheen abad	4. Qanchi, UC-227	4. Gelo Noonari	5. Mir Jan Muhammad
			5. Youhanabad UC-246	5. Soomar Mallah	

Four districts were selected for the evaluation, with one district representing each province to ensure coverage of diverse regional contexts. (The selected districts and communities are colour highlighted) This selection strategy was guided by security considerations, urban-rural balance, and the need for comprehensive geographic representation.

**Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP):** Mardan was chosen instead of Swat due to current security concerns related to the resurgence of Taliban activity in the area, which poses risks to data collection and field activities. Mardan offers a safer environment while still providing insights into the regional dynamics of KP.

**Sindh:** Benazirabad was selected over Hyderabad to maintain a balance between urban and semi-urban contexts in the evaluation. Since two other provincial capitals—Lahore and Quetta—are included in the evaluation, the selection of Benazirabad helps capture a more rural perspective within Sindh, avoiding an overrepresentation of urban areas.

**Punjab and Baluchistan:** In these provinces, only one district in each—Lahore for Punjab and Quetta for Baluchistan—was included in the project, leaving no alternative options for district

selection. Including these capital cities is essential, as they capture perspectives from major urban centers, providing critical insights into how the project impacts vary across different socio-economic settings.

In each of these four districts, the evaluation covered all project-impacted communities—five in total, except in Benazirabad where one community was dropped due to inaccessibility—ensuring that the evaluation comprehensively assessed 66% of the project universe. This approach provided a robust basis for understanding both the broad regional realities and the specific local contexts within which the project was implemented.

A purposive sampling approach was employed for FGDs and KIIs to ensure representation from a variety of service providers, community leaders, and project partners. For surveys, a convenience sample was used to ensure diversity across age, gender, and geographical locations.

Total sample selected under different stakeholder categories as per the actual numbers received and total respondent accessed are as follows:

Table 7: Details of the Sample Selected for Evaluation

Beneficiary categories	Target in 4 districts	Actual participation achieved in 4 districts	Sample proposed in 4 districts	Total Individual accessed	% of the sample achieved	Methodology
Women and Girls (Primary Beneficiaries), who participated in awareness sessions, SAls and other project related activities	15740	14951	1495 (10%) (Participation count)	440	3482 (230%) Participation count)	Community Survey
Survivors (primary)	400	42	20 (48%)	18	90%	KIIs
Community Men and Boys who attended various awareness raising sessions, SAls and other project related activities	7200	10,081	1008 (10%)	239	1087 (100%)	community survey
Community Facilitators trained by SG carried out various project activities within the community, engaging directly with its members and duty bearers.	160 (80F+80M)	155 (78F+77M)	20 (13%)	21	105%	KIIs
VFF families who participated in the	1200	1677	167 (10%)	167 (2 discarded)	165 (98%)	survey with Violence Free

Violence-Free Family Campaign and pledged to improve the situation of women and girls within their families.				d in data cleaning )		Families
(Nikah Registrar) This group is one of the most important and relevant stakeholders in preventing child and early-age marriages. For sampling purposes, the evaluation team designated them as a separate group distinct from other duty bearers.	80	98	24 (24%)	23	95%	4 FGDs, One in each district
Duty Bearers, State & Private Service Providers and Institutions (women Commissions, law enforcement (police), shelter providers, legal aid services, helpline operators, and local government officials)	120	180 (110F+70M)	20 (11%)	20	100%	20 KIIS
CBO Partners, project implementation partners in the communities	12	12	7 (58%)	7	100%	7 KIIS, two from each Lahore, Quetta and Mardan and one in Benazirabad , as there was only one implementing CBO
SG Implementation Team		Project Staff 9	9 (100%)	9	100%	9 KIIS
<b>Total</b>	<b>24912</b>	<b>27205</b>	<b>2770</b>	<b>944</b>		<b>community survey with three categories of beneficiaries 4 FGDs with Nikahkhawan in 4 districts 77 KIIS</b>

## *Community Survey*

The project's impact at the community level was assessed using a 10% sample for each beneficiary category, a widely accepted standard in the development sector. This approach ensures the sample represents the population's diversity and captures variations in responses and outcomes across subgroups. By minimizing bias and producing generalized findings, the evaluation accurately reflects beneficiaries' experiences, enabling the team to assess the project's impact.

The project's community-level beneficiaries included:

**Women and Girls:** As defined in the project document, this group included survivors or those at risk of VAWG and Child, Early Age Marriage (CEAM) in the project's selected communities. For the evaluation, only women aged 18 and above were surveyed, as girls under 18 were not included in the sampling process. A total of 14,951 women participated as primary beneficiaries (excluding girls under 18) across four selected districts. For the evaluation, a 10% representative sample from each district was planned to survey (1495 total) but the evaluation team got 3482 participation count through a structured community survey. SG calculated beneficiary numbers based on cumulative participation, counting each instance of an individual's involvement in activities rather than unique individuals. For consistency, the evaluation team used the same method to calculate participation figures, reflecting total engagement instances rather than distinct participant counts.

The survey assessed the project's impact on participants' knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding VAWG, DV, CEAM, and their effects on women. It also explored perceptions of available support mechanisms and redress options. Trained enumerators conducted one-on-one interviews using a structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions, Likert scale items, and multiple-choice options to ensure nuanced responses. (The full survey tool is included in the annex.)

**Men and Boys:** As outlined in the project document, men and boys were engaged as allies in supporting behavioral change towards reducing VAWG and CEAM. Their role was critical in the project's efforts to shift community norms and encourage positive attitudes toward gender equality and the protection of women and girls. For the evaluation, only men aged 18 and above were surveyed, as boys under 18 were not included in the sampling process. They were evaluated using the same methodology. A total of 10,081 men and boys participated in the project across four districts. A representative sample of 270 participation counts per district (totaling 1,080 participation counts) was planned but the evaluation team got 1087 male participation.

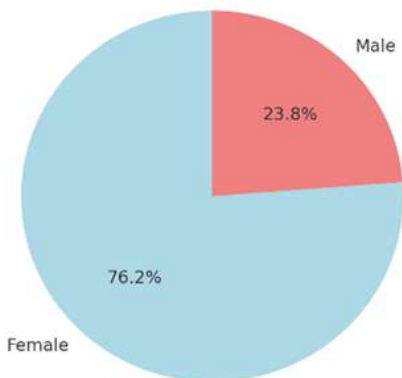
Table 8: Regional breakdown of Evaluation Participation Count by Gender

District	Female	Male	Total
Benazirabad	382	190	572
Lahore	763	269	1032
Mardan	1764	308	2072
Quetta	573	320	893
Total	3482	1087	4569

The actual number of unique individuals approached through the community survey was 679, comprising 440 females and 239 males. However, the total participation count reached 4,569, of which 3,482 were females, reflecting a significant female engagement in the activities.

**Illustration 2: Gender Distribution of Community Survey Participants**

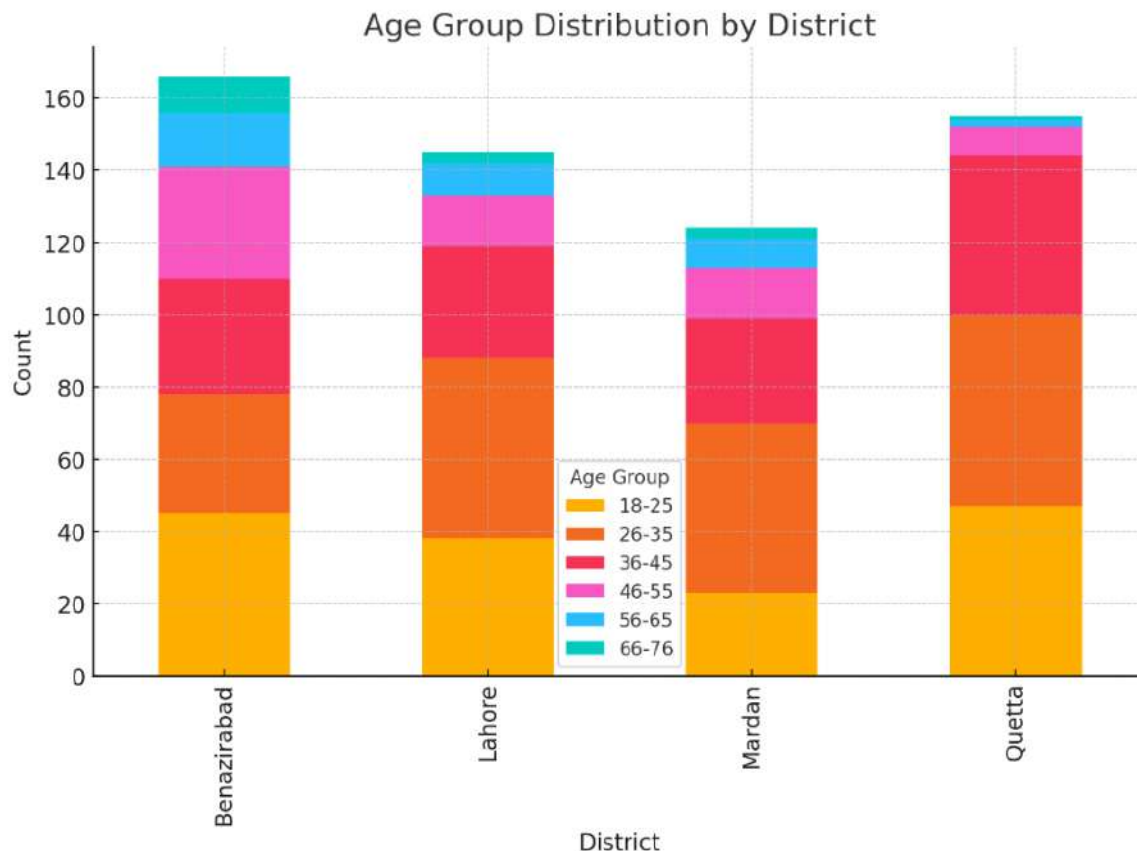
Gender Distribution of Participation Count



To ensure confidentiality, participants' identities were kept anonymous. Each participant was assigned a unique code, and the participation data was gathered on a recall basis. This approach relied on participants accurately remembering and reporting their involvement across various activities, adding a qualitative dimension to the evaluation process.

Furthermore, the survey was designed to include participants from all age groups, ensuring that the perspectives and experiences of individuals across various stages of life were adequately represented. This approach aimed to address age diversity by capturing insights from both younger and older participants, as well as those in between. By engaging a broad range of age groups, the survey ensured a more comprehensive understanding of community dynamics, needs, and perceptions, enabling the evaluation to be inclusive and reflective of the diverse demographic profile of the population. The Figure below shows the age group from each district.

**Illustration 3: Age Distribution of Survey Respondents by District**



**Violence-Free Families:** This category included families that participated in the VFF campaign, where families made pledges to improve the lives of women and girls within their households by rejecting violence and supporting gender equality. The evaluation assessed the impact of this campaign on families’ attitudes and behaviors related to VAWG and CEAM. : The VFF Campaign mobilized 1,677 families across the four evaluation selected districts. A 10% sample of these families, 167 families, was surveyed to assess the extent to which households have upheld their pledges. The survey also explored how the campaign has influenced family attitudes and behaviors towards VAWG and CEAM.

#### *Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)*

Marriage Registrars (Nikahkhawans) were key stakeholders in preventing child marriages by enforcing legal marriage requirements. SG provided targeted training to 98 Nikahkhawans across four evaluation selected districts, as against 80 targeted, to increase their knowledge of marriage laws and the risks of CEAM. To evaluate the training’s effectiveness, FGDs with a consistent sample of 25% trained registrars from each district were conducted. A total of 23 Nikahkhawans participated in four FGDs: Benazirabad (6), Lahore (8), Mardan (5), and Quetta

(4).By involving a group of Nikahkhan, FGDs allowed the evaluation team to gather diverse perspectives from different individuals who perform similar functions. This helped to capture common themes and experiences that might not emerge in individual interviews, revealing broader patterns and issues that can inform project evaluations and future interventions. One FGD in each district were specified number in each district means a total of four FGD in all four districts.

### *Key Informant Interviews*

Key Informant Interviews (KII) were conducted with project staff to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the processes, strategies, and the approach adopted by the SG team, the achievements and lessons learnt. In total 9 members were involved in the project implementation, all 9 were interviewed.

The involvement of local community-based organizations was pivotal in promoting awareness, fostering behavior change, and encouraging meaningful community participation. SG worked with 12 CBO partners in 4 districts. The representative of 7 CBOs were interviewed; two each in Lahore, Quetta, and Mardan and one in Benazirabad as there was only one CBO partner there.

SG trained and developed a dedicated pool of community facilitators, both women and men, who served as the first line of support in the six target districts. These facilitators were equipped with essential information, knowledge, and skills to raise awareness about VAWG, CEAM within their communities. In the four evaluation selected districts SG trained 155 community facilitators, both male and female almost same in numbers. The evaluation team conducted KIIs with five community facilitators in each district, except 6 in Benazirabad amounting a total of 21 community facilitators, 11 Female and 10 male community facilitators.

The project served as a vital intervention for individuals experiencing domestic violence, offering them crucial support and resources to help them address and overcome their challenging circumstances. To gather meaningful insights into the project's impact, the evaluation team conducted one-on-one interviews with 18 survivors. This sample represents 43% of the achieved target across all four districts. The selected survivors were individuals who availed the full range of services provided under the project, making them well-positioned to share their experiences and perspectives. Their accounts offer valuable insights into how the project supported them, the changes it brought to their lives, and the challenges they faced while accessing services. This qualitative approach provided an in-depth understanding of the project's effectiveness in addressing domestic violence and meeting the needs of survivors while ensuring their confidentiality and privacy throughout the evaluation process.

The project interventions also engaged a wide range of service providers and stakeholders essential to VAWG and CEAM. Key stakeholders included representatives from Women's Commissions, Women's Departments, relevant government departments, policy-makers, and district- and local-level service providers and duty-bearers. This group included law enforcement (police), shelter providers, legal aid services, helpline operators, and local government officials. By involving these stakeholders, the project aimed to enhance

collaboration across services and reinforce the support systems available to survivors and those at risk. The evaluation team conducted 20 KIIs with duty bearers using purposive sampling to select representatives from these service providers. The KIIs gathered in-depth insights into their experiences with the project, their perspectives on how well the interventions align with local needs, and any observed changes in their capacity to support and protect women and girls.

## **Limitations and Challenges**

The evaluation of the Humqadam – Partners for Change project encountered several limitations and challenges that influenced the scope, methodology, and data collection processes. These challenges highlight the complexities of evaluating large-scale, multi-dimensional projects in diverse and dynamic settings.

### **1. Sampling and Time Constraints**

According to the Terms of Reference (TORs), the evaluation required a sample of 10–15% of the primary beneficiaries, which amounted to over 2,200 participants from the total 22,983 beneficiaries. Given the limited timeframe for data collection, reaching this sample size was not feasible. To address this, the evaluation team focused on a representative sample by selecting four out of the six project districts, ensuring representation from each province and used survey methodology to reach maximum people. A stratified sampling approach was used to capture diversity in demographics, geographic locations, and project engagement levels. While this ensured representativeness, resource and time constraints limited the evaluation team's ability to cover the entire scope of the project comprehensively.

### **2. Recall Bias**

As the project spanned three years, participants' ability to accurately recall project-related events or experiences presented challenges. Issues such as underreporting or over reporting of changes, particularly regarding sensitive topics like VAWG, were anticipated. To mitigate this, the evaluation team employed a triangulated approach, incorporating community surveys, KIIs, FGDs with facilitators, service providers, and community members. This cross-verification of data from diverse sources reduced reliance on individual memory and enhanced the validity of the findings.

### **3. Availability of Duty Bearers**

The frequent transfer of duty bearers, such as law enforcement personnel and social service providers, made their consistent participation in the evaluation process challenging. To overcome this, the evaluation adopted a convenient sampling approach, engaging those duty bearers who were still accessible during the evaluation period. A notable exception was Nikahkhawans (marriage registrars), who are permanently based in their communities. Their involvement provided critical insights into the project's impact on local practices related to marriage registration and the prevention of Child Early Age Marriages (CEAM). The evaluation ensured at least one KII per district with key duty bearers to gather meaningful insights into the project's influence on building capacity to address domestic violence and VAWG.

#### **4. Resource and Logistical Challenges**

Conducting an evaluation across multiple districts within a limited timeframe and budget posed significant logistical challenges. Managing diverse stakeholders, adapting methodologies to local contexts, and addressing unforeseen barriers strained resources. To complete the evaluation on time, the team engaged multiple enumerators who worked collaboratively to ensure comprehensive data collection within the set schedule.

#### **5. Language and Cultural Sensitivities**

The diverse linguistic and cultural contexts across the target districts added complexity to the evaluation. To ensure that questions and interactions were culturally appropriate and comprehensible, local enumerators were engaged to conduct surveys and interviews in a manner that created a comfortable environment for participants. This approach minimized resistance and improved the reliability of the data.

#### **6. Access and Mobility Constraints**

Logistical challenges in reaching remote areas, combined with socio-political disruptions, affected data collection efforts. In Quetta, a strike during the evaluation period made the data collection process quite difficult, while political instability in Lahore and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) made accessing communities difficult. Evaluators had to adjust their plans dynamically to navigate these challenges, demonstrating flexibility to ensure data collection continued despite obstacles.

#### **7. Availability of Male Participants**

The availability of male participants posed challenges, as many were engaged in jobs or work outside their homes during the day. Enumerators showed maximum flexibility, scheduling interviews during late hours or other convenient times to accommodate the participants' availability. While this required additional effort, it ensured that the perspectives of male beneficiaries and community members were adequately represented.

These limitations and challenges illustrate the complexities of evaluating a multi-dimensional project like Humqadam, especially in diverse cultural and geographic contexts. Despite these barriers, the evaluation team employed adaptive strategies to ensure the findings were representative, valid, and reflective of the broader beneficiary population. These insights provide valuable lessons for future evaluations, emphasizing the need for flexibility, culturally sensitive approaches, and robust methodologies to navigate logistical and contextual challenges effectively.

#### **Key Ethical Considerations**

The evaluation team acknowledged the sensitive nature of the study, particularly as it addressed issues related to VAWG and CEAM. Ethical considerations were integrated throughout all field activities, especially when involving at-risk or vulnerable women and other community groups. Adherence to ethical standards was deemed crucial for maintaining the integrity and credibility of the evaluation.

The evaluation strictly adhered to the safeguards and protocols outlined in the UNEG *Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation* to ensure the physical and psychological safety of both respondents and data collectors. Additionally, the World Health Organization's *Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence against Women* and the UN Women Evaluation Handbook: *How to Manage Gender-Responsive Evaluation* was reviewed to maintain the highest ethical standards throughout the process.

***Confidentiality and Privacy:*** Strict measures were implemented to protect the confidentiality and privacy of all participants. Personal information was securely handled, and data was anonymized to prevent the identification of individuals. All interactions and data collection processes were conducted in a manner that safeguarded participants' privacy, ensuring sensitive information was disclosed only with appropriate consent.

***Sensitivity:*** Data collection tools were designed to be culturally appropriate and avoid creating distress for respondents. Efforts were made to ensure that questions were respectful, non-intrusive, and presented in a way that encouraged open and safe responses. The evaluation team approached all subjects, especially those dealing with sensitive issues such as domestic violence and child marriages, with the utmost respect and sensitivity. Efforts were made to create a safe and supportive environment for participants. The evaluation team was trained to handle sensitive topics with care, using empathetic and non-judgmental communication.

***Ethical Principles for Human Subjects:*** The evaluation team adhered to established ethical principles for involving human subjects in research, including respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Participants were provided with clear and comprehensive information about the evaluation's purpose, procedures, and potential impacts, ensuring they understood what participation entailed.

***Informed Consent:*** Written consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in the evaluation. Consent forms were provided in the local language(s) for respondents to sign. In cases where literacy was an issue, verbal consent was recorded. This consent process explained the nature of the research, how the data would be used, and participants' rights to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence if they felt uncomfortable.

***Organizing Data Collection to Minimize Risk:*** Data collection visits were scheduled at times and locations that minimized risk to respondents. Evaluations were conducted in safe, private, and neutral settings where respondents felt comfortable speaking freely. Privacy was a key priority; interviews were conducted in spaces where others could not overhear or interrupt the conversation. For example, interviews with women at risk of domestic violence were not conducted in the presence of family members or in public places. Any potential risks identified during the data collection phase, such as interruptions by family members, were addressed immediately to protect the safety and confidentiality of respondents. Interviewers or data collectors provided information on how individuals in situations of risk could seek support, including referrals to organizations offering counseling and other assistance.

***Evaluator Training for Collecting Sensitive Information:*** All members of the evaluation team underwent specialized training on collecting sensitive data related to VAWG and CEAM. This training covered:

- Techniques for conducting interviews in a sensitive and non-judgmental manner.
- Ensuring respondent safety and well-being during and after data collection.

Experienced women trained in gender-sensitive interviewing techniques were included in the team to ensure that female respondents felt comfortable and safe during the evaluation process.

By integrating these ethical practices, the evaluation upheld the highest standards of integrity and respect for participants, ensuring that the findings were both reliable and ethically obtained. All individuals involved in the evaluation signed the Pledge for Ethical Consideration in Evaluation.

## Findings as per evaluation questions

### Effectiveness

**EQ, 1:** To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs (project results) achieved and how?

*Project Goal: Women and girls at increased risk of domestic violence or child/early age marriages and unable to access response mechanisms because of COVID-19 have enhance access to robust community support in Vehari, Mardan, Swat, Quetta, Hyderabad and Benazirabad districts.*

*Improved guidance tools in the above districts and Peshawar, Jafferabad, Karachi, Shahdadt, Mirpurkhas, Muzaffargarh, Okara, Toba Tek Singh and Kasur.*

*COVID-19 appropriate protection system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sind, Punjab and Baluchistan by June 2024.*

The Humqadam Project was designed to address the vulnerabilities of women and girls in six districts of Pakistan—Vehari, Mardan, Swat, Quetta, Hyderabad, and Benazirabad—who faced heightened risks of domestic violence and child/early age marriages during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic exacerbated existing challenges such as restricted mobility, lack of access to support mechanisms, and increased socio-economic pressures, leaving many women and girls more vulnerable to violence and exploitation. The project sought to mitigate these risks by enhancing access to robust community support systems while empowering affected women and girls to reclaim their agency and rights. In the second year of the project, Vehari was replaced with Lahore due to logistical challenges. This indicates that the efforts and activities carried out in Vehari over the course of a year were not included in the overall assessment of the project's progress toward its goal. As a result, the impact, outcomes, and contributions made in that district were not factored into the final evaluation. To achieve its objectives, the project established comprehensive community support mechanisms tailored to the immediate and long-term needs of women and girls at risk. These included the creation of safe spaces, such as Gup Shup sessions, which provided survivors and at-risk individuals with secure environments to share their experiences, access information, and build networks of solidarity; awareness sessions to educate communities on the dangers of domestic violence, child marriages, and available support mechanisms; and local support networks that engaged diverse community stakeholders, including community-based organizations (CBOs), community facilitators, lady health workers, and Nikahkawan (marriage officiators), to play active roles in identifying and addressing cases of violence. Furthermore, the project collaborated with state institutions to ensure survivors could access essential services. These included law enforcement agencies, service providers, local government bodies and Women Development Departments. This integrated approach aimed to bridge critical gaps in accessibility by fostering collaboration between community-based efforts and institutional frameworks.

The project goal was evaluated based on three indicators outlined in the project proposal. The following sections present the evaluation findings for each indicator.

*Indicator 1: % project women and girls engaged confirm enhanced community support<sup>15</sup>*

The SG Humqadam Project reached 1113251 as against targeted 604,421 women and girls. This means that key messages were delivered to these many women and girls through a variety of communication channels including radio messaging, community outreach and other media platforms, ensuring widespread dissemination of information across all six districts. The project aimed to provide critical information on VAWG, DV, and CEAM. The initial target was to directly reach a total participation count of 17,310; however, SG surpassed this goal by achieving a participation count of 31751 (all six districts) through various awareness-raising and capacity-building activities.

SG facilitated support for 600 survivors of violence across the six districts, of which 88 survivors received comprehensive assistance. This included legal aid, counseling, psychological support and other forms of full-scale support.

In the four evaluation selected districts, the evaluation team accessed a total of 3,482 female participation count as having engaged in project activities such as awareness sessions, and community mobilization initiatives. Additionally, the evaluation team engaged with 165 VFF households in four evaluation-selected districts, where household-level interventions were implemented. These interactions aimed to assess how the project influenced family dynamics, perceptions of violence, and access to support services.

The evaluation also involved direct engagement with 18 survivors of violence who had utilized the support mechanisms strengthened by the project. These interactions provided valuable insights into how these mechanisms addressed survivors' immediate and long-term needs, including access to legal, psychological, and social services.

A community survey was conducted in four evaluation–selected districts with 679 respondents, of whom 440 were women. Among the surveyed women, 424 (96%) confirmed their participation in one of the 600 community awareness sessions focused on CEAM conducted in four evaluation-selected districts. These women demonstrated their understanding of the issue by articulating key points such as: CEAM is harmful, it has serious health consequences, it is considered a crime, girls should not be married before the age of 18, and there are legal penalties for those who perpetuate it. This reflected their basic understanding of CEAM-related issues.

Additionally, Out of 440 women surveyed 402 (91%) confirmed their participation in one of the 80 community awareness sessions on 'DV and Reporting VAW Cases' conducted in four evaluation-selected district. These sessions provided crucial information on identifying various forms of abuse, understanding their legal rights, and accessing available support services. The

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<sup>15</sup> All the indicators used in the evaluation were taken from the Result Chain of the Project Proposal Document approved by UNTF

review of activity reports and participants feedback indicated that these sessions had enhanced their confidence and ability to seek help when facing domestic violence.

The project created some community support system and developed the linkages of at risk women and girls with the institutional support mechanisms. Out of 440 women surveyed 166 (38%) confirmed their participation in Gup Shup sessions and 148 (34%) in community orientation. Gup Shup and community orientation sessions created safe spaces for women and girls to voice their concerns and seek guidance while fostering a sense of solidarity and collective resilience within their communities.

A female respondent from village in Mardan, who was surveyed on 30th November 2024, reflected on her experience:

*"For the first time, I felt heard. The Gup Shup sessions gave me the confidence to stand up for myself and seek help when I needed it."*

The community facilitators played a pivotal role in strengthening the support system for at-risk women and girls, providing them with essential information, practical skills, and connections to institutional support services. The project trained 260 facilitators (131 female and 129 male) across all six project-implemented districts, equipping them to offer critical guidance and support to those in vulnerable situations. These facilitators empowered individuals to fight for their rights, make informed decisions, and navigate complex situations. Acting as a bridge between the community and institutional resources such as legal aid, healthcare, and law enforcement, they ensured that survivors had access to the tools and services necessary for protection and justice. Their efforts significantly contributed to creating a responsive and sustainable support network within the community.

A community facilitator from Quetta shared her thoughts during a KII conducted on 28th November 2024.

*"Our role is to be the first point of contact for women in distress. We guide them on where to go and what to do. This project has shown us the power of collective action."*

The local support system also included LHWs and Nikahkhawan (marriage officiators), both of whom played important roles in bridging the gap between survivors and formal service providers. The Nikahkhawan, primarily government-appointed, were particularly effective in preventing CEAM, by ensuring adherence to legal requirements during marriage registration and raising awareness about the consequences of underage marriages. Their role in the project proved to be a critical preventive measure, as they could intervene at a key stage to uphold legal and ethical standards.

On the other hand, the Lady Health Workers, while recognized as a valuable asset, were not fully integrated into the system. Despite their extensive reach within communities and their potential to identify and support at-risk women and girls, their engagement was limited. This was primarily due to their existing workload as government employees, which left them with little capacity to take on additional responsibilities within the project. While their involvement

showed promise, it remained an underutilized resource, highlighting an area for improvement in similar projects in future.

These visits offered them a comprehensive understanding of the wide range of services available for the protection and support of GBV survivors. Participants gained firsthand insight into how institutions such as police stations, courts, shelter homes, and medical facilities operate to address GBV cases. They learned about legal protections, procedural requirements, and the roles of various service providers, enabling them to navigate these systems more effectively. The exposure visits also demystified institutional processes, fostering trust and reducing the apprehension often associated with seeking formal support.

A community facilitator from Mardan recalled her experience in a KII conducted on 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2024:

*“The exposure visits helped us understand how the system works and overcome the apprehension and fear that many people in the community feel about approaching services like the police and courts. It gave us the confidence to see these institutions as allies in our protection and support”.*

The project also played a crucial role in facilitating survivors to seek support for the challenges they faced. SG reported that they facilitated a total of 600 survivors in all six districts. The support was primarily providing them with vital information and para-counseling services. Among them, 88 survivors were able to access formal support in all six districts. In the four evaluation-selected districts, formal support was extended to 42 survivors, ensuring they received tangible assistance to address their specific needs. To better understand the nature and impact of this support, the evaluation team conducted 18 KIIs with the survivors. These interviews provided valuable insights into the kinds of support offered and how it influenced the lives of the recipients, both emotionally and practically.

The survivors’ accounts highlighted the significance of the project in helping them rebuild their lives and regain their confidence. The following are a couple of illustrative examples that showcase the project’s impact and the diverse ways it facilitated survivors in their journey toward safety and empowerment.

**Case 1:** The respondent, a survivor of domestic violence, endured years of abuse and emotional trauma in her marriage, compounded by societal stigma and fear of judgment. With support from the project, she received emotional counseling, legal education, and immediate protection through a trusted local female police officer which empowered her to prioritize her safety and well-being. Learning about her legal rights gave her the confidence to break free from the cycle of abuse and secure a divorce through the court. Reflecting on her journey, the survivor from village in Benazirabad, in a KII conducted on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024, stated:

*“The facilitators gave me emotional support when I needed it the most. They introduced me to legal information about protecting myself and connected me with a local female police officer. The team ensured I understood referral mechanisms and guided me on legal rights in marriage,*

*inheritance, and protection from violence. This knowledge enabled me to make informed decisions about my life and safety."*

**Case 2:** A 27-year-old survivor from Mardan, endured years of domestic violence and financial neglect from her husband, a government employee, before seeking help through the Humqadam Project. With guidance from facilitators, she approached the Dispute Resolution Council (DRC) at the Mardan police station. There, her husband was compelled to sign a written agreement pledging to cease all violence and fulfill his financial responsibilities. This critical intervention provided her with legal protection and restored confidence, enabling to reclaim her life and become an advocate for women's rights in the community.

Reflecting on her experience in a KII conducted on 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2024, she remarked:

*"Initially, I felt trapped, believing this was my fate. I was unaware of my rights and fearful of stigma. But with the guidance of Humqadam facilitators, I gained confidence and understanding of my legal protections. This knowledge empowered me to stand up for myself and find a solution to my situation."*

**Case 3:** A GBV survivor from Quetta, suffered prolonged domestic abuse that ultimately led to her separation from her husband, who then took custody of their 2.5-year-old son. Determined to reunite with her child, she turned to the Humqadam Project for support. Through the project, she received crucial legal guidance, gaining knowledge about child custody processes, family laws, and essential documentation such as birth certificate and Nikkahnama. Despite the societal stigma often associated with NGOs, she persevered with the unwavering support of her parents and began her legal battle for her son's custody and financial maintenance.

Reflecting on her journey in a KII conducted on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024, she said:

*"The Humqadam Project gave me the knowledge and courage to stand up for my rights. Their guidance showed me a path to fight for my son and seek justice. Without their support, I wouldn't have had the strength to continue this struggle."*

### **Conclusion:**

Indicator 1 of the goal was achieved at a medium level. 31751 individuals participated in direct engagement activities, exceeding the initial goal of 17,310 through awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives. The project conducted 900 sessions on CEAM and 120 sessions on DV and reporting violence, with 96% (424 of 440 surveyed women) attending CEAM sessions and 91% (402 of 440) attending DV sessions, demonstrating increased awareness of legal implications, abuse identification, and available support services. Gup Shup sessions (38% participation) and community orientations (34%) created safe spaces for women to express concerns and build confidence.

The project also facilitated support for 600 survivors of violence, with 88 receiving comprehensive services, including legal aid, counseling, and psychological support. In the four evaluation-selected districts, 42 survivors accessed formal support services, reflecting a direct

impact on survivor assistance. Firsthand survivor testimonies highlighted increased confidence and access to resources, indicating a positive impact on those directly supported.

To strengthen institutional linkages, 260 community facilitators (131 female, 129 male) were trained in all six districts, serving as bridges between at-risk women and formal services. Exposure visits to police stations, courts, and shelters helped reduce fear and stigma, improving access to institutional support. Additionally, Nikahkawan (marriage officiators) played a key role in preventing child marriages by ensuring adherence to legal marriage requirements and raising awareness about the consequences of underage marriage.

While the project expanded awareness and access to services, participation alone does not confirm enhanced community support. Attending an awareness session does not guarantee that participants experienced increase support in their daily lives. Understanding information differs from receiving direct assistance or witnessing systemic change within communities. Additionally, no longitudinal follow-up was conducted to assess whether participants felt more supported by their families, communities, or institutions after the awareness sessions.

Another limitation was the limited integration of key community stakeholders. While LHWs were identified as valuable resources, they were not fully engaged due to existing workloads, leaving a critical community-based support system underutilized. Nonetheless, the project established key linkages between women and institutional support services, laying the foundation for continued engagement and empowerment at the community level.

### *Indicator 2: % of women who report having access to improved guidance resources*

SG developed two key resources aimed at supporting survivors of GBV and DV across six districts: Referral Directories and the Humqadam App.

The Referral Directories were created to provide essential information that helps individuals navigate the available support services for GBV and DV in their local communities. These directories, available with community facilitators and CBOs at community level, are a crucial tool in directing survivors to the right resources, including law enforcement agencies, legal aid, and psychosocial support organizations, ensuring they can access the help they need. The directories were distributed amongst NGO/CBOs partners, duty bearers and parliamentarians.

A duty bearer from Lahore expressed his appreciation for the referral directories in a KII conducted on 24<sup>th</sup> of November 2024, he said,

*"I highly value the Referral Directory. It is the most effective tool for bridging gaps in services and strengthening collaboration with NGOs."*

The Humqadam App, launched in May 2024, is a mobile application designed to assist survivors of physical and emotional violence. Developed by SG in collaboration with the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) and with technical support from LUMS, the App aims to provide a comprehensive range of services and information to empower women facing violence. One of its key features is the Comprehensive Resource Directory, which provides quick access to a variety of national and provincial resources. This includes contact information for essential services such as police, law enforcement, government help lines, ministries,

commissions, and civil society organizations offering legal aid and psychosocial support. In addition to these resources, the app also provides Legal Information, empowering users with knowledge of national and provincial laws that protect their rights. This helps survivors understand their legal options and the frameworks available to them. The app further offers Guidance on GBV Cases, providing users with step-by-step instructions on how to address specific issues of violence, such as domestic violence, and detailing the multi-sectoral referral pathways that are available at various levels of support. Recognizing the challenges that some users may face with internet connectivity, Offline Accessibility is another important feature of the app, allowing it to be downloaded and used without an internet connection, ensuring that essential information is always accessible, regardless of location.

Humqadam is available for free on Android and iOS platforms and a web version, making it widely accessible to individuals across Pakistan. These tools aim to create a holistic support system for survivors of GBV and DV, providing them with the resources, legal knowledge, and practical guidance they need to seek help and protection.

Out of the 440 women respondents in the community survey, only 118 (26.8%) reported being aware of the App. These individuals had learned about the App during the DV and VAW Case Reporting workshops. While this confirmed that the orientation and access to the app were provided, there was no confirmation regarding the actual number of App downloads. Therefore, while the awareness and accessibility were established, it remains unclear how many participants followed through by downloading and using the App.

A community facilitator from Lahore said in her KII conducted on 25<sup>th</sup> November:

*"I taught people how to use this app. During the sessions, I downloaded the app onto the women's mobiles and demonstrated how to use it. I also shared the helpline numbers with them. While I can't confirm whether the women use the app regularly, it remains on their phones, and whenever I meet them, they always mention it. All the women are well aware of the services provided in the app, and I believe that if they need it, they will definitely use it."*

## **Conclusion**

The Indicator 2 of the Goal, which measures the '% of women reporting having access to improved resources,' was only partially achieved at a low level. While the project developed key guidance resources, including Referral Directories and the Humqadam App, these were primarily disseminated to CBO partners, community facilitators, and duty bearers rather than directly to community women. The assumption was that these intermediaries would facilitate women's access to essential information and support services.

However, there is no documented evidence in the project reports submitted by SG to the donor confirming that the referral directories were directly distributed among community women. Findings from the community survey conducted by the evaluation team further highlight this gap, of the 440 women surveyed, only 118 (41%) reported awareness of the Humqadam App, primarily through the DV and VAW Case Reporting workshop. While this confirms that some

women received information about the App, there is no verification of how many actually downloaded or used it.

*Indicator 3: At least 4 recommended actions to improve effectiveness of province specific VAWG prevention and response mechanisms tabled before appropriate forums*

The policy work under the Humqadam faced significant challenges due to political and governance issues during its implementation phase. The Sindh Commission on the Status of Women (SCSW) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission declined partnership requests due to administrative hurdles. The Punjab Commission lacked a chairperson to lead the Commission, further hindering progress. Additionally, both the Balochistan and Punjab Assemblies were dissolved by the then government, and the caretaker setups prolonged the process, delaying the elections. As a result, the only viable option was to work with the Balochistan Commission on the Status of Women (BCSW), with whom SG collaborated on addressing issues related to VAWG and CEAM. The change was communicated to the donor and got approval for the revised plan.

A duty bearer from Quetta reflected on the situation in a KII conducted on 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2024:

*“GBV and early-age marriage are deeply rooted issues in Balochistan that urgently need to be addressed. When it comes to GBV, the capacity of formal institutions and service providers is severely limited. While we have Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in place, the most significant challenge is the absence of a permanent shelter for GBV victims and survivors who require long-term protection and rehabilitation. Apart from Dar-ul-Aman, which itself is limited in capacity, there are no other institutions in Balochistan dedicated to this cause. Overall, the framework and institutional support for the survival, protection, and rehabilitation of GBV victims in Balochistan remain major challenges.*

*The second pressing issue is child marriages. According to a study conducted by UNESCO, approximately 45% of marriages in Balochistan are early or child marriages, which is alarmingly high. This statistic highlights the urgent need for intervention. We have incorporated these concerns into the Statement of Objects in the Child Early Marriage Bill, based on the findings of the report.”*

There was significant policy work done in collaboration with the BCSW. This included the development of the Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024 and the Balochistan Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill 2024. These bills were directly related to GBV and child marriages, two critical issues in the province. The Balochistan government demonstrated a commitment to addressing these issues, as evidenced by securing Rs.260 million in the budget for the Women Protection Bill. Although there were setbacks with the Assembly, the bills were actively tabled and worked on, aligning with the indicator's goal.

On DV Bill BCSW chair shared that *“we have got Rs.260 million in the budget in one DP of our Women Protection Bill - therefore the resources available even before the law has been passed (officially), which signifies the commitment of the Balochistan govt”*.

In KP, a policy was identified as a gap, and after consultations with civil society and government departments, a policy and law regarding Persons with Disabilities (PWD) with a gender lens, was drafted. The PWD policy was collaboratively drafted in partnership with the Social Welfare Department (SWD) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), incorporating valuable input from civil society organizations, particularly persons with disabilities (PWDs). The policy development process involved extensive consultations with diverse stakeholders to ensure inclusivity and relevance. During these consultations, the law department expressed its commitment to advancing the policy and acknowledged the significance of the collaborative efforts. They appreciated the inclusive approach taken in the consultations and the comprehensive draft that emerged from the process, highlighting its potential to address critical issues faced by PWDs.

It can be said that, although not all four recommended actions, committed in the project proposal, were fully proposed, three significant actions were tabled before the relevant forums. These actions, including the Balochistan Women Protection Bill, the Balochistan Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill, and the policy development and draft law for PWD in KP, were critical steps toward improving the effectiveness of VAWG prevention and response mechanisms. However, the ultimate success of these initiatives rested with the decision-making and approving authorities. While the bills and policy drafts were presented, their passage depended on the approval from the respective governmental bodies, which remained an ongoing challenge. Thus, while the actions were proposed and discussed, the true impact will be measured once these authorities approve and implement these policies and laws.

The Indicator 3 of the goal was achieved at medium to high level, as the Humqadam Project successfully tabled three significant policy actions despite political and governance challenges. These included the Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024, the Balochistan Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill 2024, addressing the high prevalence of child marriages (45% in Balochistan), and the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Policy and Draft Law in KP, developed through collaboration with civil society and government departments. However, efforts to engage with commissions in Sindh and KP faced setbacks due to administrative hurdles, and the dissolution of provincial assemblies further delayed legislative progress. While three policy actions were successfully proposed, the original goal of four actions was not fully met, making the indicator partially achieved. The true impact will depend on the approval and implementation of these policies, but the progress made under challenging circumstances demonstrates a significant step toward strengthening VAWG prevention and response mechanisms.

#### **Conclusion of the Goal Achievement:**

The Humqadam Project aimed to enhance community support for women and girls at risk of DV and CEAM while improving response mechanisms, guidance tools, and policy advocacy across multiple districts. The project made substantial progress in outreach, survivor support, and policy engagement, though some areas remained partially achieved, overall, the project's goal effectiveness was rated as medium.

31751 participants engaged directly, surpassing the goal of 17,310, through 900 CEAM awareness sessions and 120 DV sessions in all six districts. Among 440 surveyed women by the evaluation team in the four evaluation-selected districts, 96% attended CEAM sessions and 91% attended DV sessions, demonstrating increased awareness of legal rights, abuse recognition, and available support services. To strengthen community-based support systems, the project trained 260 community facilitators (131 female, 129 male), in all six districts, to act as bridges between at-risk women and institutional services. Additionally, in all six districts 600 survivors received assistance, with 88 accessing comprehensive legal, psychological, and counseling services. In the four evaluation-selected districts, 42 survivors accessed formal support services, showing a direct impact on survivor assistance. Furthermore, community engagement mechanisms such as Gup Shup sessions (38% participation) and community orientations (34%) provided safe spaces for women to share concerns, seek guidance, and build resilience.

Despite these strengths, challenges remained in confirming long-term enhanced community support. No longitudinal follow-up was conducted to assess whether participants felt more supported by their families, communities, or institutions after the awareness sessions. While LHWs were recognized as key stakeholders, they were not fully engaged, limiting their role in strengthening community-based response mechanisms. The sustainability of trained community facilitators post-project was also not documented, making it unclear how support systems continued beyond project implementation.

The project also introduced two key resources to improve access to response mechanisms: Referral Directories and the Humqadam App. The Referral Directories were designed to help survivors navigate available GBV and DV support services and were distributed among CBOs, facilitators, duty bearers, and parliamentarians. However, there is no documented evidence confirming whether these directories were directly distributed to community women, limiting their reach at the grassroots level. The Humqadam App, launched in May 2024, was designed to provide a resource directory, legal information, and GBV case guidance, with offline accessibility to ensure users could access information without internet connectivity. However, awareness and usage of the App remained low, with only 118 of 440 surveyed women (26.8%) aware of its existence, and no confirmation of actual downloads or usage. While community facilitators helped introduce the App to women, its actual impact on improving access to support remains unclear. Thus, this indicator was partially achieved at a low level.

Despite political and governance challenges, the project successfully tabled three major policy actions under its advocacy efforts:

Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024 – Addressing GBV prevention and response mechanisms, with Rs. 260 million allocated in the provincial budget for implementation.

Balochistan Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill 2024 – Addressing child marriages, which account for 45% of marriages in Balochistan (UNESCO study).

KP Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Policy and Draft Law – Developed in collaboration with civil society and government stakeholders, incorporating a gender-sensitive approach to address the needs of women with disabilities.

Engagement with VAWG prevention and response mechanisms in Sindh and KP faced setbacks due to administrative hurdles and the dissolution of provincial assemblies, delaying legislative progress. However, despite these challenges, three key policy actions were tabled and discussed at relevant forums, though waiting for approvals.

In conclusion, the Humqadam Project made notable progress in awareness, survivor support, and policy engagement, but long-term community support sustainability, adoption of guidance tools, and policy approvals remain areas for further development.

**Outcome 1:** *Women & Girl survivors and those at risk of VAWG, especially Domestic Violence and Child/Early Age Marriages, in districts Mardan, Swat, Benazirabad, Hyderabad, Lahore and Quetta have improved access to strengthened community-based support for prevention, protection and redress by June 2024.*

The community-based support system for prevention, protection, and redress of gender-based violence (GBV) was strengthened through Community Facilitators, Gup Shup Sessions, Awareness Sessions, and Exposure Visits, all of which played a vital role in educating communities, and linking survivors to support services.

A total of 260 trained community facilitators (131 women and 129 men) across six districts, including 155 in the four evaluation-selected districts, played a pivotal role in guiding survivors and those at risk to prevention, protection and response mechanisms. Their impact was widely recognized, with 79.53% of 679 surveyed community members rating them as "very effective" and 19.88% as "somewhat effective," while only 0.59% expressed dissatisfaction, reflecting community trust in their role.

Prevention: A total of 88 Gup Shup Sessions were conducted across all six districts, with 57 held in the four evaluation-selected districts, exceeding the planned 52 sessions. The additional sessions were conducted in response to community demand. These structured yet informal discussions engaged 953 women and 460 men in conversations on VAWG, DV, CEAM, and related issues, creating safe spaces for dialogue and awareness. Among the 679 community survey respondents, 31.52% (214) confirmed their participation in the Gup Shup sessions. Those who participated shared that the sessions were relevant in initiating meaningful conversations about VAWG, DV, and CEAM, and in providing information on accessing response mechanisms.

Awareness Sessions enhanced community knowledge on VAWG, CEAM, legal rights, and response mechanisms. The project initially planned 150 sessions per district, targeting 1,500 women and 1,500 men, but exceeded expectations by delivering 600 sessions across four evaluation selected districts, reaching 7,205 women and 6,256 men (A total of 13451 participants instead of targeted 12000). Additionally, 80 dedicated sessions on DV and

reporting VAW cases were conducted, directly engaging 1,304 women and 809 men. A high participation rate (94.5%) of surveyed respondents (642 out of 679) confirmed their attendance, highlighting the success of these efforts in engaging communities in awareness for prevention.

**Protection:** To strengthen protection mechanisms, exposure visits were conducted to provide participants with firsthand experience of key support services, including local government offices, shelters, police stations, courts, and other institutions. These visits were primarily designed for community facilitators and emerging community leaders actively supporting women and girls seeking redress, equipping them with direct knowledge of available protection mechanisms and enhancing their ability to guide survivors toward appropriate services.

**Redress:** To strengthen redress mechanisms, the project focused on legal awareness and reporting procedures through DV and VAW case reporting sessions, directly engaging 1,304 women and 809 men. These sessions ensured that survivors were equipped with the necessary knowledge to seek justice and support services.

*Outcome Indicator 1.1: Women survivors/ women and girls at risk facilitated to access response mechanisms*

Women survivors and women and girls at risk of violence were facilitated to access response mechanisms through various targeted interventions, including:

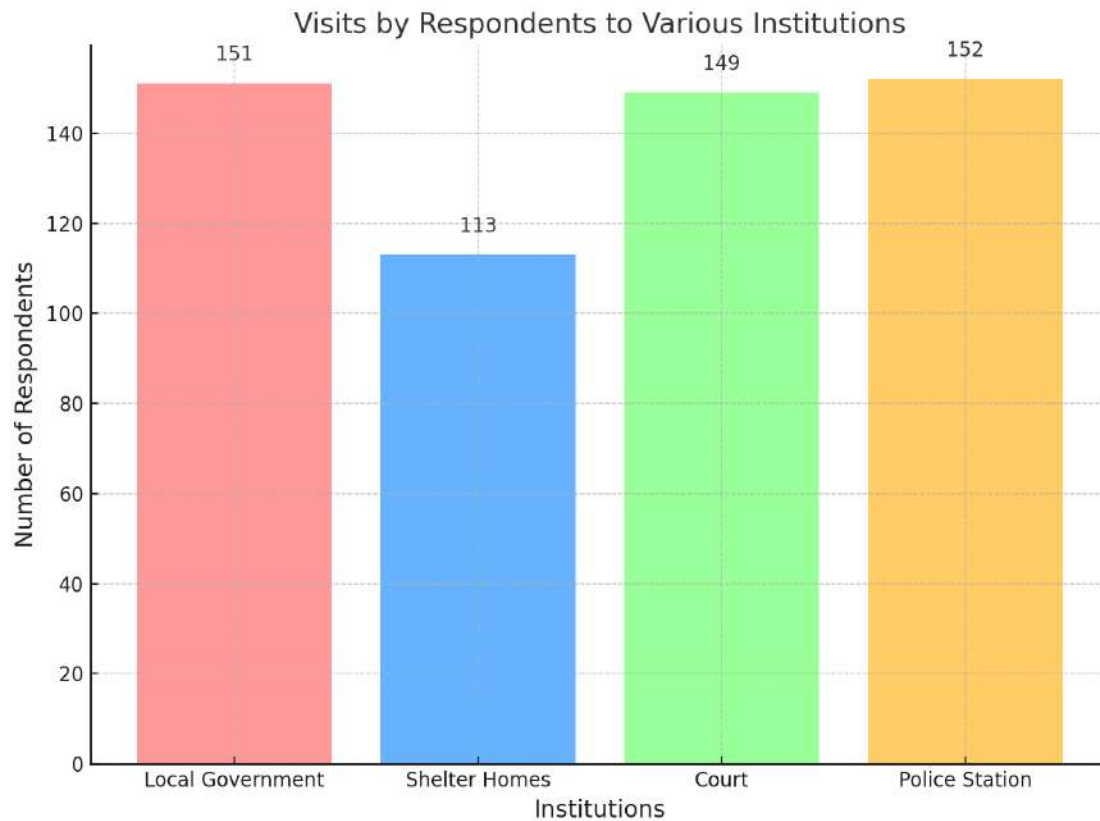
**Exposure Visits: Linking with Support Services**

Exposure visits were organized to provide participants with first-hand experience of support systems available through service providers, including local government offices, shelters, police stations, courts, and other institutions. These visits aimed to empower participants by enhancing their understanding of available resources and encouraging them to access these services when needed. The exposure visits were primarily designed for community facilitators and emerging community leaders actively supporting women and girls seeking redress.

**Local Government Offices:** Planned two visits per district with 20 participants (10 male and 10 female) per district, achieved 16 visits in four evaluation target districts with 156 participants, nearly doubling the target of 80 participants. 151 respondents of community survey (very close to the actual number participated) confirmed their participation.

**Shelters and Institutions (KPCSW/WDD/SWD):** Planned 2 visits per district with 15 participants (5 male and 10 female) per visit, resulting in 182 participants (30 male) in the four evaluation- selected districts, exceeding the target of 60 participants despite limited activity in Benazirabad. 113 respondents mentioned they visited, which is around 62% of the actual participated.

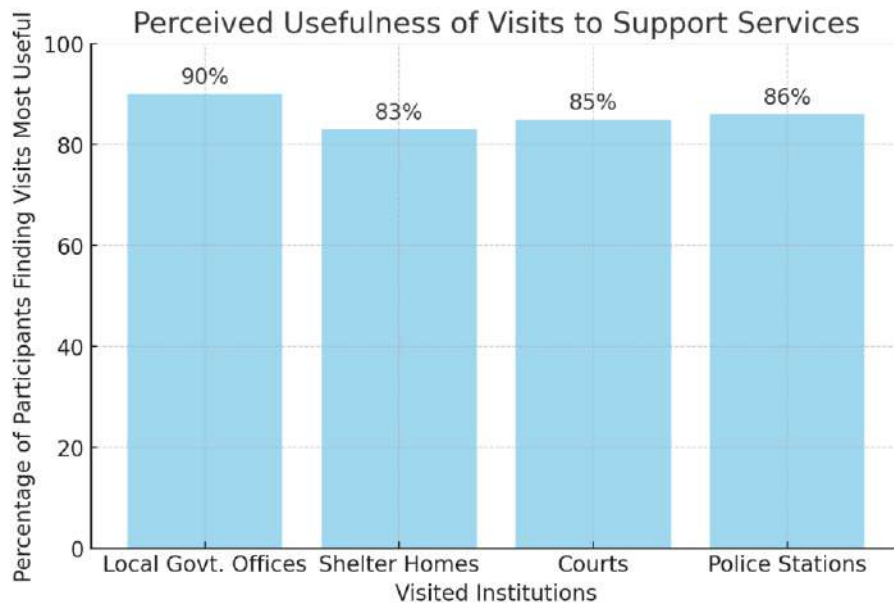
#### Illustration 4: Visit by Respondents to Various Institutions



**Police Stations and Courts:** Planned 2 visits per district with 15 participants per visit, achieving an impressive 313 participants (263 women) in four evaluation-selected districts, far surpassing the target of 120. Mardan recorded the highest participation with 219 attendees, including 177 women. Out of 679 respondents 149 confirmed they visited courts, which is almost 48% of the 313 of actual visited while 162 respondents (52% of the actual visited 313 participants) confirmed their visit to police station.

The overall feedback of the community survey participants on the usefulness of these visits is reflected in an illustration below:

### Illustration 5: The Perceived Usefulness of Exposure Visits to Support Services by Community Survey Participants



The illustration 5: demonstrate the usefulness of these exposure visits: out of 151 community survey participants who visited local government offices, 136 (90%) found the visit highly useful in understanding the civic documentation process, which is essential for claiming rights. Among the 131 respondents who visited shelter homes, 109 (83%) reported that the visit was most beneficial in learning about the rules and procedures of shelter homes and how to access them in times of need. Similarly, out of 149 participants who visited courts, 127 (85%) found the experience valuable in understanding court proceedings and how to seek legal support in VAWG cases. Additionally, among 152 participants who visited police stations, 131 (86%) found the visit instrumental in overcoming initial fear of the police and learning the procedures for accessing police services when filing reports related to VAWG cases.

The high level of appreciation for these visits highlights the keen interest and engagement of participants, all of whom were community facilitators and emerging leaders. Their enthusiasm underscores a strong commitment to understanding support services and protection mechanisms, equipping them to better assist women and girls at risk or survivors of violence.

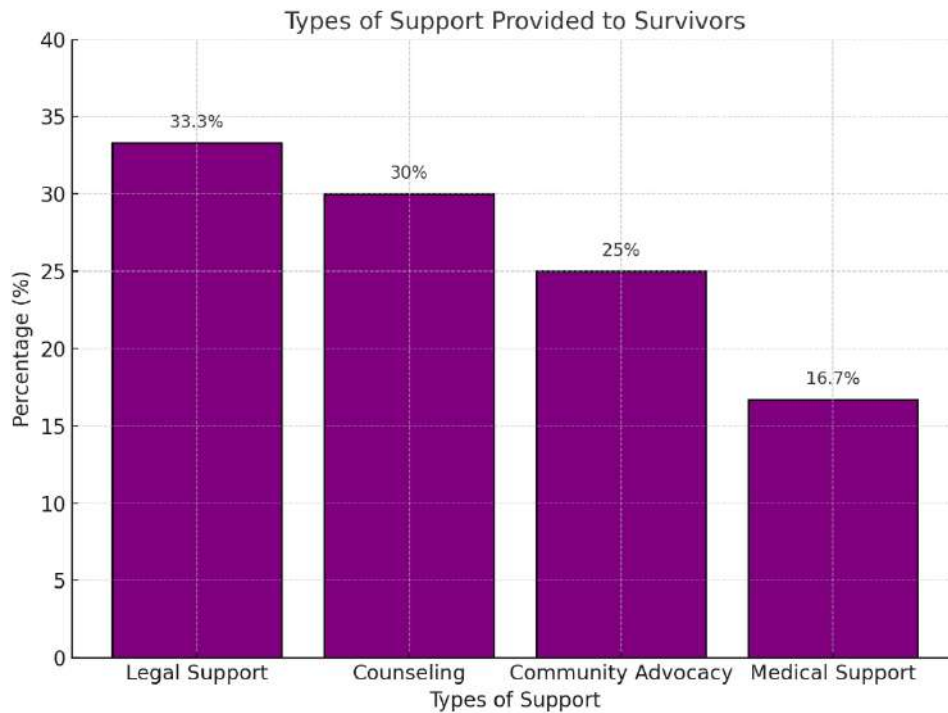
As the visits were conducted predominantly toward the end of the project, primarily in the final quarter, they were successful in enhancing participants' understanding of the available support mechanisms. However, due to the limited timeframe, it was not possible to assess how participants utilized or benefited from these resources in the long term. The late scheduling of these visits curtailed the opportunity for sustained engagement and follow-up to gauge their practical application and impact.

## Encouraging Reporting and Seeking Help

- **Sessions on DV and Reporting VAW Cases:** The project planned 20 sessions per district on DV and reporting VAW cases. In total, 80 sessions were conducted across all four districts, with 1,304 female and 809 male participants. The focus of the session was how to report cases of violence to authorities, such as the police and legal organizations, the information about available hotlines, NGOs and legal aid services was also shared. A comprehensive orientation on how to use the Humqadam App was also provided.
- Out of 679 surveyed participants a total of 556 respondents confirmed they attended sessions on DV and reporting violence against women, including 382 women (68.7%) and 174 men (31.3%). Notably, 150 respondents (27.0% of those surveyed) acknowledged that these sessions contributed to an increase in the reporting of violence against women cases, reflecting significant progress in breaking the silence and addressing these issues.
- **Women Survivors accessing the Response Mechanism**

The project provided critical support to individuals who experienced domestic violence, equipping them with resources to overcome their challenges. Insights into the project's impact were gathered through one-on-one interviews with 18 survivors, selected across four districts, who had accessed the full range of project services.

**Illustration 6: Type of Support Provided to the Survivors of GBV**



(Illustration 6 depicts the types of support provided to the 18 survivors who accessed assistance through the project.)

The Humqadam project provided survivors with various forms of support, each addressing critical aspects of their recovery and empowerment. Out of 18 survivors interviewed by the evaluation team legal support, accessed by 33.3% of survivors, was a pivotal intervention that equipped individuals with knowledge of family laws and assisted them in pursuing justice. This guidance enabled survivors to secure custody, financial maintenance, and protection orders, offering them a foundation for stability and independence. Counseling, utilized by 30% of survivors, was essential for emotional and psychological recovery. It improved communication within families and empowered survivors with coping strategies to rebuild their lives. Community advocacy, accounting for 25% of support, involved facilitators conducting awareness campaigns that reduced stigma and encouraged collective action against harmful practices. Additionally, 16.7% of survivors received medical support, which addressed physical injuries and mental health needs, ultimately stabilizing their well-being and enabling them to focus on long-term recovery.

## **Conclusion**

Outcome 1 Indicator 1.1, which aimed to facilitate women survivors and at-risk women and girls in accessing response mechanisms, was achieved at a high level. The project exceeded participation targets for exposure visits to key institutions, such as local government offices, shelters, police stations, and courts, with over 85% of participants finding them highly useful. Additionally, 80 sessions on DV and reporting violence were conducted, reaching 1,304 women and 809 men, with 27% of surveyed participants confirming an increase in reporting VAWG cases. 18 survivors who were interviewed by evaluation team confirmed that they benefited from legal aid (33.3%), counseling (30%), community advocacy (25%), and medical support (16.7%), addressing both legal and emotional needs. A key limitation was that exposure visits were conducted primarily in the final quarter of the project, limiting long-term impact assessment.

### *Outcome Indicator 1.2: At least 33% of the VFF households verified as violence free*

The VFF campaign under the Humqadam Project engaged families in pledging to reject violence, promote gender equality, and improve the lives of women and girls within their households. The campaign encouraged heads of families to commit to fostering a safe, non-violent home environment by addressing DV, child/early-age marriages (CEAM), and gender-based discrimination. To assess the pre-intervention situation, a baseline survey was conducted, examining key indicators such as gender discrimination in education and household roles, civil documentation status (including birth, marriage, voter, and death registration), awareness of family rights, women's participation in decision-making, inheritance rights, and freedom to choose a spouse. Additionally, the survey measured the prevalence of domestic violence, verbal abuse, and CEAM within households to identify priority areas for intervention.

To reinforce commitment, family heads were encouraged to sign pledges as a formal commitment to eliminating gender-based discrimination, supporting the education and mobility of women and girls, ensuring their participation in decision-making, preventing CEAM and DV, and securing legal documentation for all family members, particularly women and girls.

By signing these pledges, families took an active role in fostering safer, more equitable home environments. This campaign not only raised awareness but also instilled a sense of responsibility among families, urging them to take concrete steps toward creating a violence-free home.

As part of this initiative, SG conducted a baseline survey with 500 families in each project-implemented district to assess the existing conditions within households. Families were then encouraged to sign pledges, with a target of 300 families per district committing to the campaign’s objectives. The following table presents the number of pledges signed across the four districts selected for evaluation.

**Table 9: Pledges Signed vs. Target across Four Evaluation-Selected Districts**

S.N.	District	Target	Achieved
1.	Benazirabad	300	400
2.	Lahore	300	397
3.	Mardan	300	400
4.	Quetta	300	480
	Total	1200	<b>1677</b>

(The table 9 shows that the number of pledges signed in all four evaluation-selected districts exceeded the set target. Each district had a target of 300 pledges, with a total goal of 1,200 pledges. However, the final figures indicate that Benazirabad and Mardan each recorded 400 pledges, Lahore reached 397, and Quetta led with 480 pledges, bringing the total to 1,677 pledges—477 more than the target.)

Under this initiative a baseline survey was conducted by SG with 500 families in each project implemented district to identify the pre-intervention situation in the families. The families were encouraged to sign the pledges, targeted 300 families in each district. In six project implemented districts a total of 2480 families were designated VF families with unique identification numbers displayed on their doors, symbolizing their commitment and encouraging community participation. In total, 1,667 families across four evaluation-sleeted districts participated in the campaign.

The SG team conducted an endline survey with 150 selected families. The comparison of baseline and endline findings demonstrated measurable progress.

The evaluation team conducted detailed interviews with 165 families in four evaluation selected districts, which provided further evidence of the campaign’s effectiveness in fostering positive change and improving family dynamics. Under this indicator, the project aimed for 33% of families to be violence-free by its conclusion. However, there is no evidence from SG's reports or evaluation team conducted VFF interview results confirming that this target was fully achieved. Instead, the available evidence indicates a reduction in violence rather than its complete eradication.

**Decrease in Physical Violence: out of 165 interviews of VFF, 100 participants (60.6%)** noted significant reductions in physical violence in the families. This reflects the campaign's strong influence on mitigating physical conflicts within families.

**Verbal Violence (48.4%):** A significant 80 participants from VFF interviews (48.4% of VFF respondents) reported improved communication and reduced verbal aggression.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the data, it can be concluded that the Outcome 1 indicator 1.2 was not met at all. While interviewed families reported a reduction in both physical and verbal violence, achieving complete eradication in 33% of families remained an unattainable target.

### *Outcome Indicator 1.3: At least 40 SAIs carried out by project strengthened women and men*

Social Action Initiatives (SAIs) were community-driven efforts facilitated by project facilitators to address emerging needs in the community while aligning with the broader goals of the project. These initiatives aimed to increase awareness, engagement, and action on critical social issues such as gender-based violence, family laws, and civic responsibilities.

The SAIs encompassed a diverse range of activities designed to cater to different audiences and contexts, including:

- **Civic Documentation Campaigns:** Focused on increasing awareness and support for essential documentation like birth registrations, National Identity Cards (NICs), and marriage certificates.
- **Talk Shows and Seminars:** Engaged communities in open discussions on societal challenges, creating platforms for dialogue and knowledge sharing.
- **Social Media and Radio Programs:** Leveraged modern communication channels to spread key messages to a wider audience, especially targeting younger demographics.
- **Puppet Shows and Theatre Performances:** Used culturally relevant and engaging formats to address serious topics like VAWG and DV.
- **Celebrations of International Days:** Observed events like International Women's Day and the 16 Days of Activism Campaign to raise awareness on women's rights and related issues.

Each district was expected to conduct 60 SAIs, reaching a total of 1200 participants, with a target of 700 female and 500 male participants per district.

Across the four evaluation-selected districts, 240 SAIs were conducted, far exceeding initial goals in terms of reach: Female Participation: 2877 women engaged in various SAIs. Male Participation: 1741 men were involved, indicating strong gender inclusion. The total participation reached 4618 individuals, displaying the program's success in expanding its outreach.

SAIs were designed by facilitators in close consultation with local community members, they demonstrated a high level of facilitator engagement with the communities. This collaborative approach ensured that the SAIs were contextually relevant, addressing the specific needs, concerns, and demands of the local population. By actively involving community members in the design process, facilitators not only enhanced community ownership of the initiatives but also strengthened trust and rapport between the facilitators and the community. Additionally, this participatory method allowed facilitators to gain deeper insights into the challenges faced by different groups, enabling them to develop more effective, tailored solutions. As a result, the SAIs were not just externally imposed interventions but rather organic, community-driven initiatives that reflected local realities and priorities.

The SAIs varied across districts, as they were tailored to address the diverse needs of different communities. However, one initiative that was implemented uniformly across all six districts was the birth registration campaign, a crucial intervention in preventing child and early-age marriages (CEAM). Birth registration is essential for accessing legal and protective services, and this campaign aimed to raise awareness, provide information, and support community members in registering births. During the project period, 1,200 births were registered across six districts, with 800 registrations achieved in the four evaluation-selected districts. Out of 679 community survey respondents, 283 (41.6%) confirmed their participation in the birth registration campaign, emphasizing its positive impact in promoting civic documentation and access to essential rights and services.

SAIs significantly increased the visibility and reach of the project beyond the core participants of awareness sessions. The initiatives helped disseminate knowledge on critical issues to wider segments of the community.

While community members acknowledged the sessions' impact, many could not differentiate between specific types of activities, such as awareness sessions, theatre performances, or campaigns. Instead, they collectively remembered the overall messaging around issues like CEAM, VAWG, DV, and family laws, which indicates the initiatives' cumulative effect on raising awareness.

The SAIs was a pivotal component of the project, exceeding participation targets and creating a ripple effect of awareness within communities. By employing varied and culturally resonant approaches, the initiatives not only addressed specific community needs but also left lasting impressions on participants. Despite the lack of differentiation between activities, the collective impact of these efforts was evident in increased knowledge and community engagement.

## **Conclusion**

The Outcome 1, Indicator 1.3 was achieved at a high level, as the project exceeded its targets for SAIs and demonstrated strong community engagement. A total of 240 SAIs were conducted across four evaluation-selected districts, surpassing expectations for participant engagement. Participation was notably high, with 2,877 women and 1,741 men involved, far exceeding the initial goal of 1,200 participants.

The SAIs addressed key social issues, including gender-based violence, family laws, and civic responsibilities, using diverse approaches such as civic documentation campaigns, talk shows, theatre performances, and social media outreach. A particularly significant initiative was the birth registration campaign, which is crucial in preventing CEAM and improving access to legal and protective services.

The birth registration campaign was carried out uniformly across all districts. Out of 679 surveyed community members, 283 (41.6%) confirmed their participation in birth registration campaign. While some participants could not distinguish between project planned activities and SAI's specific activities, the overall awareness impact was strong, reinforcing key messages on VAWG, DV, CEAM, and family laws.

### **Conclusion of Achievement of Outcome 1**

Outcome 1 was achieved at a medium level as the project successfully met Indicators 1.1 and 1.3, but failed to achieve Indicator 1.2. The project demonstrated strong achievements in facilitating access to response mechanisms (Indicator 1.1) and strengthening community engagement through Social Action Initiatives (SAIs) (Indicator 1.3). Under Indicator 1.1, the project exceeded targets by providing access to legal, protective, and community-based support services. Participation in exposure visits, awareness sessions, and legal aid services was high, with over 85% of participants finding these interventions useful. Similarly, under Indicator 1.3, the project far exceeded expectations by conducting 240 SAIs and engaging 4,618 participants (2,877 women and 1,741 men), significantly strengthening community awareness and action against VAWG, DV, and CEAM.

However, Indicator 1.2, which aimed to ensure 33% of participating families were verified as violence-free, was not achieved. While evidence showed reductions in physical (60.6%) and verbal violence (48.4%), the goal of completely eradicating violence in these households was not met. The VFF campaign raised awareness and encouraged commitments to gender equality, but the project lacked clear evidence that 33% of families became entirely violence-free.

**Output 1.1:** *Communities in 30 villages of six districts have improved attitudes regarding women & girls' rights and increased knowledge of laws and protection mechanisms for VAW/G by June 2024.*

The evaluation of attitudinal changes regarding women's and girls' rights under Output One was based on two key datasets: a community survey with 679 participants (men and women) and 165 VFF interviews. The community survey captured general attitudinal change of women's and girls' rights within the broader community, offering insights into prevailing societal attitudes. In contrast, the VFF interviews focused on changes within family dynamics, providing a deeper understanding of how project interventions influenced individual households. Together, these datasets offered a comprehensive perspective on shifts in attitudes and behaviors at both the community and family levels.

*Output Indicator 1.1.1: Number of people more aware of VAWG, legal remedies and response mechanisms available.*

The Humqadam Project effectively increased awareness of CEAM, VAWG, legal remedies, and response mechanisms across multiple beneficiary categories, including women, men, community facilitators, survivors, and institutional stakeholders. Through structured awareness campaigns, targeted training, and community mobilization efforts, the project successfully engaged a diverse group of participants, strengthening knowledge of CEAM, GBV, DV, and legal protection mechanisms at various levels.

A primary indicator of increased awareness is the extent of community engagement in structured awareness activities. The Humqadam Project engaged 22,983 individuals in direct awareness-raising and capacity-building sessions on VAWG, legal rights, and protection mechanisms, exceeding the initial target of 17,310 participants. The widespread participation reflects a high level of community interest in these issues and a willingness to engage in discussions on GBV, DV, and CEAM.

The increase in participant numbers indicates that more individuals were exposed to legal information, support services, and behavioral change messaging. This suggests that awareness of VAWG was significantly enhanced, as more people took part in structured learning activities and gained knowledge that they may not have had before the intervention. The diversity of participants, including women, men, youth, and key stakeholders, highlights the project's broad outreach and inclusivity in addressing VAWG and its associated challenges.

Findings from community surveys conducted in four evaluation-selected districts confirm that both men and women participated in VAWG, DV, and response mechanism awareness sessions. A total of 402 women and 185 men attended these sessions and demonstrated knowledge retention by recalling key information, including:

- The different forms of domestic violence, including physical, emotional, financial, and psychological abuse.
- Emergency helpline numbers for violence reporting.
- Legal rights under family laws and available support service institutions in GBV cases.

Furthermore, the VFF campaign played a key role in extending awareness at the household level. A total of 2,480 households were engaged under this campaign, where information on VAWG, DV, and legal response mechanisms was provided. Out of these, All 165 households (two members per family) interviewed by the evaluation team, confirmed that they had basic information on VAWG, DV, and response mechanisms due to the orientation sessions and commitments made under the VFF pledges. These findings suggest that awareness messages reached households beyond the direct session participants, expanding knowledge on VAWG prevention, legal protections, and support mechanisms within family structures.

Following testimonials highlight that women are now recognizing their rights, understand legal remedies, and have access to resources that can help them seek protection and justice. A

female respondent from U/C 240, Lahore, interviewed on 26th November 2024, shared:

*"Earlier, we didn't know that women's rights are protected by law, but now we understand that if men commit injustice, we can seek legal help. The campaign provided us with contact details of lawyers, and now we know that justice is possible."*

A female respondent from Chamtaar, Mardan, interviewed on 28th November 2024, shared:

*"After the campaign, I realized that violence against women is not only a sin but also a crime. Now, I understand that if a woman is being abused, she can report it to the police or contact a lawyer."*

A female respondent from Nawa Killi, Quetta, interviewed on 25th November 2024, shared her thoughts on the impact of the campaign:

*"Before this campaign, I was not aware that if a woman faces domestic violence, she has support available. We never discussed these issues openly. This project has made me aware that there are courts, police, and NGOs that can help women facing domestic violence. Now, I know that we are not alone—there are people and organizations willing to support us in seeking justice and protection."*

A female respondent from Long Khan Keerio, Benazirabad, interviewed on 26th November 2024, shared:

*"Before, I didn't fully understand my rights or where to seek help if I faced violence. The campaign made me aware that legal support is available, and now we openly discuss these issues at home. We share information about the helplines, legal aid organizations and local organizations, so that no woman feels helpless. This knowledge has given us confidence and a sense of security."*

To sustain and further disseminate knowledge at the grassroots level, 260 community facilitators were provided training on VAWG, DV, violence case reporting, and response mechanisms. These facilitators were trained to engage with their communities, raise awareness on gender-based violence issues, and guide individuals toward legal and protective services. The effectiveness of this approach is supported by findings from the 21 community facilitators interviewed in the four evaluation-selected districts. All 21 community facilitators confirmed that their understanding of VAWG, DV, and response mechanisms was significantly enhanced through the training provided. This increased knowledge among facilitators is crucial, as they serve as key resources in their respective communities, ensuring that awareness continues to spread beyond the project's direct interventions.

A critical component of increasing awareness and ensuring institutional support for VAWG prevention was the engagement of duty bearers and Nikahkawan. Over the course of the project, a total of 356 duty bearers from various departments and institutions were engaged in discussions and capacity-building activities on:

- VAWG prevention and response mechanisms.

- DV case reporting procedures.
- Legal frameworks and protective services available to survivors.

The evaluation team conducted four focus group discussions (FGDs) with 23 Nikahkhawan (marriage officiators), who confirmed that their awareness of CEAM and DV had increased due to their participation in the project. While all Nikahkhawan reported an increased understanding of CEAM, DV and legal issues, 17 specifically stated that they had developed a deeper comprehension of Family Laws and CEAM laws. They demonstrated their knowledge by accurately providing legal information related to marriage regulations. Additionally, 18 registrars explicitly mentioned that they now diligently check all required documentation, such as CNICs and Form B, before performing a Nikah. This practice highlights their improved awareness of legal responsibilities and commitment to ensuring compliance with marriage laws.

Their role is particularly significant, as marriage officiators influence decisions around early marriages and can play a role in ensuring compliance with legal age requirements for marriage.

Additionally, 20 duty bearers interviewed in four evaluation districts (from police, legal aid services, and social welfare departments) confirmed an enhanced understanding of VAWG, DV, and response mechanisms. Their increased knowledge helps strengthen institutional response capacity, ensuring that survivors receive better protection and legal support when they seek help.

Beyond community members and institutional actors, the project also contributed to enhancing awareness among implementing organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), and service providers. A total of 26 organizations involved in project implementation confirmed that their staff members and community mobilizers gained a better understanding of VAWG, legal remedies, and response mechanisms.

By strengthening organizational capacity, the project ensured that awareness-building efforts would be sustained through the work of these organizations, even after the project's conclusion.

The evaluation findings indicate that awareness levels varied across different beneficiary groups, from basic awareness at the community level to more advanced understanding among trained individuals and institutional stakeholders.

- Basic Awareness (Community Level): Households engaged under the VFF campaign and general participants in awareness sessions gained introductory knowledge on VAWG, legal protections, and response mechanisms.
- Intermediate Awareness (Community Facilitators): Community facilitators showed improved knowledge retention and understanding, actively participating in discussions on prevention strategies and response mechanisms for addressing VAWG and related issues.
- Duty bearers, Nikahkhawan, and CBO representatives enhanced their expertise on VAWG-related legal protections, institutional response frameworks, and survivor

support mechanisms, ensuring stronger institutional responses to VAWG cases.

The Humqadam Project was instrumental in increasing awareness of VAWG, legal remedies, and response mechanisms across all beneficiary categories, including:

- Women and men who participated in awareness sessions and gained knowledge of their legal rights and protection mechanisms.
- Households engaged under the VFF campaign, where family members confirmed receiving basic information on VAWG and legal protections.
- Community facilitators, who gained advanced understanding and played a role in further spreading awareness.
- Duty bearers and religious leaders, who improved their knowledge of legal protections, reporting procedures, and response mechanisms.
- Organizations and community-based partners, whose staff members enhanced their awareness and institutional response capacity.

### **Understanding Legal Frameworks and response mechanisms**

General awareness about VAWG, DV, and CEAM is a critical first step, but it cannot translate into concrete action without a comprehensive understanding of the legal framework and protection mechanisms available. For women and girls at risk, access to this knowledge is essential to effectively seek relief, protection, and justice when faced with violence or harmful practices.

To address this gap, the project implemented targeted interventions to bridge the awareness-action divide. Specialized sessions were conducted to educate participants about the legal systems, policies, and procedures designed to protect women and girls. These sessions covered key topics, such as:

- Legal definitions and implications of VAWG, DV, and CEAM.
- Rights-based approaches to protection and support.
- Available legal remedies, including how to file complaints and seek protection orders.
- The roles and responsibilities of various support institutions.

Additionally, exposure visits were organized to familiarize participants with the practical functioning of protection mechanisms. These visits provided women and girls with firsthand experience of the systems in place, enhancing their confidence and ability to navigate these processes.

Participants visited shelters, legal aid centers, and police stations to understand how to report incidents and access support. Meetings were facilitated with service providers, such as legal professionals and social workers, to establish trust and build awareness of their roles in providing assistance. These efforts ensured that participants not only understood their rights

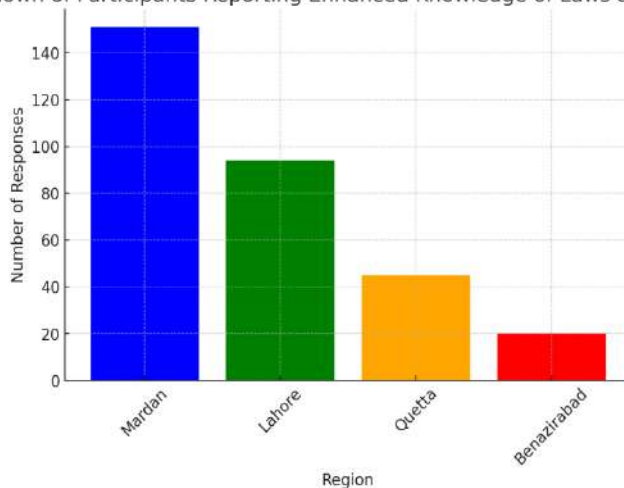
but also developed the practical knowledge required to access protection systems and support networks effectively.

310 participants out of 679 surveyed in all four evaluation targeted districts reported having enhanced knowledge of laws and protection mechanisms, accounting for approximately **45.59%** of the total respondents. This indicates a significant impact of the project in increasing legal awareness among participants.

The regional breakdown of participants reporting enhanced knowledge of laws and protection mechanisms is shown in the chart below:

**Illustration 7: Regional Breakdown of Participants Reporting Enhanced Knowledge of Laws and Protection Mechanisms.**

The Regional Breakdown of Participants Reporting Enhanced Knowledge of Laws and Protection Mechanisms.



(Illustration 7 presents a regional breakdown of participants who reported enhanced knowledge of laws and protection mechanisms, highlighting variations in awareness levels across four evaluation-selected districts of the different project.)

**Mardan** stands out as the region with the highest number of respondents 151 out of 310 respondents (48.7%) reporting enhanced knowledge. This suggests a strong outreach and impact of the project in this district. Higher participation in awareness sessions and legal training and active engagement of local facilitators were the main contributing factors.

**Lahore** has the second-highest proportion of respondents, 94 out of 310 respondents (30%), reporting enhanced knowledge. Availability of legal services and support systems might have been complemented by the project's awareness initiatives, leading to better knowledge retention.

In **Quetta**, the response rate reflects a low level of enhanced knowledge regarding legal frameworks and protection mechanisms. 45 out of 310 (14.5%) reported enhanced knowledge. Several contextual factors contribute to this outcome, highlighting the challenges faced in fostering greater awareness and utilization of formal justice systems in the region.

One key factor is the tribal sense of justice, which continues to play a dominant role in resolving disputes and addressing grievances within the community. In many cases, tribal and customary practices are prioritized over formal legal systems, leading to fewer acceptances and trust in courts and other state institutions. This reliance on traditional mechanisms often limits women's ability to access formal justice; as such, systems are viewed as external or incompatible with tribal norms.

Additionally, women accessing courts for their rights remains stigmatized, creating significant barriers to seeking legal remedies. Societal norms and cultural expectations discourage women from pursuing formal justice, as doing so is often perceived as a challenge to traditional values and familial honor. This stigma not only deters women from taking action but also perpetuates cycles of silence and inaction in the face of violence or injustice.

Another contributing factor is the level of education in the region. Limited educational opportunities, particularly for women and girls, hinder their ability to understand the technicalities of legal frameworks and protection mechanisms. Without adequate literacy and legal knowledge, navigating complex judicial processes becomes challenging, further discouraging engagement with formal systems.

**Benazirabad** exhibited the lowest proportion of enhanced knowledge (6.45%) responses among the regions surveyed. Despite the project implementing similar interventions across all areas, this discrepancy highlights unique socio-cultural and structural challenges in the district that may have hindered the effectiveness of the awareness campaigns and educational initiatives.

One significant contributing factor is the limited educational opportunities at the village level, particularly for women and girls. In villages where educational infrastructure is lacking, such as in Benazirabad, literacy rates are low, and awareness-building efforts face significant hurdles in achieving their intended impact. The stronghold of the feudal system further exacerbates these challenges. In such systems, power and authority are concentrated in the hands of local landlords, who often resist reforms that challenge traditional hierarchies. Another critical factor is the prevalence of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms, such as the Jirga system, in Benazirabad (Sindh), Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). In KP, the Jirga system has been replaced by the state-sanctioned District Resolution Council (DRC) as an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism, which is commonly used to settle disputes related to inheritance, family matters, domestic violence, and civil matters. While these mechanisms are culturally entrenched and widely relied upon, they are often highly patriarchal and unfavorable to women. Decisions in such forums typically reinforce gender biases and fail to provide justice for women facing violence or exploitation. The reliance on these systems not only undermines trust in formal legal frameworks but also restricts women's ability to access state-provided protections.

The higher achievement in Mardan can be attributed to 10 exposure visits to service providers, which engaged a greater number of emerging community leaders. These visits included four visits to local government offices, one visit to the Child Protection Center, one visit to the police station women's desk in Mardan, one visit to the District Bar Association, and two visits to the

Dispute Resolution Council (DRC) in Mardan. The consistent efforts in facilitating these practical learning experiences proved effective, as participants gained valuable knowledge through direct observation and hands-on exposure to legal and protective services.

### **Gender Analysis**

The evaluation findings indicate a moderate level of participation and knowledge enhancement among both male and female respondents regarding laws and protection mechanisms. Notably, women reported a higher level of knowledge gain, with their responses being three times higher than those of male participants. This highlights the importance of legal awareness for women, who often face greater risks and benefit significantly from understanding legal protections for their safety and rights.

#### *Response Breakdown:*

- **Female Responses:**
  - **Number of Responses:** 231
  - **Percentage:** 74.52%
- **Male Responses:**
  - **Number of Responses:** 79
  - **Percentage:** 25.48%

The higher response rate among women underscores their need for legal knowledge, as they are more frequently affected by issues such as violence and discrimination. Awareness of protection mechanisms—such as shelter homes, legal aid, and police support—enables women to safeguard their rights and seek justice. At the same time, male participation, though lower, remains crucial. Their engagement signals progress toward fostering shared responsibility in addressing gender-based issues.

### **Conclusion**

The Indicator 1.1.1 of Output 1.1 was achieved between medium to high. While the Humqadam Project effectively increased general awareness of VAWG, DV, and gender rights, reaching 22,983 individuals and exceeding its target, the understanding of legal remedies and response mechanisms varied across regions and groups. While 402 women and 185 men demonstrated knowledge retention on key issues and 2,480 households under the VFF campaign confirmed basic awareness, only 310 out of 679 surveyed participants (45.59%) reported enhanced knowledge of legal frameworks.

Regional disparities were evident with Mardan (48.7%) and Lahore (30%) showing higher retention due to frequent exposure visits, better access to legal services, and strong facilitator engagement. In contrast, Quetta (14.5%) and Benazirabad (6.5%) had lower retention, largely due to traditional justice systems, low female literacy, and reliance on informal dispute resolution mechanisms. In Quetta, the dominance of the Jirga system and social stigma

discouraged women from seeking formal legal avenues, while in Benazirabad, feudal structures and male-dominated decision-making further limited women's access to legal support.

Additionally, limited male engagement (25.48%) restricted community-wide awareness efforts, as traditional gender norms discouraged men from participating in discussions on domestic violence and legal rights. Furthermore, awareness did not always translate into action, as women faced social and cultural barriers, lack of confidence, and limited family support, preventing them from fully utilizing available legal remedies.

While the project successfully raised awareness and improved knowledge of legal remedies, the extent to which this knowledge was applied remains uncertain, placing the overall indicator effectiveness at a medium level.

### *Output Indicator 1.1.2: Number of VFF Pledges signed by households*

The VFF campaign under the Humqadam Project engaged families in pledging to reject violence, promote gender equality, and improve the lives of women and girls within their households. The campaign encouraged family heads to commit to fostering a safe, non-violent home environment by addressing DV, child/early-age marriages (CEAM), and gender-based discrimination.

To assess the pre-intervention situation, SG conducted a baseline survey examining key indicators, including:

- Gender discrimination in education and household roles
- Civil documentation status (birth, marriage, voter, and death registration)
- Awareness of family rights
- Women's participation in decision-making
- Inheritance rights and freedom to choose a spouse
- Prevalence of domestic violence, verbal abuse, and CEAM

The survey helped identify priority areas for intervention. To reinforce commitment, family heads were encouraged to sign pledges as a formal commitment to:

- Eliminating gender-based discrimination
- Supporting women's and girls' education and mobility
- Ensuring their participation in decision-making
- Preventing CEAM and DV
- Securing legal documentation for all family members, especially women and girls

By signing these pledges, families took an active role in fostering safer, more equitable home environments. The campaign not only raised awareness but also instilled a sense of responsibility, urging families to take concrete steps toward creating a violence-free home.

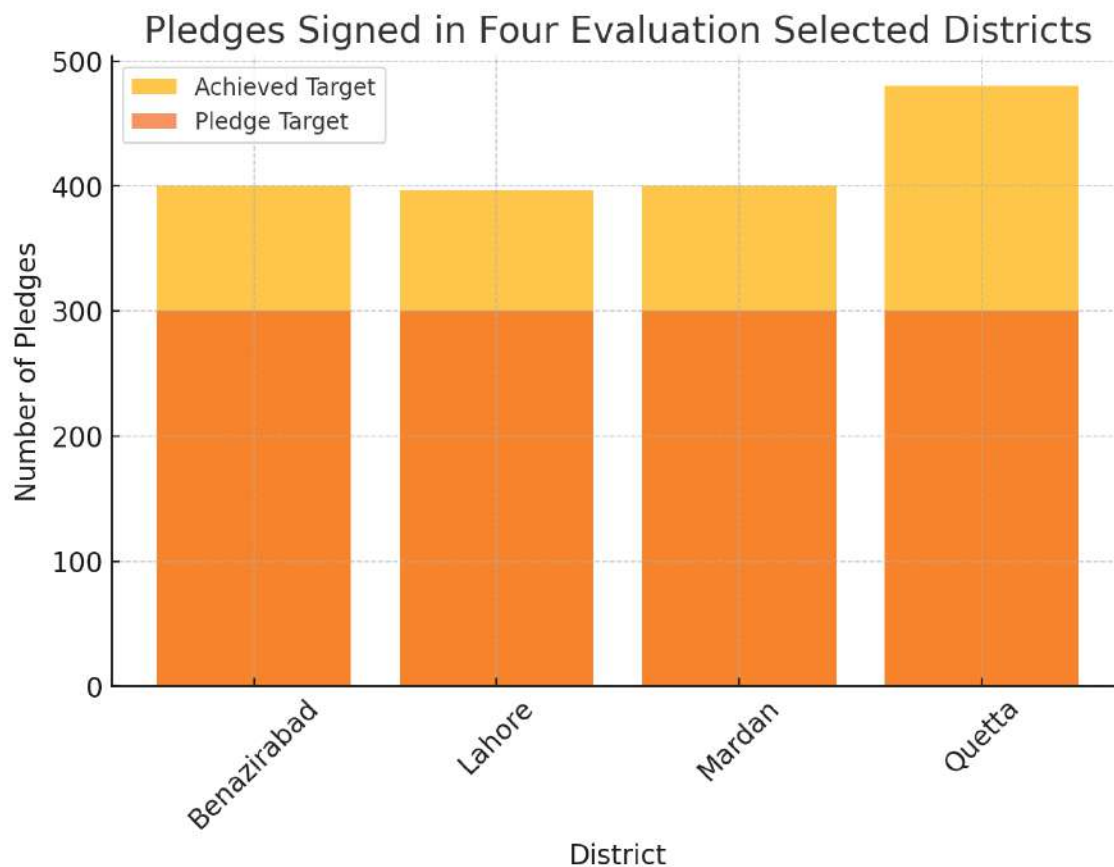
## Implementation and Participation

SG conducted the baseline survey with 500 families per project district to assess existing household conditions. Families were then encouraged to sign pledges, with a target of 300 families per district committing to the campaign's objectives.

Across six project-implemented districts, 2,480 families were designated as VFF families, receiving unique identification numbers displayed on their doors to symbolize their commitment and encourage community participation.

In four evaluation-selected districts, a total of 1,667 families participated in the campaign. The following bar chart illustrates the number of pledges signed in these districts:

**Illustration 8: Comparison of Pledge Targets vs. Achieved Targets in Four Evaluation Selected Districts**



The illustration 8 compares the pledge targets and achieved pledges in four evaluation-selected districts under the Violence-Free Family campaign. Each district had a target of 300 pledges, but all exceeded expectations. Benazirabad and Mardan reached 400 pledges each, Lahore achieved 397, and Quetta led with 480 pledges. Overall, 1,677 pledges were signed across the four districts, surpassing the 1,200 target by 477 pledges.

The evaluation team conducted interviews with 165 VFF households and asked about whether they signed the pledges or not. Out of 165 household 144 (87%) confirmed they signed the pledge, demonstrating a high level of engagement with the VFF campaign.

This strong confirmation rate indicates that families involved in the campaign exhibited a significant commitment to rejecting domestic violence, gender-based discrimination, and CEAM while promoting women's and girls' rights. The results suggest that the campaign successfully raised awareness and encouraged families to adopt more equitable and non-violent household practices.

While the project has concluded, the positive response from participating households indicates a notable shift in attitudes toward gender equality and non-violence. The high pledge confirmation rate (87%) suggests that families actively engaged with the campaign's objectives, particularly in rejecting domestic violence, preventing CEAM, and supporting women's and girls' rights.

Moreover, simply making the commitment and recognizing existing gaps in the family environment is a crucial first step toward creating a safer and more equitable home. Awareness of these challenges can prompt families to reevaluate traditional norms and practices, encouraging them to be more mindful and intentional in their actions and decisions. This initial realization lays the groundwork for gradual but meaningful improvements in household dynamics, fostering a more inclusive and respectful environment for all family members.

The commitment made through pledges suggests that the campaign has helped establish a foundation for positive behavioral change, with the potential to extend beyond the project's duration. While direct follow-ups and continued engagement are not possible, the awareness generated by the campaign may continue to shape household discussions and community interactions, reinforcing the importance of gender equality and violence-free family structures. By encouraging families to take ownership of these commitments, the campaign has contributed to building a culture of reflection, responsibility, and progress that can influence future generations.

## **Conclusion**

The indicator 1.1.2 of Output 1.1 was achieved at a high level, as evidenced by the significant overachievement of pledge targets (1,677 pledges signed against a target of 1,200) and a strong household confirmation rate (87%), indicating active family engagement. The campaign effectively raised awareness about gender equality, non-violence, and women's rights, encouraging families to recognize and address gaps in their household environments. While the project has concluded, the commitments made suggest a foundation for sustained behavioral change, with potential long-term influence on household discussions and social norms.

### ***Output Indicator 1.1.3: Number of births registered for girls***

Ensuring legal documentation, particularly birth registration, is a critical step toward preventing CEAM by establishing a verifiable age record at the time of marriage. SG, through its community facilitators, actively campaigned for birth registration, emphasizing its importance, especially in

low-income families, where it is often overlooked. As part of this initiative, all relevant legal information on documentation was disseminated, and efforts were made to encourage the registration of girls in all project-implementation districts. A target of 200 birth registrations per district was initially set, 800 registrations were completed in the four evaluation-selected districts, demonstrating a significant shift in awareness and action. SG also covered birth registration fees and provided logistical support, addressing financial and procedural barriers that often hinder legal documentation.

Findings from the community survey reflect this growing awareness, as 258 out of 679 participants (38%) confirmed their participation in the birth registration campaign. This indicates an increasing understanding of the need for legal documentation, not only to prevent CEAM but also to ensure access to fundamental rights and essential services such as education, healthcare, and inheritance. Similarly, among 165 VFF-interviewed households, 82 confirmed an increase in legal documentation, and 51 out of these 82 families (62%) specifically reported registering the birth of girls.

This shift in behavior suggests a gradual attitudinal change regarding the importance of legal identity for girls, moving beyond just compliance with legal requirements to recognition of birth registration as a means of empowerment. The increased willingness of families to document the births of girls reflects a broader transformation in gender norms, where families are beginning to acknowledge the long-term benefits of securing legal identity for their daughters. By linking birth registration with legal rights, education, and protection from early marriage, the campaign not only contributed to immediate documentation goals but also laid the groundwork for sustained behavioral change in communities, reinforcing gender-equitable attitudes over time.

## **Conclusion**

The indicator 1.1.3 of Output 1.1 on the number of birth registrations for girls, was achieved at a high level, as the campaign successfully met its target of 800 registrations across four evaluation-selected districts. Through the efforts of SG and its community facilitators, awareness campaigns emphasized the importance of birth registration, particularly in low-income families where it is often overlooked. SG's financial and logistical support helped address key barriers, such as registration fees and administrative challenges, ensuring that families could complete the process.

Findings from the community survey reflect growing awareness, with 258 out of 679 respondents (38%) confirming their participation in the birth registration campaign. Additionally, 82 out of 165 VFF-interviewed households acknowledged an increase in legal documentation, and 51 of these (62%) specifically confirmed the birth registration of girls. These figures suggest not just numerical achievement but also a behavioral shift, where families are beginning to recognize birth registration as a fundamental step toward securing legal identity, accessing rights, and preventing CEAM.

Achieving the set goal is a strong indicator of success. The initiative contributed to a broader transformation in gender norms, reinforcing the link between legal documentation, education, healthcare, inheritance rights, and protection from early marriage. Given that the target was

fully met, participation levels were strong, and attitudinal shifts were evident, the effectiveness of this indicator is assessed as high.

### **Conclusion of the Achievement of Output 1.1**

The output 1.1 is assessed medium to high in effectiveness. The Humqadam Project effectively raised awareness of VAWG, legal protections, and gender rights, engaging 31751 individuals, exceeding its target of 17,310. The project successfully mobilized community members, facilitators, duty bearers, and institutional stakeholders, leading to positive shifts in attitudes and awareness. However, regional disparities were observed, with Mardan (48.7%) and Lahore (30%) showing higher knowledge retention due to exposure visits and service accessibility, while Quetta (14.5%) and Benazirabad had lower awareness gains due to tribal justice systems, feudal structures, and limited female education. Additionally, only 310 out of 679 surveyed participants (45.59%) reported enhanced knowledge of legal frameworks, and male engagement remained low (25.48%), indicating gaps in widespread legal literacy.

Indicator 2 (VFF Pledges Signed) was achieved at a High level, with 1,677 pledges signed against a target of 1,200 and a strong household confirmation rate of 87%, reflecting high community engagement in rejecting violence and promoting gender equality. Indicator 3 (Birth Registrations for Girls) also achieved High effectiveness, with 800 registrations completed, meeting the project target and demonstrating behavioral change in securing legal identity for girls.

Overall, Output 1.1 is assessed as Medium to High in effectiveness, with strong achievements in pledge commitments and birth registrations, but variations in legal knowledge retention and structural barriers in certain regions limiting full impact.

**Output 1.2:** *Female and male community facilitators equipped with requisite knowledge, skills and links to key service providers, response mechanisms and district officials better able to change attitudes and practices, prevent and address VAW/G in their communities.*

The Humqadam project envisioned community facilitators as key actors in engaging communities to address VAWG, DV, and CEAM. Their expected role included raising awareness through community sessions to educate people about the causes and consequences of VAWG, DV, and CEAM, as well as legal rights and available support systems. Facilitators were expected to identify and assist survivors by providing guidance on legal protections, connecting them to services, and offering immediate support. Additionally, they were expected to strengthen community support by encouraging families and local groups to take an active role in protecting women and girls at risk. A crucial part of their role involved building referral networks, linking survivors with service providers, legal aid, shelters, and other relevant organizations to improve access to assistance. Through these efforts, facilitators were expected to increase awareness, connect communities with resources, and promote protective mechanisms, contributing to a more responsive environment for women's safety and rights.

To implement this, SG engaged 260 community facilitators (131 female and 129 male). Facilitators were either directly recruited or connected to the project through prior associations

with community organizations. They were equipped with knowledge and skills through structured capacity-building workshops, which focused on:

- Understanding violence: Providing information on different forms of violence, causes and consequences of VAWG, DV, and CEAM.
- Legal awareness: Familiarizing facilitators with relevant laws and the rights of women and girls, ensuring a strong understanding of foundational legal principles.
- Skill development: Training facilitators in essential communication, community mobilization, and problem-solving techniques, enabling them to engage effectively with communities.

Practical engagement complemented this training, allowing facilitators to apply their skills in real-world scenarios through community assignments. This structured capacity-building process ensured that facilitators were well-prepared to address the project's goals, fostering both competence and confidence in their roles.

In the four evaluation-selected districts, SG engaged 155 community facilitators (78 female, 77 male). The evaluation team initially planned to sample five community facilitators from each district (a total of 20 facilitators), ensuring equal representation of male and female facilitators. However, the final sample included 21 community facilitators: 11 females and 10 males. While the number of facilitators from three districts was five each, Benazirabad had six facilitators.

To evaluate the effectiveness of capacity-building efforts in enabling facilitators to address VAWG, CEAM, and survivor support, their knowledge and skill acquisition were assessed through self-evaluation. No formal tests were conducted; instead, facilitators provided self-assessments of their capabilities. However, self-assessments have inherent limitations, as individuals may either overestimate or underestimate their competencies.

The evaluation of output 1.2 was evaluated using three indicators outlined in the project proposal.

*Output Indicator 1.2.1: Number of female and male facilitators who gain an understanding of the negative gendered impact of COVID-19 especially VAWG*

According to the project plan, 40 facilitators (20 female and 20 male) from each project-implementing district were expected to participate in the training workshops on the Gendered Impact of COVID-19, totaling 240 community facilitators across all six project districts.

A review of the workshop reports for all six districts showed that a total of 225 facilitators (116 female and 109 male) attended the workshops. In all six project implemented districts, eight workshops were conducted—one for female participants and one for male participants in each district, except in Lahore, where both workshops were combined. Overall, 15 participants were missing from the planned target, with a higher shortfall among men. The number of attendees was verified through the attendance sheets while reviewing the workshop report folders. Due to time constraints during data collection, it was not possible to reach all community facilitators across the four evaluation-selected districts. The evaluation team utilized both primary data,

gathered from 21 KIIs with community facilitators, and secondary data from training workshop reports to assess the status of this indicator.

**Table 10: Regional and Gender-wise Breakdown of Participation in Gendered Impact of COVID-19 Workshop**

District	Female participants	Male Participants	Total
Benazirabad	20	18	38
Hyderabad	21	17	38
Lahore	23	21	44
Mardan	14	17	31
Swat	19	20	39
Quetta	19	16	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>116/120</b>	<b>109/120</b>	<b>225/240</b>

(Table 10 presents the regional and gender-wise breakdown of participation in the Gendered Impact of COVID-19 Workshop across all six project implemented districts)

The workshop covered a range of key themes, starting with an orientation and information session on the Humqadam Project. Participants explored gender concepts, including gender discrimination, its causes and consequences, gender roles, the division of labor based on gender, and gender disparities in accessing resources and services. A significant focus was placed on the gendered impact of COVID-19, particularly its effects on VAWG, as well as the role of government institutions and the barriers to accessing services during the pandemic.

Additionally, the workshop emphasized skills required for community engagement and facilitation, introducing participants to the SALT (Stimulate, Appreciate, Learn, and Transfer) technique, along with communication skills and effective methods for engaging with communities. Participants also learned how to conduct Gup Shup sessions and lead community awareness initiatives. Lastly, the workshop provided an introduction to the mobile app, equipping facilitators with digital tools to support their community work.

The workshop reports reviewed by the evaluation team did not include pre- and post-analysis forms or an assessment of learning levels. However, individual participant feedback was documented as part of the reports. A consolidated analysis of this feedback, recorded in the three-day training workshop for male facilitators in Benazirabad (March 1–3, 2022), demonstrated the key takeaways participants gained from the workshop.

The training provided clarity on the difference between gender and sex, highlighting how societal norms shape gender roles and contribute to discrimination. The SALT approach emphasized positive community engagement. Mock Gup Shup sessions underscored the importance of open discussions in breaking social taboos and fostering safe spaces for dialogue.

An exploration of colors and emotions offered insights into self-expression, diversity, and gender perceptions. The Gender Tree activity illustrated how gender discrimination originates at home and extends into society. Practical knowledge on SOPs and referral pathways equipped participants with the tools to support survivors of violence, including access to legal and institutional resources.

The Humqadam app introduced digital tools for accessing information on gender rights, legal protections, and survivor support services. Overall, the training instilled confidence and knowledge to challenge gender biases, support those in need, and drive meaningful change within communities.

The evaluation team conducted 21 interviews with community facilitators across the four evaluation-selected districts. Among them, 20 facilitators confirmed their participation in the workshops,

Reflecting on her experience, a community facilitator from Quetta, in her Key Informant Interview (KII) conducted on November 26, 2024, shared:

*"I have learned about the SALT approach, its steps, and how to apply it. I gained insights into gender concepts, the impacts of COVID-19, especially on VAWG and the Hamqadam app, which we can use anytime to report GBV. The gender tree exercise was a hands-on experience that was completely new to me. We also practiced report writing, which I had no prior knowledge of."*

## **Conclusion**

The indicator 1.2.1 was rated high in its effectiveness as the training workshops on the Gendered Impact of COVID-19 effectively engaged community facilitators across the six project-implementing districts. Out of the planned 240 facilitators, 225 (94%) (116 female and 109 male) attended, reflecting a high level of participation with only a shortfall from the target.

The training covered essential themes, including gender discrimination, division of labor, barriers to accessing services, and the gendered impact of COVID-19, especially on VAWG. The facilitators also received practical training on community engagement, including the SALT approach, Gup Shup sessions, referral pathways, and the use of digital tools like the Humqadam app. These topics equipped them with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills to address gender-related challenges in their communities.

However, while the training content was comprehensive and well-received, the absence of pre- and post-assessments meant there was no formal measurement of learning levels or knowledge retention. Instead, qualitative feedback from participants provided valuable insights into the impact of the workshops. The high participation rate among interviewed facilitators with 20 out of 21 confirming their attendance further supports the analysis that both secondary and primary data indicate that approximately 94% of the planned community facilitators gained an understanding of the negative gendered impact of COVID-19, particularly its effects on VAWG.

This indicator is rated high in effectiveness based on the strong participation numbers, the relevance of the training content, and positive participant feedback. While there was a minor shortfall in attendance and a lack of structured learning assessments, the overall impact of the training appears substantial in equipping facilitators with the necessary knowledge and tools to address gendered impacts of COVID-19 in their communities.

*Output Indicator 1.2.2: # of female and male facilitators gain knowledge on VAWG, legal remedies and response mechanisms available as well increased capacity to deal with cases.*

Capacity building for community facilitators on VAWG, legal remedies, and response mechanisms is crucial in the Humqadam Project for several reasons. These facilitators act as key change agents within their communities, helping to prevent, identify, and respond to cases of VAWG. Strengthening their knowledge and skills enables them to create safe spaces for survivors, promote legal awareness, and facilitate access to justice.

One of the primary reasons for capacity building is to equip facilitators with accurate legal knowledge so they can educate community members about their rights and the available legal protections. Many survivors of violence are unaware of the laws safeguarding them or the procedures for seeking justice. Trained facilitators can bridge this gap by providing guidance on legal remedies, referring survivors to relevant authorities, and ensuring they receive the necessary support.

Additionally, increased capacity enables facilitators to effectively respond to VAWG cases. Without proper training, facilitators may struggle to handle sensitive situations, leading to further trauma for survivors. Training in response mechanisms, and referral pathways ensures that facilitators can provide appropriate support, connect victims with services, and advocate for justice.

It was planned in the project that the training on DV, VAWG Case Reporting and Protection Mechanisms would be organized in all six districts for community facilitators with 40 participants in each district with equal participation of female and male community facilitators, which means 240 participants in all six districts. The SG record showed that 213 (89%) community facilitators, 101 female (84%) and 112 male (93%), received the training. The regional participation and gender-wise break down in four evaluation selected districts is listed in the chart below:

**Table 11: Regional and Gender-wise Breakdown of Participation in DV, VAWG Case Reporting and Protection Mechanism Workshop**

District	Female participants	Male Participants	Total
Benazirabad	16	19	35
Hyderabad	20	20	40
Lahore	12	19	31
Mardan	17	17	34
Swat	18	21	39
Quetta	18	16	34
Total	101/120	112/120	213/240

(Table 11 provides a regional and gender-wise breakdown of participation in the DV, VAWG Case Reporting and Protection Mechanism Workshop, highlighting the number of male and female participants across all six project implemented districts.)

Key topics covered during the workshop included:

- Different forms of violence
- Distinction between criminal and civil cases
- Key components of the criminal justice system
- Laws protecting women
- Domestic violence laws
- Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (CEAM) laws
- Sexual crimes
- Institutions responsible for response
- Case filing procedures
- Police investigation processes

The review of the workshop reports confirmed that almost all of the topics were covered in the workshops. There was no record available in the reports for pre and post workshop evaluations to assess the learning levels of the participants however feedback from the participants confirmed they learn during the workshops.

Just one example the accumulated feedback from the training workshop in Quetta confirmed that participants learn the key areas of DV, VAWG Case Reporting and Response Mechanism.

The training on DV, VAWG Case Reporting and Protection Mechanisms was highly effective in enhancing participants' understanding of legal provisions, complaint procedures, and the role of authorities in addressing domestic violence. Many participants emphasized that they had little prior knowledge of these laws but gained valuable insights into Section 366 (Section 366 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) was a section that made it an offense to kidnap, abduct, or induce a woman to marry against her will), forced marriage laws, DV laws, Section 376 of PPC (about rape), FIR vs. report distinctions, bailable and non-bailable offenses, and the responsibilities of the police in domestic violence cases. Some also highlighted the importance of raising awareness in their communities and using social media for educational purposes. While the training content was well-received, feedback on its delivery and engagement methods was mixed. Many appreciated the facilitators' expertise, but some found the training content heavy to deliver in just four days. Suggestions for improvement included shortening training hours but increase the number of days, incorporating more group activities, exposure visits, and case study videos for better engagement.

18 (85%) out of 21 community facilitators interviewed during the evaluation confirmed their participation in DV, VAWG Case Reporting and Response Mechanism Workshop.

A male community facilitator from Benazirabad reflected on his experience during a Key Informant Interview (KII) conducted on November 27, 2024

*"Throughout the training, we covered several crucial topics, including the definition and types of domestic violence, the authorities working in Sindh to address such issues, legal concepts as well as cases related to women's harassment. We also explored the differences between criminal and civil law and learned about the various legal frameworks that support survivors of violence and protection laws for women and children. Understanding these rules and how to navigate them with the help of government authorities was particularly insightful. This training has been an enriching experience, and I have noted several key points that will help me in my work within the community. Regarding the booklets provided, my suggestion is to design them in a way that ensures easy comprehension for all readers, making the information accessible and impactful."*

A male community facilitator from Mardan reflected on his experience during a Key Informant Interview (KII) conducted on November 26, 2024

*"The most useful training was on family laws and GBV. The content of these trainings was complete. Personally, I learned many topics for the first time, such as GBV its symptoms, mechanisms, and ways to reduce it. One suggestion for improvement is to elaborate on Pakhtunkhwa's Domestic Violence Act in a simpler manner so that we can convey it more effectively to communities."*

In the workshop reports, it was repeatedly highlighted across all four districts that exposure visits should be arranged to enhance community facilitators' understanding of key institutions. These visits were designed to familiarize facilitators and emerging leaders with the functioning of various service-providing institutions, equipping them with firsthand knowledge essential for guiding women and girls at risk of violence.

All 21 community facilitators interviewed across the four evaluation-selected districts confirmed their participation in exposure visits. These visits provided facilitators with firsthand engagement with key institutional stakeholders, including local government offices, police stations, courts, and shelter homes. In Lahore, the facilitators visited the Tahaffuz Markaz (Protection Centre), Child Protection Welfare Bureau, and Safe City Office, gaining insights into the operational mechanisms of these entities in responding to cases of domestic violence and child protection. In Mardan, they had the additional opportunity to visit the Women Police Station, which offered valuable exposure to law enforcement procedures specifically related to gender-based violence cases.

While these exposure visits were a critical component of the initiative, they were conducted nearly a year after the DV workshop. To maximize their effectiveness, it would be beneficial to schedule these visits in closer alignment with the workshop sessions. Integrating the exposure visits with the DV workshop would allow participants to observe the real-time implementation of legal and institutional procedures discussed during the training. This practical reinforcement could significantly enhance their understanding of response mechanisms, improving their ability to support survivors and advocate for effective case management in their respective

communities. The workshops and exposure visits provided a comprehensive understanding of service providers and response mechanisms. This exposure was crucial in ensuring that community facilitators are well-prepared to guide and support women and girls facing violence, connecting them with the appropriate services and response mechanisms effectively.

## **Conclusion**

The indicator 1.2.2 of Output 1.2 was achieved at a medium level. The training on DV, VAWG Case Reporting and Protection Mechanisms made notable progress in equipping community facilitators with essential legal knowledge and response mechanisms. A total of 213 community facilitators (101 female and 112 male) were trained across six districts, achieving 89% of the initial target. Despite falling short of full participation, the training ensured a broad reach among facilitators.

The content covered critical legal frameworks, including distinctions between criminal and civil cases, child and forced marriage laws, and institutional response mechanisms. However, there were no pre- and post-training evaluations, making it difficult to measure actual learning gains. Participant feedback indicated they found the information valuable, particularly on legal distinctions and law enforcement procedures, but the impact remains anecdotal rather than data-driven.

A significant shortcoming was the delayed implementation of exposure visits, which occurred almost a year after the initial training. While participants benefitted from firsthand engagement with institutional stakeholders such as police, courts, and child protection agencies, the disconnect in timing likely reduced the reinforcement effect of theoretical learning. Scheduling these visits closer to the training sessions would have significantly strengthened practical understanding and application.

While the training increased awareness and provided critical legal knowledge, the absence of formal learning assessments and the delayed exposure visits weakened its overall effectiveness. The initiative ensured broad participation and covered relevant content, but without structured evaluation mechanisms, its long-term impact remains uncertain. Future efforts should focus on integrating assessment tools and aligning exposure visits with training to maximize learning retention and practical application.

### ***Output Indicator 1.2.3: # of women and men facilitators gained skills to formulate and execute SAIs.***

SAIs were community-driven efforts led by project facilitators to address emerging needs while aligning with the project's broader objectives. These initiatives aimed to raise awareness, encourage engagement, and drive action on critical social issues such as gender-based violence (GBV), family laws, and civic responsibilities. To reach diverse audiences, SAIs employed multiple approaches. Civic documentation campaigns promoted awareness about essential legal documents like birth registrations, National Identity Cards (NICs), and marriage certificates. Talk shows and seminars provided platforms for open discussions on societal challenges, fostering dialogue and knowledge sharing. To extend outreach, social media and

radio programs leveraged modern communication channels, particularly targeting younger demographics. Additionally, puppet shows and theatre performances used culturally engaging formats to address sensitive topics like VAWG and DV. SAIs also marked significant occasions, such as International Women’s Day and the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, to highlight women's rights and related issues. Collectively, these initiatives played a crucial role in empowering communities, enhancing legal awareness, and fostering social change.

**Table 12: Regional and Gender-wise Breakdown of Participation in Training and Refresher on SAIs and intro to VFF Campaign**

District	Female participants	Male Participants	Total
Benazirabad	24	25	39
Hyderabad	17	15	32
Lahore	8	8	16
Mardan	9	10	19
Swat	9	10	19
Quetta	14	11	25
Total	81/120	79/120	160/240

(Table 12 presents a regional and gender-wise breakdown of participation in training and refresher sessions on Social Action Initiatives (SAIs) and an introduction to the VFF campaign, highlighting the distribution of male and female participants across different regions.)

Interestingly, the workshop focusing on community engagement, advocacy and lobbying techniques, campaign design, and implementation had the lowest participation among all capacity-building trainings. Despite its critical role in equipping community facilitators with the skills to drive social change, this particular workshop saw a lower turnout compared to other training workshops. Out of the planned 240 facilitators, only 160 attended, reflecting a 66% participation rate, the lowest among all SAIs training sessions.

A review of the workshop reports across all six districts revealed that the key themes covered in these workshops were:

### **Understanding the Root Causes of DV & CEAM**

This theme explored the social, economic, and cultural factors driving DV and CEAM, focusing on community norms, financial dependency, gender roles, and institutional structures that sustain these practices. Participants also examined the role of local governments, religious influences, and societal behaviors in either perpetuating or addressing these issues.

### **Community Context & Stakeholder Engagement**

Discussions highlighted the social, cultural, and political factors shaping attitudes toward DV and CEAM. The importance of stakeholder mapping was emphasized, helping participants identify key influencers, decision-makers, and community leaders who can either support or obstruct change. Strategies were developed to engage resistant individuals and groups, considering their motivations, interests, and power dynamics to ensure sustainable transformation.

## **Advocacy & Lobbying Strategies**

This theme focused on creating persuasive advocacy and lobbying messages to promote legal protections and policy reforms. Participants learned how to structure compelling arguments, use strong evidence, and tailor messages for different audiences, including policymakers, community members, and civil society organizations to maximize impact.

## **Effective Communication & Community Engagement**

Ensuring advocacy messages effectively reach and influence communities was a key focus. Participants explored creative communication tools such as theater performances, storytelling, songs, community dialogues, and charters of demand to drive awareness and action. They also practiced delivering lobby messages in different formats and learned campaign design strategies, including an introduction to the VFF campaign, equipping them with practical tools to implement sustainable advocacy initiatives in their communities.

Since no pre- and post-training assessments were included in the workshop reports, it was not possible to formally evaluate participants' learning progress or measure the impact of the sessions on their knowledge levels. Without structured assessments, a comparative analysis of knowledge gained before and after the training could not be conducted. However, participant feedback was incorporated into the reports, providing qualitative insights into their experiences.

## **Participants' Feedback from Workshop Reports**

The training helped participants enhance their understanding of community behavior, lobbying strategies, and approaches to addressing DV and CEAM. While many had some prior knowledge, the sessions provided practical insights on how to engage communities more effectively and apply strategic advocacy methods in their work.

The review of the three-day training workshop reports on the Introduction of the VFF Campaign and SAIs for community facilitators across six districts found that only three reports (two from Benazirabad and one from Quetta) included individual feedback from 41 participants. Among them, 29 participants (77%) explicitly mentioned learning practical community engagement techniques such as role playing, storytelling, theatre, group discussions, action planning, advocacy and lobbying.

They observed that open discussions encouraged community members to express their views freely, leading to more meaningful conversations and a stronger sense of involvement in identifying solutions.

The training also introduced participants to VFF campaign, lobbying mechanisms, and ways to assess local issues related to DV and CEAM. Many shared that they now feel more confident in identifying key stakeholders, understanding the social and legal landscape, and formulating advocacy messages tailored to their communities.

A key takeaway was the importance of adapting engagement strategies to the specific needs of each community. Participants emphasized the value of observing, listening, and involving community members in decision-making, rather than introducing solutions without local input.

However, some challenges were noted during the training. A few participants found advocacy and lobbying concepts difficult to grasp, particularly those who were new to community facilitation.

A male participant of Quetta workshop expressed his difficulty in understanding advocacy and lobbying. He said:

*"I learned about advocacy and lobbying, but these were new concepts for me. Case studies helped, but I still need more clarity."*

A female training participant from Quetta shared her feedback on understanding advocacy and lobbying, stating:

*"We learned about advocacy and lobbying, but it was difficult at first as I am new to this field. I am still trying to understand how to apply them practically within the community, which remains a challenge."*

A male participant from the Benazirabad workshop shared his perspective, stating:

*"There are many aspects of violence that often go unrecognized. Small issues can escalate into bigger problems, but understanding and applying advocacy remains challenging, especially when working with government institutions."*

Others highlighted cultural resistance within communities, making it difficult to openly discuss sensitive issues like DV and CEAM.

A male participant from the Quetta workshop shared his perspective, stating:

*"In our community, people do not openly discuss domestic violence. It is considered a private family matter, and speaking about it publicly is often viewed as interference in personal affairs."*

A female participant from the Quetta workshop shared her experience, stating:

*"Advocating against forced and early marriages is challenging, as many consider it a family matter. Women who question these practices are often silenced."*

A female participant from the Benazirabad workshop shared her perspective, stating:

*"Child marriage is deeply rooted in our tradition, and whenever we try to raise awareness, community elders resist, insisting it is part of our cultural norms."*

A male participant from the Benazirabad workshop shared his perspective, stating:

*"Domestic violence is viewed as a private household matter, and many people hesitate to report it. Even victims fear backlash from their own families and community members."*

Logistical challenges, such as limited session time, and participants' competing responsibilities, also affected engagement levels.

A female participant from the Quetta workshop shared her feedback, stating:

*"The sessions were highly informative, but the time was too limited to cover everything in depth. More time is needed to fully grasp and discuss these complex issues."*

A male participant from the Benazirabad workshop shared his feedback, stating:

*“Many participants had competing commitments, making it difficult to stay fully engaged throughout the sessions. Some had to leave early due to personal or work-related responsibilities.”*

Overall, participants found the training valuable and insightful, equipping them with new perspectives, practical strategies, and a more structured approach to community engagement and advocacy. Many expressed their commitment to applying these skills in their ongoing work, advocating for stronger protective mechanisms and increased legal awareness within their communities despite the challenges they may face.

Out of 21 community facilitators interviewed during the evaluation 17 confirmed they attend the SAI workshop and carried out SAI in the field.

A female community facilitator shared her experience in a KII conducted on November 28, 2024:

*“For the first time, I truly understood how to analyze community behavior. While I was familiar with community engagement strategies, this training introduced a new approach—one that emphasized engaging people in their own language, understanding their perspectives, and building strategies accordingly. This made community engagement more effective and contextually relevant.”*

## **Conclusion**

The Indicator 1.2.3 of Output 1.2 was achieved at a medium level, as the training successfully equipped many facilitators with skills to execute SAIs but faced limitations in participation and knowledge retention. Out of 240 planned facilitators, 160 attended the training, reflecting a 66% participation rate, the lowest among all SAI training sessions. Despite this, those who participated were able to apply their learning, with 17 out of 21 interviewed facilitators confirming they conducted SAIs in their communities. Participants reported gaining valuable insights into advocacy, lobbying, and stakeholder engagement, improving their confidence in community facilitation. However, challenges such as difficulty in grasping advocacy and lobbying concepts, cultural resistance to sensitive topics, and time constraints affected the overall impact. Additionally, the lack of pre- and post-training assessments limited the ability to measure learning outcomes. While the training contributed to building facilitator’s capacity, the lower-than-expected participation and challenges in applying certain concepts indicate that the indicator was moderately achieved but not fully met at a high level.

## **Conclusion of Achievement of Output 1.2**

The achievement of Output 1.2 was assessed as medium level. While the training provided valuable knowledge, built skills, and enabled practical implementation, challenges in participation rates, structured learning evaluations, and real-world application of certain concepts resulted in moderate effectiveness overall.

The training engaged and equipped community facilitators with knowledge and skills to address VAWG, DV, and CEAM in their communities. Participation was strong in most areas, with 225 out of 240 facilitators (94%) attending sessions on the negative gendered impact of COVID-19, making it the most successful component of the training. This session covered gender discrimination, access to services, and the pandemic's impact on VAWG, while also providing facilitators with practical engagement tools such as the SALT approach, Gup Shup sessions, and the Humqadam app. However, the lack of pre- and post-training assessments limited the ability to formally measure learning outcomes.

Training on VAWG, legal remedies, and response mechanisms reached 213 out of 240 facilitators (89%), effectively covering legal frameworks, survivor support, law enforcement processes, and institutional referral mechanisms. Many facilitators found the knowledge on criminal vs. civil cases, FIR processes, and survivor support pathways valuable, but some struggled with understanding complex legal concepts within the available training time. Exposure visits to key institutions, such as police stations and shelters, were beneficial but took place nearly a year after the training, reducing their immediate reinforcement effect. Furthermore, no structured learning assessments were conducted, making it difficult to evaluate the depth of knowledge gained.

The lowest participation was recorded in training on SAIs, with only 160 out of 240 facilitators (66%) attending. However, those who did attend successfully implemented SAIs, including radio programs, civic documentation campaigns, and awareness sessions on DV and CEAM. 17 out of 21 interviewed facilitators confirmed executing SAIs, showing that the training had a tangible impact on community engagement. However, challenges such as difficulty grasping advocacy and lobbying concepts, cultural resistance, and time constraints affected participants' ability to fully apply their learning. Once again, the absence of structured assessments limited the ability to measure progress objectively.

***Outcome 2: State and other response and protection mechanisms are more gender-responsive, appropriate and effectively implemented in four provinces by June 2024***

In the four evaluation selected districts, SG engaged with a total of 180 duty bearers (110 females and 70 males) comprising state and private service providers, and representatives from key institutions. These included Women Commissions, law enforcement agencies (police), shelter providers, legal aid services, lady health workers, helpline operators, and local government officials, who participated in networking meetings and training sessions aimed at enhancing their capacity to address gender-based violence and child protection issues.

The project initially aimed to train 120 LHWs across six implementation districts. However, a total of 83 LHWs were trained in four districts, including two of the evaluation-selected districts.

In addition, 98 Marriage Registrars/Nikahkawan were trained on family laws and the Child Marriage Restraint Act, equipping them with the knowledge and tools needed to ensure compliance with legal requirements and to prevent underage marriages effectively.

Furthermore, the evaluation team planned to conduct four FGDs with marriage registrar/Nikahkawan, one in each district, with a minimum of five participants in each session. However, participation exceeded expectations, with a total of 23 Marriage Registrars/Nikahkawan contributing across the four districts. As part of the evaluation process, the team conducted Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with 20 duty bearers selected from relevant departments and institutions, including Women Development Departments (WDD), shelter homes, social welfare departments, local government offices, Women Commissions, and law enforcement agencies. These interviews provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the interventions and the challenges faced by service providers.

This outcome was evaluated under three indicators.

*Outcome Indicator 2.1: Number of policy makers who take forward policy recommendation.*

It is challenging to provide an exact number of policymakers, as SG focused on working with BCSW and the Social Welfare Department KP for its policy efforts rather than engaging individuals directly. While state institutions and civil society members were consulted during the policy formulation process, the evaluation findings are presented based on the involvement of these two designated institutions/departments.

SG signed an MoU with the Balochistan Commission on the Status of Women (BCSW) to advance policy-level work in Balochistan. During a Key Informant Interview (KII), the commission chairperson acknowledged that GBV and CEAM were deeply ingrained issues in the province that required urgent attention. Responding to these critical needs, SG collaborated closely with BCSW to advocate for policy changes addressing both concerns.

Under the FEMPOWER project, SG drafted the Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024, which was further followed up under the Humqadam project. BCSW, along with SG, conducted multiple meetings and consultations with key stakeholders and representatives of political parties to build consensus around the bill. To ensure wider dissemination, SG prepared and circulated an Urdu translation of the bill.

Similarly, SG and BCSW worked together to build consensus around the CEAM Bill in Balochistan. A joint press conference was held to show support and solidarity for the bill. SG and BCSW, called upon political parties in Balochistan to take action to prevent the solemnization of early-age marriages, which was identified as a major contributing factor to high maternal and neonatal mortality, low female literacy, and increased VAW in the province.

Through a Resolution for 'Supporting the Balochistan Child Marriage Restraint Bill', SG and BCSW emphasized the need for strong political commitment to legislate against early-age marriages, aligning with Sindh's legal framework. The resolution urged political parties to endorse 18 years as the minimum legal age for marriage, incorporate this commitment into their party manifestos, and actively support the bill's passage in the new assembly to protect women and girls from the harmful consequences of early marriages.

Five political parties signed the resolution, demonstrating a multi-party consensus on the need for legislative action against early-age marriages in Balochistan. By signing, political

representatives acknowledged the importance of legal measures to restrict early-age marriages, signaling a collective effort to ensure the bill's passage and implementation within the province.

Reflecting on the process, BCSW Chairperson shared during a KII conducted on November 25, 2024:

"We conducted regular sessions and meetings to address the issue of child early-age marriages and also signed an MoU with SG to strengthen our collaborative efforts. The Child Marriage Bill had previously been submitted to the Cabinet, and while we successfully secured the Chief Minister's (CM) signature, the Assembly did not take it up for consideration. Had the Assembly entertained the bill, it would have been passed during its previous tenure. Unfortunately, with the dissolution of the Assembly, we faced the challenge of restarting the entire process from the beginning. During the interim period, as the election process was underway, political parties were actively engaged in finalizing their manifestos. We seized this opportunity to maintain momentum by holding regular meetings with various political parties. These engagements resulted in securing their commitment, as they included the CEAM bill in their manifestos. Following this, we organized a joint press conference where all political parties publicly endorsed the bill. This unanimous support provided a significant boost to our efforts, as it ensured smoother progress when we resubmitted the bill to the Cabinet. On this occasion, the bill advanced through the Cabinet in one go. As we prepared to present the bill to the Assembly once more, we remained optimistic about its passage. Within the commission, all our energy and focus were dedicated to ensuring that this critical legislation was approved, as it was a vital step toward protecting the rights of children and ending the harmful practice of child marriages."

#### **Policy Work with SWD in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)**

SG also engaged in significant policy advocacy in KP, addressing the province's lack of legislation for persons with disabilities (PWDs), a gap identified during the UN Trust Fund project. The marginalized PWD community had been advocating for a specific law for over a decade. In response, SG initiated advocacy and lobbying efforts, including meetings with PWD community representatives, parliamentary officials, the National Commission on Human Rights (NCHR), and social welfare authorities. Broader consultations were organized to involve key stakeholders in refining the policy brief and improving the draft of the KP-PWD Bill, developed by the Social Welfare Department (SWD).

The first consultation, held on July 11, 2024, in Peshawar, engaged 41 participants, including representatives from religious and gender minorities, NCHR, UNDP, provincial assembly law drafters, High Court lawyers, and officials from the Law and Social Welfare departments. During the event, the draft PWD bill and consultant recommendations were presented, and participant feedback was compiled into a formal document.

A second, more focused consultation was held on August 19, 2024, involving male and female legislators, including the Deputy Speaker of the KP Assembly. During this session,

recommendations on PWD issues were reviewed through a gender lens, ensuring the proposed legislation addressed the unique needs of women with disabilities. Parliamentarians, the law department, and other stakeholders actively participated and pledged to promote the policy recommendations to advance the legislative process.

The updated policy brief was submitted to the Law Ministry for further action. Although the PWD law fell under the Social Welfare Department, the absence of a Social Welfare Minister at the time necessitated that the Law Ministry take the lead. If the Law Ministry did not act, an MPA from the government setup was expected to present the bill in the provincial assembly.

By the end of the project, the bill and policy brief were with the Law Ministry. With the appointment of a Social Welfare Minister, the brief was expected to be shared with them, ensuring further progress on this critical legislation.

## **Conclusion**

The achievement of Indicator 2.1 of Outcome 2 was at medium level, as SG's policy advocacy efforts made significant progress but faced delays in legislative approval. In Balochistan, SG and BCSW secured multi-party consensus, with five political parties signing a resolution to support the Balochistan Child Marriage Restraint Bill 2023 and committing to include it in their party manifestos. The bill secured the Chief Minister's signature and passed through the Cabinet, but the provincial assembly did not take it up before its dissolution, requiring the process to restart. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), SG led two key consultations (July 11 and August 19, 2024) with 41 stakeholders, including parliamentarians, legal experts, and social welfare officials, to refine the KP-PWD Bill and ensure it addressed gender-specific needs. The policy brief was submitted to the Law Ministry, but progress stalled due to the absence of a Social Welfare Minister, delaying formal adoption. While SG's efforts successfully influenced decision-makers and built momentum for policy change, the lack of final legislative approval in both cases indicates that the indicator is moderately achieved rather than fully realized.

### *Outcome Indicator 2.2: 60% of duty bearers and first responders more aware of existing provision & their responsibilities*

The indicator lacks clarity as it does not specify which existing provisions duty bearers should be aware of or the specific responsibilities they are expected to fulfill. Given the project's scope, it is assumed that awareness of existing provisions refers to laws and policies related to VAWG, DV and CEAM. Similarly, duty bearers' responsibilities likely pertain to their role in prevention, protection, and redress mechanisms for these issues.

## **Engagement with Duty Bearers**

SG engaged duty bearers at two levels:

- Capacity building of first responders and service providers
- Networking with duty bearers involved in policy advocacy

## Capacity Building of First Responders and Service Providers

Under this component, SG engaged with LHWs to support early identification of violence and address reproductive health issues. The project planned to conduct one training session per district with 20 LHWs per session, targeting 120 LHWs in total across six districts.

Out of six project-implemented districts, SG conducted one-day workshops with LHWs in four districts:

Table 13: Participation Count of LHWs in Gender Sensitization Training with LHWs.

District	Date of the workshop	# of LHWS participated
Benazirabad	14 May 2022	21
Hyderabad	26 April 2022	19
Quetta	10 May 2022	23
Swat	27 April 2022	20
Total		<b>83</b>

(Table 13 presents the participation count of LHWs in Gender Sensitization Training, highlighting the number of attendees engaged in the sessions.)

The training could not take place in Mardan and Lahore due to the following reasons:

- In Punjab, training was conducted in Vehari, which was not counted among project-implemented districts.
- In Mardan, the Medical Superintendent did not grant permission for LHW participation, as they are government employees and require official authorization to attend such training.

There was no pre- and post-assessment available in the workshop reports to evaluate participants' learning outcomes. However, participant feedback at the end of the training provided some insight, though it was not consistently documented across all workshops.

The Quetta workshop report provided detailed feedback, revealing the following trends:

- 64% (14 out of 22 participants) reported an increased understanding of GBV and legal protections.
- 55% (12 out of 22) committed to actively supporting GBV victims in their communities.
- 45% (10 out of 22) overcame barriers to speaking up, realizing their role as advocates.
- 18% (4 out of 22) emphasized the need for broader engagement, including training for men and local leaders.
- 77% (17 out of 22) expressed commitment to applying their learning in real-life

scenarios.

Unfortunately, the full potential of this resource was not realized. Among the four evaluation-selected districts, training was conducted only in Quetta and Benazirabad. Despite efforts, the evaluation team was unable to conduct Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with LHWs due to logistical constraints. This limitation further restricted the ability to assess the effectiveness of the capacity-building component.

### Capacity Building of Nikah Registrar

One category of duty bearers that played a crucial role in preventing Child Early and Forced Marriages (CEAM) were Marriage Registrar/Nikahkhawans. To enhance their understanding and capacity, SG (SG) organized trainings, in each district, focused on the legal framework governing their responsibilities, including the Child Marriage Restraint Act and the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance. The training aimed to equip them with the knowledge needed to ensure compliance with laws and promote responsible practices, such as verifying the age of brides before solemnizing marriages and filling all the columns in Nikahnama.

The project aimed to train 20 Nikahkhawans per district, totaling 120 participants across six districts. Strengthening the capacity of Nikahkhawans was considered essential, as they play a crucial role in preventing Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (CEAM) and advocating for women’s rights in marriage.

Two-day training workshops were conducted in all six districts, except for Lahore, where a one-day training session was held. The table below presents the number of participants in each district:

**Table 14: Gender and Regional Breakdown of Nikahkhawn’s Trainings**

District	Dates of Workshops	# of participants	
		Female	Male
Benazirabad	March 2023	4	21
Hyderabad	18-19 March 2023	5	20
Lahore	14 October 2023-One day	2	27
Mardan	201-21 October 2023		20
Swat	28-29, 2023		18
Quetta	22-23 July 2023		24
<b>Total</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>106</b>

(Table 14 provides a gender-wise and regional distribution of Nikahkhawans who participated in the training sessions conducted under the Humqadam Project. The table categorizes the number of male and female Nikahkhawans trained across six project districts, illustrating the extent of outreach and participation in these sessions.)

Across all six project-implemented districts, a total of 106 male Nikahkhawans were engaged, along with 11 female Union Council secretaries. Nikah solemnization is traditionally a male-dominated field, female participants are the inclusion of female secretaries represents a significant step toward broader participation.

To evaluate the impact of this training under the Humqadam Project, the evaluation team reviewed all training reports produced by SG and conducted four Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) across four evaluation selected districts with 23 Nikahkhawans.

In the training reports no pre- and post-assessment were included; therefore, the learning levels of participants could not be measured. However, in three out of the six reports (specifically from Benazirabad, Hyderabad, and Quetta), participant feedback was attached with names. Based on this feedback, the evaluation team attempted to quantify responses related to this indicator. It is important to note that this feedback did not represent all participants in those three workshops.

In the remaining three reports, only cumulative feedback was included, making it impossible to determine individual responses or quantify the data effectively. This gap in documentation highlights inconsistencies in reporting, despite a standardized reporting format having been shared with the implementing partners. The lack of adherence to a uniform reporting structure also reflects the varying capacities of local organizations in systematically documenting results.

The combined analysis of the Benazirabad, Hyderabad and Quetta training workshops provides a broader understanding of participant learning, commitments, and challenges. Below are the key findings from all three locations, incorporating total numbers and percentages based on 53 participants, which is almost 45% of the total (117) trained.

**Table 15: Summary of the Feedback from Nikahkhawan Trainings in Benazirabad, Hyderabad and Quetta**

Category	Benazirabad (n=25)	Hyderabad (n=12)	Quetta (n=16)	Total (n=53)
Participants responses %	25/25 (100%)	12/25 (48%)	16/24(66%)	53/74(71%)
Increased awareness of legal provisions	18 (72%)	10 (83%)	9 (56%)	37(70%)
Understanding of responsibilities	16 (64%)	8 (68%)	9 (56%)	33 (62%)
Role in social change	17 (68%)	7 (58%)	8 (50%)	32 (60%)

(The table 15. Illustrates significant regional variations in awareness, understanding of responsibilities, and acceptance of legal frameworks among Nikahkhawans and UC Secretaries across the three training locations out of six project implemented districts.)

The highest increase in awareness of marriage laws and women's rights was observed in Hyderabad (83%), while Quetta had the lowest improvement (56%), leading to an overall 70%

increase across all locations. This suggests that pre-existing familiarity with legal principles and exposure to previous awareness initiatives likely influenced the degree of knowledge retention.

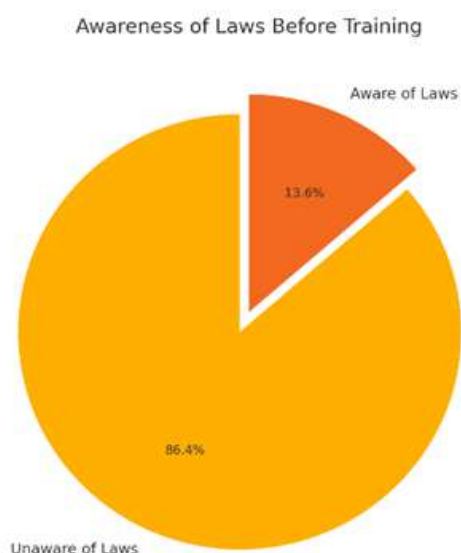
Similarly, the understanding of responsibilities was higher in Hyderabad and lower in Quetta, indicating that while some participants were more receptive to legal compliance, others required further reinforcement. A notable finding is that in Benazirabad, 68% of participants recognized their role as change agents, whereas only 50% in Quetta expressed similar acknowledgment. This suggests that perceptions of responsibility in upholding legal obligations vary across regions, potentially due to differing levels of engagement with legal awareness efforts and varying degrees of cultural resistance.

The data underscores the complex relationship between religious traditions, cultural norms, and the formal legal framework governing marriage laws. Nikahkhawans, being deeply involved in religious and cultural practices, demonstrated varying levels of acceptance of their legal responsibilities, highlighting that integration of legal provisions within religious marriage practices remains a nuanced challenge. While many participants expressed a greater willingness to align their practices with legal standards, there were clear indications that some still view legal compliance as secondary to religious and customary practices.

This analysis highlights that while legal literacy efforts were effective in increasing awareness and shifting perceptions, the deep-rooted influence of cultural and religious norms continues to shape attitudes toward marriage laws. The findings reflect both progress and persistent challenges in ensuring that legal provisions are not only understood but also implemented in practice within marriage officiating and registration processes.

The Humqadam Project evaluation team conducted four FGD) across the evaluation selected districts to assess the outcomes of the Nikahkhawan trainings. A total of 23 Nikahkhawans participated in these FGDs. The findings from these discussions largely aligned with the feedback reported in training workshops reports, reinforcing key insights on the training's impact and participants' experiences.

### Illustration 9: Nikahkhawan Awareness of the Laws before Training



Out of 23 Nikahkhawan 22 responded to this question and 19 (86%) said before participating in training they do not have proper legal information on family laws and CEAM laws. They acknowledge the contribution of Humqadam project in raising their awareness and information of the laws. Though all said they have increased understanding of legal issues but 17 ( 77%) mentioned they have increased understanding of laws and were able to provide accurate information on few questions regarding family laws and CEAM laws. 18 (86%) out of 22 particularly mentioned checking all the documentation while performing Nikah showing they knew their responsibilities under the law. Out of 22 Nikahkhawan, who responded 10 clearly

stated that they refused performing underage marriage after the training reflecting they are implementing the training in real life world.

A Nikahkhawan from Mardan, the participant of FGD conducted on November 26, 2024 said:

*"Before the training, I thought puberty was the only requirement for marriage. Now I ensure the age is verified using CNICs or Form B."*

A Nikahkhawan from Lahore shared his thoughts in the FGD conducted in Lahore on November 27, 2024

*"Previously, we knew underage marriage was a crime, but we didn't know there was a penalty for it. It was only after joining the training that we learned about the legal consequences. Honestly, I didn't realize the law was this strict. Before the training in my opinion, a sixteen-year-old girl was an adult, but the severity of the punishment was surprising."*

The Capacity Building of Nikah Registrars initiative under the Humqadam Project successfully trained 117 participants across six districts, enhancing their legal awareness of family laws and child marriage prevention. The training led to 70% increased awareness of legal provisions, 62% better understanding of responsibilities, and 60% recognizing their role in social change.

Findings from FGDs showed that out of 23 Nikahkhawan engaged in FGDs 86% of Nikahkhawans lacked proper legal knowledge before training, but post-training, 77% improved their understanding, and 86% began verifying documentation before solemnizing marriages, fulfilling their responsibilities as Nikahkhawan. A key impact was that 10 Nikahkhawans refused to perform underage marriages post training, demonstrating real-world application of their training.

The project effectively strengthened legal literacy, ensuring marriage practices align with legal requirements and contributing to the prevention of Child, Early, and Forced Marriages (CEAM).

#### Networking Meetings with Duty Bearers

The project planned to conduct one networking meeting per district, targeting at least 20 duty bearers (10 female and 10 male) per meeting, with a total goal of 120 duty bearers across six districts. According to networking meeting reports, 128 duty bearers (64 female, 64 male) participated, surpassing the target.

The primary objectives of these meetings were to:

- Provide information about the SG Humqadam project
- Orient duty bearers on the Humqadam App
- Share resource materials developed under the project
- Explore potential collaboration to support women and girls at risk and survivors of violence

The evaluation team also engaged with 20 duty bearers across the four selected evaluation districts, including directors and deputy directors of social welfare departments and local governments, in-charge Tahafuz Markaz and Mesac Centers, Superintendents of Dar-ul-Aman, VC Secretaries, Chairpersons of commissions, Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries of the Women Protection Authority, and parliamentarians.

All 20 participants of KIIs acknowledged VAWG, DV and CEAM are deeply rooted societal issues. *Many noted that their understanding of VAWG expanded during their engagement with SG, recognizing non-physical forms of abuse such as verbal, mental, and emotional violence.*

These duty bearers demonstrated varying levels of understanding of legal provisions and their roles in addressing VAWG and CEAM. 18 out of 20 duty bearers interviewed confirmed they were well-informed about relevant laws, including the Child Marriage Restraint Act and legal frameworks addressing VAWG. While they exhibited both awareness and pro-activeness in implementing legal and procedural measures, their knowledge, skills, and sense of responsibility cannot be solely attributed to the project, as they were engaged only through networking meetings and did not receive capacity-building training under this initiative. Their understanding and sense of responsibility is reflected in the quotes cited below:

Chairperson BCSW, in her KII conducted on November 25, 2024 said:

*"We are pushing for the Early Age Marriage Act and other bills to empower women, which are critical steps toward addressing these issues."*

She reflected a policy-level understanding and commitment to tackling CEAM and VAWG through legislative reforms. By pushing for the Early Age Marriage and related bills, she demonstrated an awareness of the systemic barriers that perpetuate gender inequality and the need for structural changes to address them effectively.

An advocate from PCSW, Lahore, in a KII conducted on November 25, 2024, stated:"

*"We prepared a training manual on family law, distributed to every Union Council of Punjab, ensuring that local bodies understand their legal responsibilities."*

This manual was disseminated to every Union Council in Punjab, ensuring that grassroots-level duty bearers, such as local government officials and marriage registrars, have a clear understanding of their legal responsibilities. The manual covers critical aspects of family law, including provisions related to VAWG and the Child Marriage Restraint Act, equipping local officials with the knowledge needed to enforce these laws effectively.

Superintendent, Darul Aman, Mardan, in her KII conducted on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024 stated:

*"As a superintendent, my primary responsibilities include ensuring the overall welfare, safety, security, and shelter of the residents who seek refuge at this institution. The legal framework places significant emphasis on ensuring the dignity and rights of women seeking refuge in Darul Aman. As a duty bearer, I am accountable for upholding these principles while adhering to the Child Marriage Restraint Act, Family Law Ordinance, and other laws that protect women's rights. My position also requires sensitivity to the trauma and mental health challenges many residents face, necessitating consistent capacity-building for staff to handle cases with professionalism and empathy".*

Assistant Director Local Government, Model Town Lahore, KII on November 26, 2024

*"Over the past year, I have collaborated with SG under the Humqadam focusing on issues such as child marriages, women's empowerment, and gender-based violence (GBV). My work includes training marriage registrars (Nikahkhawans) on laws like the Child Marriage Restraint Act and the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961, to prevent underage marriages. I also oversee the Women's Human Rights Cell, which provides resources, legal aid, and counseling for women's rights violations. By fostering collaboration between local government and NGOs, I aim to bridge the gap between policy and practice, creating an environment that supports women's empowerment and systemic change within our Union Councils:.*

Assistant Director, Social Welfare Department, Benazirabad shared in a FGD conducted on November 28, 2024.

*"I became involved in this project because it aligns seamlessly with our field of work, which focuses on addressing critical social issues such as domestic violence and child early-age marriages. These pressing challenges demand urgent attention, and our commitment to these causes is driven by the understanding of their profound social impact. As part of a department dedicated to tackling such issues, our expertise and interests naturally align with initiatives like this. This project has not only enabled us to contribute meaningfully to broader social change but also significantly enhanced our capacity to address these problems more effectively in our day-to-day work."*

Secretary WDD, Lahore in a KII conducted on November 27, 2024 said:

*"VAWG is a spectrum. We are addressing this through laws, awareness, and structural reforms like virtual police stations and Safe City projects. Initiatives like these empower women to report violence and access support, bridging critical gaps in justice delivery".*

The engagement with duty bearers across various sectors revealed awareness of legal frameworks and a commitment to addressing VAWG and CEAM. Their insights highlighted ongoing policy advocacy, legal enforcement efforts, and institutional support mechanisms aimed at protecting vulnerable populations. While their knowledge and proactive measures cannot be attributed to the project, as they were only engaged through networking meetings rather than capacity-building training, their statements reflect a broader institutional effort to address these critical issues. The push for legislative reforms, development of training manuals, provision of shelter and legal aid, and structural initiatives such as virtual police stations and Safe City projects demonstrate a multi-layered approach to combating VAWG and CEAM. These efforts indicate a commitment to systemic change, reinforcing the importance of collaboration between government bodies, legal institutions, and civil society in ensuring the effective implementation of laws and protection of women's rights.

## **Conclusion**

The indicator 2.2 of Outcome 2 was achieved at a medium level. The project engaged 83 LHWs in gender sensitization training across four districts, though sessions could not be conducted in two planned districts. In Quetta, 64% of LHWs reported increased understanding of GBV and legal protections, and 77% committed to applying their learning. However, no pre- and post-assessments were conducted, limiting the ability to measure knowledge retention across all districts.

Among 117 trained Nikahkhawans, 70% reported increased awareness of legal provisions, 62% improved their understanding of responsibilities, and 60% recognized their role in social change. A key outcome was 10 Nikahkhawans refusing to perform underage marriages, reflecting direct behavioral change. However, inconsistencies in documentation and regional variations in legal acceptance indicate that some participants required further reinforcement.

The project also engaged 128 duty bearers (64 male, 64 female) through networking meetings, exceeding the target of 120. These meetings introduced them to the Humqadam project and app, provided resource materials, and explored collaboration opportunities. The evaluation team conducted only 20 KIIs with duty bearers, which represents a small sample size relative to the total population of duty bearers. Given this limited sample, it is not statistically valid to generalize the findings and claim that 60% of all duty bearers would exhibit the same level of awareness or response patterns. Therefore, while these 20 KIIs provide valuable insights, they should be interpreted as indicative rather than conclusive and not assumed to reflect the knowledge level of all duty bearers.

While the project met its engagement targets and contributed to raising awareness, inconsistent training coverage, lack of structured assessments, and gaps in documentation limited its overall impact measurement. Given these factors, the indicator's achievement is

medium, progress was made, but incomplete implementation and evaluation reduced effectiveness.

*Outcome Indicator 2.3: 30% of duty bearers engaged who find the App useful*

The Humqadam GBV Response Mobile Phone Application is a comprehensive tool designed to enhance accessibility to GBV response services and empower both survivors and those at risk. The app offers several key features:

**Easy Access to GBV Response Services:** Users can connect to emergency services and access a referral directory for legal aid, shelter homes, counseling centers, and law enforcement support, ensuring timely and effective assistance.

**Legal Knowledge:** The app offers a comprehensive repository of relevant national and provincial laws, empowering users with a clear understanding of their legal rights and protections. These include laws addressing child protection, marriage, assaults, cybercrimes, acid crimes, and minority rights, ensuring that users are well-informed about the legal frameworks available to safeguard their rights and seek justice.

**Step-by-Step Guidance:** Detailed instructions on how to respond to specific cases of GBV enable survivors, duty bearers, and community members to navigate challenging situations effectively and ensure the proper escalation of cases to the appropriate authorities.

The app was officially launched in May 2024, during the final quarter of the Humqadam Project, leaving limited time to fully evaluate its widespread use and impact. However, feedback collected through KIIs with 20 duty bearers across four provinces revealed promising initial outcomes. All 20 duty bearers were familiar with the App's features and downloaded the App while 10 (50%) out of 20 said they are using this in their daily work particularly those who are dealing with cases of VAWG and service delivery. This demonstrates the app's potential as a valuable resource for bridging gaps in GBV response systems. Unfortunately this sample is very small and there is no mean to find out how many duty bearers engaged are actively using the App some quantitative feedback can give an idea but that too will not help to quantify.

Below are a few quotes extracted from the KIIs with duty bearers:

The Chairperson BCSW, Quetta:

*"The referral directory is a very good initiative. You can't carry a book all the time, but with the Humqadam App, you can provide contact support to any GBV victim anywhere in Pakistan. It helps identify where and which institution is providing support. I believe this app will go a long way in supporting GBV victims."*

In-charge, Messac Center, Lahore:

*"The app is an effective tool for monitoring and tracking cases. It helps us navigate the referral pathways. I use it whenever I need to search for a resource for my cases, and it has become an essential part of our workflow now."*

VC Secretary Bughdada Rural 2, Mardan:

*"The Humqadam App is a really helpful tool, not only for violence victims but also for duty bearers. I use it to take notes about important laws and write them in my diary to update my knowledge of existing laws and provisions, which support my work."*

*Assistant Director (Local Government, Lahore):*

*"Using the app has streamlined communication with stakeholders and reduced paperwork, allowing us to focus on actual case resolution."*

*Assistant Director WDD, Incharge Crisis Center, Benazirabad:*

*"Initially, I faced some difficulties downloading the app, possibly due to internet connectivity issues or limitations with my mobile phone. However, I have now successfully downloaded it and plan to start using it in my work. I believe this app will be a valuable tool in enhancing my ability to provide timely support and resources to those in need, particularly in cases of GBV."*

*Incharge Tahaffuz Center, Lahore:*

*"The referral directory and the Humqadam App are incredibly effective tools that have significantly facilitated our work. The referral directory provides quick and easy access to essential contacts and resources, while the app ensures that we can efficiently navigate the support system for gender-based violence (GBV) cases"*

While it is too early to measure the app's long-term impact, the initial positive reception indicates potential for its scalability and effectiveness. The quotes above revealed a clear pattern, indicating that the Humqadam App is currently being utilized more in urban centers, where access to technology and connectivity is likely more consistent. Across all duty bearers interviewed, there was unanimous acknowledgment of the app's usefulness and potential impact, regardless of whether they had incorporated it into their daily workflows. For those actively using the app, it has proven to be an invaluable tool in facilitating their work, streamlining processes such as accessing referral pathways, updating knowledge of relevant laws, and efficiently addressing cases of gender-based violence (GBV).

## **Conclusion**

The indicator 2.3 of Outcome 2 was achieved at a low level, as the indicator aimed for 30% of all duty bearers to actively use the Humqadam GBV Response Mobile Phone Application, but no quantitative tracking data exists to confirm this. From 20 interviewed duty bearers, 10 (50%) reported active use, but this small sample size does not represent the total duty bearers engaged in the project.

While the app is well-received, especially in urban areas, adoption in rural areas remains unclear due to connectivity challenges. The lack of broader monitoring mechanisms prevents verification of the app's overall reach. Thus, while initial engagement is promising, the indicator is only partially met at a low level, requiring further assessment to confirm actual usage across all duty bearers.

## Conclusion of Outcome 2

Outcome 2 was assessed as having a medium level of achievement, with notable progress in engagement, policy advocacy, and awareness-raising but gaps in final implementation, legislative adoption, and impact measurement. Under Indicator 2.1, SG's advocacy efforts led to multi-party consensus on the Balochistan Child Marriage Restraint Bill, signed by five political parties, and its Cabinet approval, but the Assembly's dissolution delayed its passage. Similarly, in KP, SG led two key consultations on the KP-PWD Bill, refining it with a gender-responsive approach and submitting it to the Law Ministry, but progress stalled due to the absence of a Social Welfare Minister. Under Indicator 2.2, SG engaged 128 duty bearers through networking meetings, exceeding the target, but no structured assessments were conducted to measure their actual awareness gains. 83 LHWs were trained in four districts, with 64% in Quetta reporting improved understanding of GBV and 77% committing to applying their learning, but no pre- and post-assessments limited impact evaluation. Additionally, 117 Nikahkhawans were trained, with 70% improving legal awareness, 62% better understanding responsibilities, and 60% recognizing their role in social change, with 10 refusing to perform underage marriages, demonstrating real-world application, though regional inconsistencies persisted. Under Indicator 2.3, the Humqadam GBV Response App was launched late in the project, and while all 20 interviewed duty bearers had downloaded it, only 10 (50%) actively used it, making it unclear whether 30% of duty bearers engaged in the project were using the app, as no quantitative tracking existed. Overall, while SG effectively influenced policy discussions, engaged key stakeholders, and improved awareness, gaps in legislative approvals, structured assessments, tracking mechanisms, and full implementation result in medium achievement of Outcome 2.

**Output 2.1:** *Women's commissions, women's departments and policy makers better equipped to improve institutional response and prevention measures around VAW/G especially in COVID-19 and other emergency contexts by June 2024*

**Indicator 2.1.1:** *Province specific existing gaps and bottlenecks identified in service provisions around VAW/G and 4 policy briefs produced*

The project effectively identified critical service gaps in VAWG, Domestic Violence DV, and CEAM by engaging Women's Commissions, government departments, policymakers, and duty bearers. Through networking meetings and multi-stakeholder consultations, the project documented challenges in service delivery, highlighting infrastructural, cultural, and systemic barriers that hinder gender-responsive protection mechanisms. The policy response to these findings was consolidated into three policy briefs, reinforcing the need for legal reform and institutional strengthening.

### Identification of Gaps in Service Provision

The project engaged with Women's Commissions, social welfare departments, law enforcement agencies, and shelter providers to identify key gaps in service provision. Among the most pressing issues was the lack of specialized facilities for vulnerable groups, including

overburdened shelter homes and welfare centers that limited access to critical support services. Cultural resistance further complicated the situation, as deeply rooted societal norms often discouraged survivors from seeking justice, making it difficult to enforce protective laws. Weak inter-agency coordination and the absence of clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) led to inconsistencies in service provision, eroding trust in formal systems. Additionally, high stress levels and staff burnout in welfare institutions affected service quality, emphasizing the need for mental health support and capacity-building programs for frontline responders.

These findings were communicated to social welfare departments and women protection authorities for addressing the institutional gaps. SG worked on three areas for policy advocacy and systemic change.

### **1. Policy Briefs and Legislative Advocacy Efforts Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) – Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Policy Brief**

In KP, the absence of a dedicated policy for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) emerged as a major gap, despite a decade-long demand from advocacy groups. To address this, SG initiated the development of a PWD policy brief under the UN Trust Fund project. On July 11, 2024, SG facilitated a consultation with 41 stakeholders, including gender and religious minorities, UNDP representatives, and legal experts, to refine the draft policy brief. A follow-up consultation on August 19, 2024, engaged lawmakers and the Law Ministry, ensuring a gender-responsive framework was incorporated into the PWD draft bill. The bill was subsequently submitted to the Law Ministry for approval, marking a significant policy milestone. However, formal adoption remains pending due to the absence of a Social Welfare Minister, slowing the legislative process.

### **2. Balochistan – Child Marriage Restraint Act & Early Age Marriage Bill**

In Balochistan, a critical policy gap was the legal age of marriage for girls, which remained at 16 years, despite strong evidence linking early-age marriages to high maternal mortality and low female literacy rates. SG partnered with the Balochistan Commission on the Status of Women (BCSW) to push for an amendment to the Child Marriage Restraint Act, advocating for an increase in the legal marriage age to 18 years. Through extensive consultations with legislators and community leaders, SG built multi-party consensus, culminating in a press conference where five political parties signed a resolution supporting the bill. The resolution ensured that the amendment was included in party manifestos, reinforcing political commitment. The Cabinet approved the bill, marking a major legislative success; however, due to the dissolution of the Assembly, the bill was not passed, requiring the process to be restarted.

### **3. Balochistan – Women Protection Bill 2024**

Another major policy gap in Balochistan was the lack of a comprehensive legal framework to address gender-based violence (GBV) and institutional protection mechanisms for women. SG took the lead in drafting the Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024 under the FEMPOWER project, later refining it under Humqadam through consultations with legislators, civil society, and community leaders. To increase accessibility and engagement, the bill was translated into

Urdu and disseminated among policymakers. SG further strengthened advocacy efforts by organizing a press conference with political parties, which bolstered legislative support. While the bill has not yet been formally submitted to the Provincial Assembly, strong backing from political stakeholders increases the likelihood of its passage in the near future.

### **Strengthening Community Engagement & Service Provision**

Beyond policy advocacy, the project implemented community-level interventions to address service provision challenges and ensure survivor support. Awareness-raising initiatives targeted women, girls, men, and boys, sensitizing them on issues related to VAWG, DV, and CEAM. The project also trained local organizations and community facilitators, equipping them with tools to support at-risk women and girls effectively. Additionally, linkages and referral pathways were established to enhance survivors' access to legal aid, counseling services, and shelter homes. These interventions ensured that policy efforts were complemented by grassroots action, fostering a more integrated approach to addressing gender-based violence.

### **Conclusion**

The indicator 2.1.1 of Output 2.1 was achieved at a medium level. The project successfully identified key service provision gaps and produced three policy briefs, fulfilling the quantitative target of the indicator. Legislative advocacy efforts in KP and Balochistan resulted in significant policy progress, with the PWD policy brief submitted to the Law Ministry, the Child Marriage Restraint Act amendment approved by the Cabinet, and the Women Protection Bill receiving strong political support. However, formal legislative approval remains pending, limiting full policy implementation. Despite this, the systemic and institutional reforms initiated through these efforts have set a strong foundation for future legal advancements.

### ***Output Indicator 2.1.2: Mitigating policy options formulated and shared for COVID-19 & other emergency situations in two Provinces***

SG, in its No Cost Extension request, cancelled the originally planned activity and replaced it with two key advocacy initiatives, which was approved by UN Trust Fund.

First, SG committed to advocating for the completed and approved 'Balochistan Women Protection Bill,' which was developed under a different project. This bill is crucial, as Balochistan currently lacks an implemented legal framework for the protection of women residing in the province.

Second, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), SG will collaborate with the Social Welfare Department, disability rights groups, and parliamentarians to advocate for a Persons with Disabilities (PWD) bill with a gender-focused approach. This effort includes meetings with policymakers to draft a policy document on disability rights in KP, ensuring alignment with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

*(Taken from SG No Cost Extension request).*

## **Output 2.2: Improving Responses of VAW/G Service Providers and Duty-Bearers**

### **Output Indicator 2.2.1: # of duty bearers' gender sensitized on VAWG related matters and their roles**

Gender sensitization is crucial for effective service provision in responding to VAWG because it ensures that survivors receive empathetic, informed, and rights-based support. Without a gender-sensitive approach, service providers may perpetuate victim-blaming, fail to recognize structural inequalities, or overlook the unique needs of survivors, ultimately reducing the effectiveness of protection and support mechanisms. Gender sensitization is not just an optional training component but a fundamental requirement for effective VAWG service provision. By fostering empathetic, survivor-centered, and legally informed responses, it enhances access to justice, protection mechanisms, and rehabilitation support. Without it, VAWG service provision risks reinforcing gender inequalities, deterring survivors from seeking help, and failing to hold perpetrators accountable.

In the Humqadam Project, gender remained a core component across all trainings, ensuring that participants developed a strong understanding of gender-related issues and their implications in service provision. Two key structured training initiatives—with LHWs and Nikahkhawans—illustrate this emphasis.

The training for LHWs, titled “Gender Sensitization of LHWs,” was designed to enhance their awareness of gender-based violence (GBV), violence against women (VAW), and legal protections for women and girls. The project successfully trained 83 LHWs across four districts: Benazirabad, Hyderabad, Quetta, and Swat.

During the evaluation, the team reviewed all training reports; however, no pre- and post-training assessments were available, limiting the ability to measure learning progression quantitatively. Despite this, accumulative participant feedback suggested that trainees became better informed about GBV issues. In Quetta, 22 participants provided detailed feedback, with 14 (64%) reporting that they gained new knowledge on gender issues, GBV, VAW, and the legal protections available to women and girls.

Another category of duty bearers engaged in the Humqadam Project was Nikahkhawans, who play a critical role in marriage solemnization and ensuring compliance with legal provisions. The project trained 117 Nikahkhawans across all six project-implemented districts, equipping them with knowledge on Family Laws, Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (CEAM) laws, and their legal responsibilities under these frameworks.

Throughout the training, discussions frequently centered on gender disparities in society, emphasizing how legal protections are designed to safeguard the rights of women and girls. These sessions aimed to sensitize Nikahkhawans on their role in preventing child and forced marriages and ensuring that marriage contracts (Nikahnama) are properly completed and legally valid.

The evaluation team reviewed training reports from all six districts, but pre- and post-training assessments were not included, limiting the ability to measure knowledge improvement quantitatively. However, participant feedback strongly indicated enhanced understanding of legal frameworks and gender issues. Among the 117 trained Nikahkhawans, 70% reported increased awareness of legal provisions. The evaluation team also conducted FGDs in all four evaluation selected districts with 23 Nikahkhawan. Out of these 23 Nikahkhawan 77% acknowledge they have better understanding of issues surrounding VAWG and CEAM. Out of these 23 Nikahkhawan 15 said they are regularly verifying the age of brides using CNICs.

It can be stated the training successfully improved awareness among Nikahkhawans about VAWG and CEAM laws, which is a necessary foundation for gender sensitization. However, without deeper engagement in changing mindsets and challenging discriminatory norms, it remains more of a legal awareness initiative than a comprehensive gender sensitization. To fully categorize it as gender sensitization, the training would need to explicitly address gender power structures, societal biases, and promote advocacy for gender equality alongside legal education.

The project also engaged 120 duty bearers through networking meetings, ensuring participation from key officials in relevant response mechanisms such as law enforcement agencies, social welfare departments, women's commissions, crisis centers, and local government department. These duty bearers hold influential positions in VAWG response and protection systems, making their awareness and commitment to gender-sensitive approaches critical for institutional change.

To assess the effectiveness of this engagement, the evaluation team conducted 20 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) across four selected evaluation districts, focusing on duty bearers who were actively involved in the referral pathways established under the Humqadam project. Findings revealed that 19 out of 20 duty bearers demonstrated a clear understanding of GBV, including its root causes such as economic dependency, deeply ingrained cultural norms, and the lack of societal awareness regarding women's rights and protections. Their responses reflected an awareness of the structural and systemic factors contributing to VAWG, which is essential for implementing effective prevention and response strategies.

Additionally, 17 out of 20 duty bearers reported having attended multiple gender sensitization training sessions conducted by various organizations including SG. They also acknowledged that they were actively applying the learnings from these training programs in their professional roles, including improving survivor-centered response mechanisms, strengthening legal enforcement, and advocating for gender-sensitive policies within their departments. This indicates that the cumulative effect of continuous training and engagement efforts has contributed to a more gender-responsive approach within institutions addressing GBV. However, while knowledge and awareness were evident, the extent to which these duty bearers implemented systemic changes within their organizations was not fully assessed, leaving room for further institutional reinforcement and accountability mechanisms.

## **Examples of Gender Sensitive Responses.**

A duty bearer from the Tahafuz Center in Lahore used her training on gender-based violence (GBV) to conduct community sessions that empowered a young woman to report domestic violence for the first time. Through her efforts, the woman received shelter, counseling, and legal support from local authorities and NGOs. The success stemmed from her ability to build trust and create a safe space for survivors, highlighting the transformative impact of such training on addressing GBV.

Chairperson of BCSW in Quetta successfully halted the early marriage of a 14-year-old girl by using communication and legal skills gained from a child rights training session. She persuaded religious leaders and the girl's family to reconsider, resulting in the girl's re-enrollment in school with support from a local NGO. This intervention highlights the critical role of gender sensitization in addressing sensitive cultural issues effectively.

At the Messac Center in Lahore a duty bearer introduced a survivor-centered protocol for handling GBV cases after receiving training. The protocol ensured immediate access to legal aid, medical assistance, and counseling services. Training on gender responsiveness and institutional frameworks (received from various institutions) was key in equipping the officer with the tools to improve service delivery effectively.

Nikahkhawans are increasingly acting as key advocates against early-age marriages, balancing their roles as officials and community influencers. Post-training, around 10 participants reported refusing to conduct underage marriages, demonstrating increased legal awareness and a willingness to challenge traditional norms. Success Stories: In three instances, families changed their stance after interventions, showcasing the potential of community education and dialogue when supported by Nikahkhawans' advocacy.

Failures and Limitations: In two cases, refusals were overruled by influential community members, highlighting the need for stronger systemic support to empower Nikahkhawans in enforcing legal and ethical standards.

## **Conclusion**

The indicator 2.2.1 of Output 2 was achieved at a medium level. The Humqadam Project effectively integrated gender sensitization into its training and engagement with duty bearers, enhancing their awareness of VAWG, legal frameworks, and their roles in addressing gender-based violence. The project trained 83 LHWs, 117 Nikahkhawans, and engaged 120 duty bearers through networking meetings, contributing to increased knowledge and behavioral shifts.

Among LHWs, 64% out of 22 in Quetta training reported gaining new knowledge on gender issues, GBV, and VAW legal protections. Among 117 trained Nikahkhawans, 70% reported increased awareness of legal provisions, and 77% (from a sample of 23) acknowledged a better understanding of VAWG and CEAM. Additionally, 15 Nikahkhawans (out of 23 FGDs participants) confirmed regularly verifying brides' ages using CNICs, demonstrating improved adherence to legal requirements.

The project also engaged 120 duty bearers, with 19 out of 20 KIIs confirming strong awareness of GBV and its systemic causes. Additionally, 17 out of 20 duty bearers had undergone previous gender sensitization trainings, with many organizations, reported applying their learnings in legal enforcement, survivor-centered service provision, and advocacy.

Despite these achievements, the absence of pre- and post-training assessments limits the ability to measure long-term knowledge retention and institutional application. Cultural resistance and systemic gaps in law enforcement and service provision remained challenges. Engaging service providers late in the project also posed constraints on capacity-building and long-term impact tracking. While gender sensitization efforts successfully increased awareness and influenced behavioral changes, the lack of structured assessments and long-term tracking mechanisms prevents a full high achievement rating.

### **Conclusion of Output 2.2**

Output 2.2 was achieved at medium level. The Humqadam Project effectively enhanced gender sensitization among service providers and duty bearers, improving their awareness of VAWG, legal frameworks, and survivor-centered response mechanisms. The project trained 83 (HWs, 117 Nikahkhawans, and engaged 120 duty bearers through networking meetings.

Among LHWs, 64% of 22 participants in Quetta training reported gaining new knowledge on GBV, VAW, and legal protections. Among 117 Nikahkhawans, 70% reported increased awareness of legal provisions, while 77% (out of 23 FGDs participants) acknowledged a better understanding of VAWG and CEAM. Additionally, 15 Nikahkhawans (out of 23 participants of FGDs) confirmed regularly verifying the age of brides using CNICs, demonstrating practical application of their training.

The project also engaged 120 duty bearers, with 19 out of 20 KIIs confirming strong awareness of GBV and its systemic causes. 17 out of 20 duty bearers had undergone previous gender sensitization trainings and applied their learnings in legal enforcement, survivor-centered response, and advocacy.

Some behavioral changes were observed, such as Nikahkhawans refusing to perform underage marriages and duty bearers recognizing GBV beyond physical violence to include psychological and systemic abuse. Institutional changes were noted, including introducing SOPs for handling GBV cases and developing survivor-centered service protocols. Success stories highlighted interventions to prevent child marriage and improve GBV case handling in shelters and crisis centers.

However, gaps remain due to the absence of pre- and post-training assessments, systemic cultural resistance, and limited tracking of long-term institutional changes. Late engagement of duty bearers also restricted deeper capacity-building efforts.

### **Output 2.3: Enhancing Access to Preventive and Response Services/Tools**

Under this output SG developed Referral Directories in all six districts having all the relevant information to navigate the support services of GBV, DV. The second tool was the Humqadam GBV App, which is a user-friendly mobile application developed to assist survivors of GBV in Pakistan. Launched in May 2024 by SG, in collaboration with the NCSW and with technical support from LUMS, the app aims to provide comprehensive support to women facing physical and emotional violence.

The outcome was evaluated under three indicators.

#### **Indicator 2.3.1: Number of districts mapped and added to the Humqadam App**

It was envisioned in the project goal that women and girls at increased risk of DV or CEAM, who face barriers in accessing response mechanisms due to COVID-19, have enhanced access to strengthened community support systems and improved guidance tools across Vehari, Mardan, Swat, Quetta, Hyderabad, and Benazirabad. Expanded access to improved guidance tools has also been ensured in Peshawar, Jafferabad, Karachi, Shahdadt, Mirpurkhas, Muzaffargarh, Okara, Toba Tek Singh, and Kasur, facilitating better-informed decision-making, increased legal awareness, and more effective referral pathways for survivors and at-risk individuals.

Shahdadt was replaced with Larkana, Mirpurkhas with Rawalpindi, and Muzaffargarh with Multan due to the centrality and strategic importance of the newly selected districts, ensuring broader accessibility and improved outreach. The breakdown of the districts covered, along with the information collected and integrated into the Humqadam App, is provided in the accompanying table.

**Table 16: Geographical Coverage of Humqadam App**

Balochistan	Khyber Pakhtunkhawa	Punjab	Sindh
1. Quetta (Provincial Capital)	3. Peshawar (Provincial Capital)	6. Lahore (provincial Capital)	13. Karachi (Provincial Capital)
2. Jafferabad	4. Mardan	7. Kasur	14. Benazirabad
	5. Swat	8. Multan	15. Hyderabad
		9. Okara	16. Larkana
		10. Rawalpindi	
		11. Toba	
		12. Vehari	

(Table 16 provides a detailed overview of the geographical reach of the Humqadam App, listing the districts where services were mapped and integrated into the platform. It highlights the 16 districts covered, ensuring that women and girls at risk of DV and CEAM have access to essential response mechanisms and support services.)

As planned in the project, services across all 16 districts were mapped and integrated into the Humqadam App to enhance access to response mechanisms for women and girls at risk of domestic violence and child/early-age marriages. In these districts, secondary beneficiaries, including community facilitators, women/human rights defenders (W/HRDs), civil society organizations (CSOs), duty-bearers, and service providers, were expected to use the app and printed materials to access legal frameworks, existing services, and step-by-step guidance on assisting and responding to women and girls at risk and survivors seeking support. Additionally, provincial women's commissions, women's departments, and VAW/G-specific units or cells were planned to benefit from the app by gaining easy access to legal information and procedural guidance for their staff, members, and networks, ensuring a more coordinated and informed response to gender-based violence.

However, due to delays in finalizing and verifying the information, the app's official launch could not be conducted simultaneously across all districts. As a result, widespread publicity and awareness campaigns for the app were also impacted, limiting its initial reach and adoption. This delay affected the app's ability to fully serve as a comprehensive resource at the intended scale during the project period.

## **Conclusion**

Indicator 2.3.1 is achieved at a medium level. While services were successfully mapped and integrated into the Humqadam App across 16 districts, aligning with the project's geographic coverage goals, delays in finalizing and verifying information prevented a simultaneous launch across all areas. As a result, publicity and awareness efforts were limited, reducing initial adoption and accessibility for women and girls in need of response mechanisms. Although the intended coverage was met, the delayed rollout and lack of widespread awareness hindered the app's full utilization, preventing it from reaching its maximum impact during the project period.

### *Output Indicator 2.3.2: Non android versions of the app developed*

Digital tools play a crucial role in overcoming accessibility challenges in remote areas by ensuring that essential information and services reach communities that might otherwise be disconnected from support mechanisms. However, a key concern with digital interventions is the risk of excluding individuals who do not own Android smart phones or have reliable internet access, particularly in underprivileged and rural regions where digital infrastructure is limited. To address this issue, the Humqadam App was designed with offline accessibility, ensuring that women, community facilitators, and service providers in areas with poor or no internet coverage could still access legal information, referral services, and step-by-step guidance on gender-based violence (GBV) response mechanisms.

By integrating an offline feature, the project ensured that critical support remained inclusive and available, preventing the marginalization of those who face technological and infrastructural barriers. This approach helped bridge the digital divide, making information and resources more equitable and widely accessible across all target districts. However, since this

intervention was implemented during the no-cost extension period, there was insufficient time to conduct a thorough assessment of its actual usage, effectiveness, and impact on beneficiaries. As a result, while the offline functionality addressed accessibility concerns in theory, its real-world adoption and success in improving access to services remain undocumented, leaving a gap in measuring its full potential.

## **Conclusion**

The Indicator 2.3.2 is met at a medium level. The development of a non-Android version of the Humqadam App successfully addressed accessibility concerns by ensuring that women, community facilitators, and service providers in remote and underprivileged areas could access legal information and response mechanisms without requiring Android smart phones or internet connectivity. This intervention effectively mitigated the risk of excluding non-Smartphone users, making digital tools more inclusive.

However, since this feature was introduced during the no-cost extension period, there was insufficient time to assess its real-world usage, adoption, and effectiveness among target beneficiaries. While the technical work was completed, the absence of impact data and user feedback leaves a gap in evaluating how effectively the non-Android version was utilized in enhancing access to GBV response services. Given that the key technical milestone was achieved but its actual reach remains undocumented, the indicator is assessed as medium to high in achievement.

### *Output Indicator 2.3.3: Number of duty bearers oriented*

The Humqadam App was developed not only to facilitate women and girls at risk but also to support community facilitators, key service providers, and duty bearers in developing referral pathways and strengthening response mechanisms. Community facilitators played a crucial role in bridging the gap between survivors and support services, while duty bearers and service providers utilized the app to enhance coordination, improve service delivery, and access legal frameworks to guide their interventions.

The orientation of the app was an integral component of all networking and orientation meetings with duty bearers, ensuring that key stakeholders were familiar with its functions and could integrate it into their work. SG provided app orientation to over 200 duty bearers, as confirmed through networking meeting reports. Additionally, a formal launch event was conducted, where the developers of the app gave a comprehensive presentation, guiding participants on how to navigate its features and download it onto their devices. While the target for app orientation was successfully met, the actual rate of app downloads and its integration into everyday work by duty bearers remains uncertain, as no structured tracking mechanism was in place. However, 20 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) across the four evaluation-selected districts provided some insights into user feedback and perceptions.

The launch of the Humqadam App was widely appreciated by government officials, legislators, and civil society representatives, who recognized its potential to streamline access to GBV response services and legal support. By offering a centralized platform for information and assistance, the app empowers survivors, service providers, and facilitators to effectively navigate available services, legal frameworks, and referral mechanisms, thereby contributing to broader efforts in combating gender-based violence (GBV) across the country. On the occasion of App launch in Islamabad on May 21, 2024 several key speakers highlighted the importance of the app.<sup>16</sup>

The Chairperson of NCSW said: *“A woman who is a victim of domestic violence cannot look towards her family for support and this is where this [mobile] application helps,”* adding that the initiative would also help in the capacity building of law enforcers and the health authorities.”

A Former MNA, stressed the need to raise awareness to make this initiative successful by introducing this in universities, among women lawyers, and influencers which she termed the “pockets of change”.

Secretary Women Development Department, Lahore, during the KII gave her remarks about the App:

*“Before the introduction of this app, my engagement with SG (SG) through their publications and initiatives had already shaped my perspectives significantly. However, the development of this app has taken their impact to a new level. The app addresses a major gap in the VAWG ecosystem, which has historically lacked consolidation and inter-agency collaboration. By providing comprehensive information on the types of violence, the agencies involved, and the available support mechanisms, the app fills a critical need. It also emphasizes essential areas often overlooked, such as counseling for trauma, understanding the dangers of pregnancy for survivors, and recognizing the importance of parenting skills and self-care for women.*

*This initiative is more than just a resource; it is a catalyst for systemic improvement. By consolidating information and fostering collaboration between government bodies and civil society, the app strengthens the VAWG ecosystem. It plays a vital role in evolving the system, deepening its reach, and fostering societal awareness, making it an invaluable tool for empowering women and ensuring their voices are heard”.*

Chairperson, BCSW, Quetta:

*“The app has played a crucial role in raising awareness about available resources for survivors. It’s helping bridge the gap between survivors and service providers.”*

Although the tool is ready and available for use, similar to other activities under Outcome 2, the launch of the app faced delays. As a result, it was not rolled out in all the selected districts as initially planned. The feedback captured in this section primarily reflects input from duty bearers, while responses from other stakeholders were documented under the broader project goal. Due to the brief period after its launch and the limited publicity surrounding it, a

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2024/05/21/humqadam-app-launched-to-support-survivors-of-gender-based-violence/>

comprehensive assessment of the app's utility and effectiveness was not feasible. Furthermore, there was insufficient awareness among key stakeholders, which hindered the ability to fully gauge the app's potential impact and the extent of its reach and effectiveness in achieving its objectives.

## **Conclusion**

Indicator 2.3.3 was met at a high level in terms of orientation targets but remains unverified in terms of actual usage and impact. The overall rating of its achievement is medium to high.

The project successfully provided app orientation to over 200 duty bearers, meeting the intended target, as confirmed through networking meeting reports. Additionally, the formal launch event in Islamabad on May 21, 2024, reinforced orientation efforts, where app developers provided a comprehensive presentation and assisted participants in downloading the app. Several government officials, legislators, and civil society representatives acknowledged the app's potential to streamline GBV response services and legal support, emphasizing its role in bridging service gaps and enhancing coordination.

However, despite successful orientation efforts, challenges remained in assessing actual adoption and usage. Due to delays in the app's rollout and limited publicity, it was not widely launched across all selected districts as initially planned. While duty bearers were introduced to the app, no structured mechanism existed to track its regular use in their daily work. Furthermore, a short post-launch period and insufficient awareness among key stakeholders hindered comprehensive evaluation of its effectiveness in enhancing service coordination and response pathways. Thus, while the target for orientation was successfully met, the real-world impact of the app on duty bearers' work and survivor support remains undocumented, leading to an overall rating of medium to high achievement for this indicator.

## **Conclusion of Output 2.3**

Output 2.3 was achieved at a medium level, with significant progress in developing digital tools but challenges in awareness, adoption, and impact assessment. The Humqadam GBV App and Referral Directories were successfully developed and services were mapped across 16 districts, ensuring broader accessibility for survivors, facilitators, and duty bearers.

While the offline version of the app helped address digital accessibility barriers, its real-world usage remains undocumented due to limited time for assessment. Similarly, over 200 duty bearers were trained on using the app, but no structured tracking mechanism was in place to evaluate its practical application in their daily work.

Delays in finalizing information and app rollout limited publicity and awareness efforts, affecting overall adoption and effectiveness. Despite these challenges, the technical milestones were achieved, but the actual impact of these tools on service accessibility and survivor support remains unverified.

Overall, Output 2.3 was assessed at a medium level, with strong progress in tool development but gaps in utilization and long-term impact measurement.

**EQ 2: What factors contributed to or hindered the achievement of these goals, outcomes, and outputs?**

**Contributing Factors**

The Humqadam Project demonstrated strong community engagement, capacity building, policy advocacy, and institutional collaboration, leading to increased awareness, policy advancements, and improved service provision. However, challenges such as cultural resistance, systemic barriers, and gaps in impact measurement affected the full realization of project goals.

**1. Strong Community Engagement**

***Grassroots Involvement***

The project emphasized deep engagement with communities to address deeply entrenched societal issues such as GBV, DV and CEAM. Tools like Gup Shup sessions were central to this strategy. These informal, interactive dialogues provided a culturally sensitive platform for women and girls to openly share their experiences, voice concerns, and learn about their rights. By fostering trust and inclusivity, these sessions not only empowered participants but also encouraged collective action within communities. Topics ranged from the impacts of early-age marriages to the importance of accessing legal and social support services.

A community facilitator from Lahore, reflected on the effectiveness of Gup Shup sessions during a KII conducted on 25th November 2024:

*“During Gup Shup sessions, women reported feeling more confident in identifying harmful practices and accessing the resources introduced by the project, such as the Humqadam App and referral services”.*

The grassroots engagement approach fostered trust between the project team and the communities, ensuring long-term sustainability and buy-in for project goals.

**2. Role of Community Facilitators**

Community facilitators played a vital role in mobilizing communities, raising awareness, and connecting survivors to essential services, ensuring that marginalized groups, particularly women and girls, were informed about legal protections against VAWG and CEAM. Their deep community integration fostered trust and sustained engagement, making it easier for at-risk individuals to seek support without fear of stigma or retaliation. Across six project-implemented districts, facilitators conducted 900 awareness sessions on CEAM and VAWG, held 120 sessions on domestic violence and legal recourse, mobilized 2,480 families for the VFF campaign, facilitated 1,200 birth registrations to secure legal identity for young girls, and provided support to 600 survivors, linking them to legal aid, medical assistance, shelters, and psychosocial services. Through Gup Shup sessions and community dialogues, facilitators created safe spaces for women and girls, encouraging them to discuss experiences, seek guidance, and access protection services. Their community-based, culturally sensitive approach empowered women and girls to break the cycle of silence and assert their rights. The

effectiveness of community facilitators was evident in evaluation findings, where 79.53% of 679 community survey participants rated them as very effective. Without their support, large-scale outreach and grassroots engagement would not have been possible, making them a key driver in the project's success.

### ***3. High Female Participation***

Women played a pivotal role in the project's success, demonstrating high levels of participation in awareness, advocacy, and capacity-building activities across the four evaluation-selected districts. Their engagement was crucial in challenging societal norms, increasing access to legal protections, and fostering collective action against VAWG and CEAM. A total of 953 women attended Gup Shup sessions, which provided safe spaces for open discussions on gender-based violence, legal rights, and survivor support mechanisms. Additionally, 7,250 women participated in community awareness sessions on CEAM and VAWG, while 1,304 women attended sessions on domestic violence and reporting mechanisms, equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to seek legal recourse and access survivor services. More than 300 women took part in exposure visits to service-providing institutions, such as police stations, crisis centers, and shelter homes, helping them understand the institutional response to gender-based violence and available support systems. The project's effectiveness in reaching women was further validated by community survey findings, where out of 679 community survey respondent 73.6% female respondents confirmed their participation in awareness and capacity-building activities. This high level of women's participation underscores the success of targeted outreach strategies, particularly in patriarchal societies where women's voices are often marginalized. By ensuring women's active involvement, the project strengthened their agency, empowered them to advocate for their rights, and built community-level resilience against gender-based violence. Their direct exposure to legal mechanisms and service institutions further enhanced their capacity to navigate support systems, challenge harmful norms, and become advocates within their families and communities.

### ***4. Engaging Male as Strategic Partner***

Engaging men as strategic partners in the Humqadam project was vital for addressing the root causes of gender-based violence (GBV) and CEAM by challenging patriarchal norms and fostering shared responsibility for gender equality. Men were involved as allies to promote cultural shifts, reduce resistance to change, and amplify the project's impact through their roles as decision-makers and influencers in families and communities.

In the four evaluation-selected districts, 6,256 men participated in awareness sessions on VAWG and CEAM, while 809 men attended sessions on DV and reporting mechanisms for VAW cases. Out of 239 men in community survey 121 (50%) confirmed their participation in VAWG and CEAM awareness sessions.

Additionally, engaging male heads of 2480 VFF household, signing pledges and making them accountable for improving women's situations within their families' encouraged concrete

actions and commitments, ensuring their role as advocates for gender equality and sustainable societal change.

By actively engaging men in discussions on domestic violence and gender equality, the project encouraged broader community support for its objectives. 60% of community survey respondents recognized men's participation as a key driver of behavior change, emphasizing its role in challenging harmful norms and fostering collective responsibility for gender justice.

CEO of Chanan Organization in Lahore, reflected on men's engagement in the VFF initiative:

*“People recall the Violence-Free Family sessions and the commitments made during these sessions. The public promises made by men have created a sense of accountability and realization about the need to eliminate violence within their homes.”*

### **5. Creative Methodologies Used for Community Mobilization and Awareness**

The participatory tools and dialogue methodologies used in the Humqadam project were crucial in fostering community engagement, building knowledge, and promoting cultural and behavioral shifts to address gender-based violence (GBV) and CEAM.

Among the various participatory tools used in the Humqadam project, interactive theater proved to be the most effective in attracting and engaging a diverse audience. These methods created emotional connections, made complex issues relatable, and encouraged open discussions on gender-based violence (GBV) and CEAM. Unlike structured discussions, theater performances were accessible to all, including men, women, youth, and elders. Post-performance discussions allowed community members to express their thoughts, ask questions, and participate in local advocacy. Theater did not require literacy, making it more effective for reaching wider sections of the community. While other methods, such as Gup Shup sessions and mass media, played important roles, interactive theater had the strongest impact in mobilizing communities, challenging harmful norms, and encouraging sustained engagement. Out of 21 community facilitators interviewed 16 found theater as the most engaging tool in creating awareness and engaging communities.

### **6. Capacity Building**

Capacity building was a key contributing factor in the Humqadam project as it equipped stakeholders with the knowledge, skills, and tools to address CEAM and VAWG effectively. Training programs targeted at community facilitators, Nikah registrars, LHWs, and duty bearers played a transformative role, leading to significant behavioral changes.

Talking about the importance of trained facilitator a CBO member from Lahore shared his thought in a KII conducted on 27<sup>th</sup> of November 2024:

*“The presence of trained facilitators created safe spaces for open dialogue, where community members felt empowered to discuss sensitive issues, seek help, and make informed decisions. Over time, their influence extended beyond awareness-raising; they played an active role in preventing underage marriages, reporting cases of violence, and mobilizing local action for gender justice”*

Trained Nikahkhwana reported rejecting underage marriage proposals and actively advocating for compliance with legal frameworks. Out of 23 Nikahkhwana who participated in FGDs and were part of SG training 15 said they now regularly verify the age of brides using CNIC, which is an important step in prevention of CEAM. Additionally, **empowering duty bearers** like police officers and social welfare staff enhanced institutional responses by deepening their understanding of laws and their roles in protecting vulnerable populations. These efforts fostered accountability, improved service delivery, and created a foundation for sustainable change within communities.

### **7. Use of Technology and Resources**

The use of technology was an important factor in the success of the Humqadam project, enhancing accessibility, communication, and coordination among stakeholders. The Humqadam App, a bilingual tool, empowered survivors by providing critical information on legal rights, support services, and step-by-step guidance for addressing GBV. Its offline functionality ensured that even in remote areas with limited internet connectivity, survivors could access vital resources, when needed. Referral directories further streamlined the response mechanisms by offering quick access to help lines, legal aid, and healthcare providers, enabling timely support. Additionally, WhatsApp groups created for key stakeholders, such as community facilitators and Nikahkhwana, facilitated real-time communication, updates, and the exchange of information, improving coordination and the overall effectiveness of interventions. These technological tools significantly enhanced the project's reach, efficiency, and impact.

The PCSW lawyer, who conducted the Nikahkhwana training in Lahore, shared in his Key Informant Interview (KII)

*“Even after the project had officially concluded, on daily basis I receive numerous queries from Nikahkhwana through the WhatsApp group created during the training. This platform proved to be an invaluable tool for ongoing communication, allowing Nikahkhwana to seek clarifications, discuss legal complexities, and share experiences in real time.”*

### **8. Institutional Collaboration**

Institutional collaboration was a critical factor in the success of the Humqadam project, fostering systemic improvements and ensuring sustainable impact. Multi-sectoral engagement with Women’s Commissions, police, social welfare departments, and other institutions strengthened advocacy efforts and facilitated practical changes, such as the establishment of GBV desks in police stations and enhanced coordination among stakeholders. These partnerships bridged institutional gaps and improved the delivery of support services. Additionally, policy advocacy efforts involving provincial assemblies and ministries ensured that legislative reforms, such as amendments to the Child Marriage Restraint Act and the drafting of the Balochistan Women Protection Bill, remained at the forefront of government agendas. By aligning with institutional priorities and leveraging cross-sector collaboration, the project amplified its reach and effectiveness, creating an enabling environment for long-term change.

## **9. Public Engagement Campaigns**

Public engagement campaigns were important in raising awareness, mobilizing communities, and generating public support for key legislative reforms. Press conferences, awareness walks, and public events highlighted critical issues like VAWG and CEAM, drawing attention to legislative gaps and advocating for reforms such as raising the legal age of marriage and passing the Women Protection Bill. These campaigns fostered solidarity among diverse groups, including community members, civil society, and policymakers, creating a unified voice to push for change. The visibility generated through these activities not only amplified the project's message but also built a broad base of support, ensuring sustained advocacy and long-term impact.

### **Conclusion of Contributing Factors**

The Humqadam Project successfully demonstrated how community engagement, capacity building, institutional collaboration, can drive meaningful change in addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and CEAM. By leveraging grassroots mobilization, empowering community facilitators, and fostering multi-sector partnerships, the project made significant strides in raising awareness, improving service provision, and influencing policy discourse. The strategic use of interactive methodologies, technology, and localized interventions ensured that information and support were accessible to diverse community members, especially women and girls.

### **Hindering Factors**

#### **1. Cultural and Social Barriers**

These barriers significantly hindered the success of the Humqadam project by limiting its reach and impact. Resistance to change driven by entrenched patriarchal norms and opposition from traditional and religious groups slowed progress, particularly in regions like Balochistan and Benazirabad. Women faced stigma, fear of retaliation, and social isolation when attempting to report GBV or resist early-age marriages, which weakened the effectiveness of advocacy efforts. Low levels of public education in rural and underserved areas further compounded these challenges, as communities often struggled to understand technical information about laws, legal rights, and available support services, reducing their ability to engage with the project's objectives. These barriers highlight the critical need for tailored strategies to address cultural sensitivities, increase educational outreach, and engage men as allies in future interventions.

A male community facilitator from Mardan shared these thoughts in his KII conducted on November 27, 2024

*“A significant challenge came from the clergy, who opposed the project, accusing it of aiming to make women 'khudmukhtar' (independent), though we clarified that the goal was to make them 'baaikhtyar' (empowered). NGOs in Pakistan often face skepticism, particularly when they don't provide tangible benefits”.*

## ***2. Crisis and Disaster***

Crisis and disasters significantly hindered the progress of the Humqadam project by disrupting planned activities, creating safety concerns, and exacerbating community vulnerabilities. Security concerns, such as the resurgence of Taliban activity in Swat and Mardan and political instability in Quetta and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, posed risks to the team's operations, delaying or halting field activities during critical periods. Similarly, natural disasters, including widespread flooding in Year 2 that affected over half the country, severely impacted districts like Hyderabad and Benazirabad. These floods not only delayed project implementation but also deepened the challenges faced by communities, diverting focus to immediate survival needs and recovery efforts. Together, these crises created logistical, safety, and resource constraints, slowing the overall momentum of the project.

## ***3. Systemic Gaps***

Systemic gaps posed challenges to the progress of the Humqadam project by impacting the efficiency and consistency of interventions. Limited inter-agency collaboration among institutions like police, social welfare departments, and civil society organizations resulted in fragmented service delivery, making it harder to address issues like VAWG, and CEAM comprehensively. Additionally, the inconsistent implementation of laws, due to unclear SOPs and capacity constraints within implementing agencies, created further hurdles. These gaps highlighted the importance of strengthening coordination and building the capacity of stakeholders to ensure more seamless and effective project outcomes.

## ***4. Economic Constraints***

Economic constraints hindered the progress of the Humqadam project by straining resources and increasing the vulnerability of both project stakeholders and target communities. Inflation and rising costs exceeded the original budget projections, making it challenging to manage activities within the financial framework. Additionally, food insecurity and livelihood losses among community members and facilitators compounded their hardships, reducing their ability to actively participate in project initiatives. These economic pressures not only delayed implementation but also underscored the need for flexible budgeting and additional support to address the immediate needs of affected stakeholders.

## ***5. Bureaucratic and Procedural Challenges***

Bureaucratic and procedural challenges hindered the progress of the Humqadam project by causing delays and disrupting planned activities. Leadership transitions within partner organizations, such as Women's Commissions, interrupted collaborations and slowed decision-making, affecting the continuity of efforts. Additionally, approval bottlenecks, including delays in securing fieldwork permissions and EAD approvals, significantly impacted timelines in districts like Swat, Mardan, and Vehari. NOC-related constraints further restricted formal engagement with local administrations, limiting the project's ability to operate efficiently. These procedural challenges highlighted the need for streamlined processes and consistent support from key administrative bodies to ensure smoother project implementation.

## **6. Operational Challenges**

The progress of the Humqadam project was hindered by several operational challenges that often intersected and compounded delays. Procedural and logistical delays within the project, such as challenges in coordinating training sessions, consultations, and community events, slowed implementation. Collaboration with multiple stakeholders highlighted the need for more streamlined processes to avoid scheduling conflicts and redundancies.

The project's dependency on external partnerships with institutions like Women's Commissions and government departments further disrupted activities when leadership transitions or procedural delays arose, particularly in KP and Sindh.

At the community level, facilitator attrition caused by economic pressures and ingrained prejudices, especially in areas like Vehari, posed significant obstacles, with gate keeping behaviors further challenging gender equality initiatives.

Additionally, operational barriers, such as inflated fees and delays in birth registration processes in Benazirabad and Lahore, created logistical roadblocks that impacted outcomes. Finally, the cumulative impact of external delays, including security risks, NOC issues, and natural disasters like floods, disrupted project timelines and necessitated continuous adjustments and adaptive strategies.

## **7. Limited Capacity for Follow-Up and Monitoring**

The project faced challenges due to a lack of impact monitoring, even though backstopping mechanisms were in place for activity monitoring. While efforts were made to oversee and support the implementation of activities, the absence of a robust system for tracking long-term outcomes limited the ability to assess the project's overall impact. Without a focus on impact monitoring, it became difficult to measure the extent to which training and interventions translated into meaningful change in the lives of participants and their communities. Strengthening impact monitoring processes would help ensure that the project's goals are being effectively met and that lessons learned can inform future initiatives.

### **Both Contributing and Hindering Factors**

#### **Overall Project Design**

The SG project utilized a Cascade Model, where training and knowledge were passed from central stakeholders to community-level actors. This model had both positive and negative impacts on the Humqadam Project.

On the positive side, it enabled scalability by reaching remote areas efficiently through trained duty bearers, community facilitators, and Nikahkhawans. It fostered localized ownership, allowing community actors to adapt knowledge to their contexts, and was cost-effective by reducing the need for ongoing centralized training. Engaging trusted local stakeholders, such as religious leaders and registrars, also built community trust.

However, challenges arose from potential information dilution with each level of transfer, especially if training quality and follow-up were not maintained. Variability in the capacity and commitment of intermediaries led to inconsistent outcomes. The lack of strong monitoring mechanisms made it difficult to track the effectiveness of grassroots training, and reliance on the initial trainees' dedication meant that underperforming individuals could hinder progress.

Overall, while the cascade model contributed positively when supported by structured follow-ups and resources, gaps in monitoring and consistency occasionally hindered the project, leading to uneven knowledge dissemination and implementation.

## **Conclusion**

The Humqadam Project showcased a multi-faceted approach to addressing gender-based violence (GBV), DV, and CEAM through community engagement, capacity building, policy advocacy, and institutional collaboration. By employing grassroots mobilization strategies, fostering strong community participation, and integrating innovative awareness methodologies, the project successfully challenged harmful norms, empowered key stakeholders, and enhanced institutional response mechanisms. The active involvement of community facilitators, women, and male allies was instrumental in breaking cycles of silence, promoting legal awareness, and strengthening support networks for survivors.

Despite notable achievements, the project encountered challenges such as cultural resistance, bureaucratic hurdles, and systemic gaps in legal enforcement, and economic constraints that limited the full realization of its objectives. Natural disasters, political instability, and operational delays further complicated implementation. However, adaptive strategies, including technology-driven solutions like the Humqadam App, community-based interventions, and cross-sector collaborations, helped sustain momentum and ensure lasting impact.

### ***EQ 3: How were any challenges addressed during project implementation?***

This section is based on the review of the project's three-year reports to the UN Trust Fund, analyzing the challenges faced and the strategies used to overcome them. It highlighted key insights, the effectiveness of mitigation efforts, and how these strategies helped ensure the project's success and sustainability despite obstacles.

## **Cultural and Social Barriers**

**Challenge:** Cultural resistance, especially in regions like Balochistan and Benazirabad, hindered the Humqadam project. Deeply rooted patriarchal norms, opposition from religious groups, and social stigma prevented women from reporting GBV or resisting early-age marriages. Low levels of education and lack of male involvement further limited the project's impact.

**Mitigating Strategy:** The project emphasized cultural sensitivity, ensuring tailored outreach strategies. It engaged religious and community leaders to build trust and counter resistance. Awareness programs targeted both men and women to encourage male allyship and challenge gender norms. Collaborations with CBOs helped facilitate local engagement, enhancing understanding of legal rights and available support services.

A male facilitator from Mardan shared his strategy in a KII conducted on November 27, 2024:

*"We presented our content in a way that showed how relevant the laws and concepts were to the problems they were facing. Gradually, some members of the clergy were convinced, and even village secretaries, after participating in the sessions, began encouraging others. They helped spread the message that the content was not harmful but rather beneficial and could bring positive changes to the community."*

### **Crisis and Disaster**

**Challenge:** Political instability, security concerns, and natural disasters, like flooding in Year 2, disrupted project activities. These crises diverted resources and focus away from the project, particularly in regions like Swat, Mardan, and Benazirabad.

**Mitigating Strategy:** The project implemented flexible planning and response strategies, adjusting timelines and reallocating resources to address emergency needs while keeping long-term objectives intact. The team maintained close communication with local stakeholders to manage risks and reschedule activities as necessary.

**Adjusting Locations and Activities:** In response to security risks and permission issues, the project shifted its activities to safer areas such as Lahore and Karachi. Operations in flood-affected regions were suspended, and efforts were redirected to relief work in other locations.

**Flexible and Adaptive Planning:** The project adapted venue choices, using places like Murree for KP and Karachi for Quetta to ensure participant safety. It also integrated project objectives with relief efforts during floods, maintaining the project's relevance and impact even in the face of crises.

### **Systemic Gaps**

**Challenge:** Weak inter-agency coordination and inconsistent law enforcement hindered the project's efficiency. Fragmented service delivery, lack of clear SOPs, and limited capacity within agencies created barriers to addressing issues like VAWG and child marriage comprehensively.

**Mitigating Strategy:** The project focused on strengthening partnerships and facilitating better coordination among institutions. It worked on building the capacity of local stakeholders, such as police and social welfare departments, and supported the development of clearer SOPs to ensure more effective and aligned interventions.

### **Economic Constraints**

**Challenge:** Inflation and rising costs exceeded the budget, while economic hardships in the communities affected stakeholder participation and the project's execution.

**Mitigating Strategy:** The project identified budget concerns early and requested revisions to align resources with emerging needs, ensuring it stayed within financial limits. To address delays caused by administrative, environmental, and security challenges, the project requested NCE, enabling it to continue its work despite economic pressures.

## **Bureaucratic and Procedural Challenges**

**Challenge:** Leadership transitions, approval delays, and NOC constraints slowed down decision-making and delayed field activities, particularly in districts like Swat, Mardan, and Vehari.

**Mitigating Strategy:** The project established clear communication with government bodies to expedite approvals and developed strategies for continuity during leadership transitions, so that the disruption in project implementation could be minimized. Activities were shifted to locations where permissions were easier to obtain, helping bypass bureaucratic hurdles. The project secured EAD permissions and formal approvals to resume activities in previously restricted districts, such as Swat and Mardan, overcoming procedural delays.

## **Operational Challenges**

**Challenge:** Logistical delays, facilitator attrition, and external barriers like NOC and security risks slowed the project's momentum, particularly in regions like KP and Sindh.

**Mitigating Strategy:** The project streamlined operations by enhancing coordination and refining scheduling processes. It worked on maintaining consistent engagement with stakeholders and implemented adaptive strategies to manage external delays, ensuring that activities experienced minimal disruption. The project's flexibility in adjusting to changing circumstances helped maintain momentum despite challenges.

To counter facilitator attrition, the project replaced departing facilitators with community-active individuals who were familiar with the local context. These new facilitators received focused orientations to ensure they were well-prepared to continue the work. This approach maintained continuity in operations and allowed the project to adapt to workforce changes without losing momentum.

To overcome regional restrictions, particularly in areas like Swat and Mardan, the project organized training sessions for facilitators in Lahore. This creative solution allowed the project to continue its community engagement efforts without interruption, bypassing logistical and security challenges in the original locations.

## **Limited Capacity for Follow-Up and Monitoring**

**Challenge:** The lack of a robust monitoring system made it difficult to track long-term outcomes and measure the impact of interventions.

Though backstopping of the training and awareness sessions were in place there was no mitigating strategies for tracking long term outcomes

## **Conclusion:**

The Humqadam project addressed several key challenges to effectively combat VAWG and CEAM. Cultural resistance in Balochistan and Benazirabad, fueled by deep-rooted patriarchal norms and opposition from religious groups, made it difficult for women to report violence or resist early-age marriages. The project mitigated this by engaging religious leaders and community influencers to foster acceptance of gender-sensitive messaging. Natural disasters

and security risks, including flooding in Year 2 and political instability in Swat and Mardan, disrupted project activities. In response, the project relocated activities to safer areas like Lahore and Karachi and integrated GBV awareness into relief efforts to maintain momentum. Systemic barriers, such as bureaucratic delays, weak law enforcement, and limited inter-agency coordination, slowed institutional interventions. The project navigated procedural hurdles by securing formal approvals and shifting activities to locations where permissions were easier to obtain. Economic constraints, including inflation and rising costs, impacted execution, but strategic budget adjustments and a no-cost extension (NCE) allowed the project to stay on track. Facilitator attrition, especially in high-risk areas, posed a continuity risk, which was mitigated by replacing departing facilitators with community-active individuals and conducting focused orientations. Despite these challenges, the project's flexible planning, community engagement, and institutional partnerships ensured the completion of project activities.

## Relevance

***EQ. 4: To what extent do the achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls?***

### **Project Goal:**

The overarching goal of the Humqadam Project was to enhance access to robust community support systems for women and girls, particularly those at increased risk of DV and CEAM, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and other socio-economic challenges. This goal remains deeply relevant to the ongoing needs of women and girls, particularly in marginalized and underserved regions where systemic barriers to justice, protection, and empowerment are still significant obstacles.

### **Relevance to Needs of Women and Girls:**

#### **Increased Risk During COVID-19:**

The COVID-19 pandemic intensified the vulnerabilities of women and girls across Pakistan. Lockdowns and movement restrictions led to an increase in domestic violence as women and girls became more isolated with their abusers. Economic instability and loss of livelihoods further marginalized women, making them dependent on their abusers, and compounded existing gender inequalities. The breakdown of community and institutional support systems during the pandemic left many women without the protection or services they needed.

#### **How the project goal achieved results will remain relevant:**

**Community-Based Support Systems:** The Humqadam Project established essential, community-driven support structures that have proven to be a lifeline for women and girls during the pandemic and will continue to be crucial in post-pandemic scenarios. The use of local facilitators ensures that women and girls, particularly in rural or flood-affected regions, have continued access to gender-sensitive resources, legal aid, and social services. With trained community facilitators embedded in their local contexts, women and girls will always have a

point of contact for help, advice, and support. These facilitators are trusted members of their communities, making it easier for women and girls to seek support without fear of stigma or retaliation. Their ongoing work ensures that support remains rooted in the community and accessible for those in need, especially in areas where formal institutions may be distant or under-resourced.

During the project evaluation, 21 facilitators were interviewed, out of which 14 (55%) expressed their commitment to continuing awareness-raising efforts on VAWG and CEAM.

Another crucial community support mechanism in preventing CEAM and ensuring women's rights in marriage contracts is the Nikahkhawan. Feedback from training workshops indicated that:

In Quetta, 7 out of 16 (44%) Nikahkhawans committed to discouraging underage marriage registration and ensuring bride consent. In Benazirabad, 15 out of 25 (60%) pledged to continue these efforts.

These findings highlight the sustained impact of community-based interventions, demonstrating that local actors—including facilitators and Nikahkhawans—are key allies in preventing CEAM and promoting women's rights in marriage.

**Mobile Tools and Apps:** The mobile app developed by the project will continue to be an invaluable tool for women who face barriers to accessing services due to geographic isolation or societal constraints. The app provides information about legal rights, health services, and emergency contacts. It will remain especially relevant as it offers discreet access to resources for women facing violence who may not be able to leave their homes due to restrictions or fear of retaliation.

#### **Outcomes:**

The Humqadam Project aimed to achieve several key outcomes, including the creation of a community ecosystem that rejects VAWG, the strengthening of institutional support for survivors, and the promotion of gender-responsive policies. These outcomes are directly aligned with the ongoing and evolving needs of women and girls, particularly those at risk of domestic DV and CEAM. As these challenges persist in communities, the project's outcomes will continue to be highly relevant and impactful in meeting the long-term needs of women and girls.

#### **Relevance to Needs of Women and Girls:**

##### **Increased Access to Support Systems:**

One of the primary outcomes of the project was ensuring that women and girls, particularly those at risk of DV and CEAM, gained increased access to community-based support systems for prevention, protection, and redress. In many marginalized communities, women and girls continue to face severe barriers in accessing legal and social services, whether due to geographical isolation, social stigma, or the lack of awareness about available resources.

### How this Outcome Remains Relevant:

**Sustained Access to Services:** The project’s use of community facilitators, mobile apps, and referral networks ensures that women and girls have continuous access to services, even in remote or underserved areas. These services provide critical support, ranging from legal aid to healthcare and emotional counseling. The 18 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with survivors confirmed that the support services were accessible and effective in times of crisis. Survivors reported receiving timely legal aid, psychosocial support, and medical care through trained facilitators and referral pathways. The presence of community-based facilitators helped bridge gaps between survivors and institutional services. However, some survivors in remote areas faced challenges such as mobility constraints, stigma, and limited awareness of available support.. As long as barriers to accessing such services remain in place, these support systems will continue to be vital.

**Timely Interventions:** The project’s support infrastructure ensures timely intervention in cases of violence or exploitation. Women and girls, especially in rural areas, often experience delays or fail to report incidents of violence due to isolation or fear. By providing direct access to trained facilitators who can act quickly, the project ensures that these women and girls are not left without recourse in moments of crisis.

Several rounds of capacity-building workshops were conducted for facilitators. Feedback from the workshop reports indicated that many participants were eager to apply their learning to raise awareness about VAWG and CEAM within their communities. They also expressed a strong commitment to working towards building a violence-free and more equitable society.

In Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with community facilitators, they were explicitly asked whether they would continue supporting women and girls at risk. The responses from the four evaluation-selected districts provide valuable insights into their commitment post-project.

Table 17: Facilitators Pledged Post Project Support for Women and Girls at Risk

Name of district	Total facilitators interviewed	Facilitators pledged supporting	% of the responses
Benazirabad	6	3	50%
Lahore	5	4	80%
Mardan	5	4	80%
Quetta	5	3	60%
Total	21	14	66%

(The table17 illustrates the percentage of facilitators in four evaluation-selected districts who committed to providing post-project support.)

- Lahore and Mardan had the highest percentage of pledges, with 80% of facilitators in both districts committing to support.
- Quetta had a lower pledge rate at 60%.
- Benazirabad had the lowest support pledge, with only 50% of facilitators committing.

The overall pledge rate across all districts was 66%, indicating varied level of sustained engagement.

### **Behavioral Change in Communities:**

Another significant outcome of the project was the increased community mobilization and the rejection of VAWG. The project's awareness campaigns, including community orientations, theatre productions, and radio messaging, were designed to target not only women but also men and boys, to highlight the importance of shifting harmful cultural norms surrounding gender-based violence and child marriage.

### **How this Outcome Remains Relevant:**

**Shifting Cultural Norms:** One of the most enduring challenges women and girls face is the deeply rooted patriarchal mindset that often justifies violence and discrimination. By changing attitudes and raising awareness about the harmful effects of DV and CEAM, the project is helping to dismantle these cultural barriers. These interventions have the potential to create sustainable societal change, as the next generation of women, men, and children will be more informed and empowered to reject violence and support gender equality.

Responding to the question, "What changes are you observing in yourself after the project intervention?" 45% of respondents (308 out of 679) reported a positive shift in their thinking regarding VAWG and harmful practices. This reflected increased awareness and a growing disapproval of harmful practices within the communities engaged by the project. These mindset changes have contributed to a noticeable decrease in child marriages and VAWG. When individuals recognize and reject harmful practices like child marriages and DV, they disrupt cycles of normalized abuse that have persisted for generations.

A male respondent from a Village in Mardan shared a family situation during the community survey on November 23, 2024:

*"I did not agree to my granddaughter's marriage proposal because of her young age,"*

The case of the male respondent from Mardan refusing an early marriage proposal for his granddaughter reflects a crucial behavioral shift, one where traditional gatekeepers of patriarchal norms start embracing change.

The project has led to 65% of community survey female respondents (285 out of 440 women) reporting increased awareness of their rights and the forms of violence they may face. When women and girls understand their rights, they are more likely to resist coercion, demand access to education, seek legal protection, and make informed life choices. This empowerment helps weaken patriarchal control and shifts the power dynamics in favor of gender equality.

**Involvement of Men and Boys:** Engaging men and boys in discussions about gender equality and the harms of violence ensures that the project's impact goes beyond just women and girls. This involvement is crucial for creating a supportive environment where men actively advocate for women's rights, ensuring that the changes made by women are supported by the broader community. The involvement of men will continue to be relevant as it challenges traditional gender roles and creates allies in the fight against GBV. The project has made notable strides in fostering awareness of women's rights among men, with 38.4% of community survey respondents (261 out of 679 respondents) reporting increased understanding and recognition of women's rights. This shift signals a promising transformation in societal attitudes, paving the way for long-term changes in traditional gender roles and responsibilities.

**Strengthened Institutions and Advocacy for Legal Change:**

A key outcome was the strengthening of local state institutions, such as women's commissions and local government bodies, to ensure they are better equipped to address issues like VAWG and CEAM. In Pakistan, local government bodies and law enforcement agencies often lack the gender sensitivity required to effectively implement laws against GBV and CEAM. Through advocacy and capacity-building, the project worked to make these institutions more responsive and accountable to the needs of women and girls.

**How this Outcome Remains Relevant:**

**Institutional Capacity for Women's Protection:** By building the capacity of local institutions to respond to the needs of women and girls, the project has created a framework that will continue to offer protection and support. Gender-sensitive government bodies and agencies can now better protect women and girls from violence, address issues of early marriage, and provide adequate social support.

**Legal and Policy Changes:** The project's advocacy efforts are critical to ensuring that gender-responsive legal measures are implemented effectively. In Pakistan, where laws protecting women and girls often face challenges in implementation, the project's work with policymakers and duty-bearers is critical to creating lasting change. These legal and institutional reforms will continue to be relevant as they provide a framework for accountability, justice, and long-term protection for women and girls at risk of GBV and CEAM.

**Sustained Advocacy:** As the legal and institutional landscape continues to evolve, the project's advocacy work ensures that women's rights remain at the forefront of policy discussions. This advocacy ensures that the needs of women and girls are continuously addressed through updated policies, legal reforms, and the strengthening of state mechanisms designed to combat gender-based violence.

**Outputs:**

The Humqadam Project delivered several key outputs, including increased awareness, a network of trained facilitators, and enhanced linkages to legal and healthcare services. These outputs are critical in ensuring the long-term relevance and sustainability of the project's efforts to support women and girls, particularly in marginalized communities.

## **Relevance to Needs of Women and Girls:**

### **Improved Knowledge and Awareness:**

The project's community awareness sessions have been a cornerstone in educating women, girls, and entire communities about the legal implications of domestic violence DV, child/early-age marriage CEAM, and their legal rights. In areas where access to such information is limited, these efforts are crucial for empowering women and girls with the knowledge needed to protect them and seek justice.

### **How this Output Will Remain Relevant:**

**Ongoing Education:** The continued outreach and education efforts will remain essential as communities need constant reinforcement of gender equality principles and the recognition of harmful practices like early marriage and domestic violence. These educational efforts ensure that women and girls remain aware of their rights and available services, even as they encounter new challenges in their personal and community lives.

**Cultural Transformation:** The increased awareness around gender equality helps shift entrenched cultural norms that perpetuate violence and discrimination against women and girls. By continuing these awareness campaigns, the project helps make gender equality an integral part of societal values, which will remain relevant as these societal changes are carried forward in future generations.

### **Capacity Building of Facilitators and Duty-Bearers:**

Training 260 community facilitators has created a network of knowledgeable, trusted individuals who can offer ongoing support to women and girls facing violence. Out of the 21 community facilitators interviewed across the four evaluation-selected districts, 14 (66%) committed to continuing their support for women and girls at risk of violence even after the project's conclusion. This localized network ensures that women have a reliable point of contact for help and protection, ensuring that the support systems in place are sustainable and accessible.

### **How this Output Will Remain Relevant:**

**Long-Term Support:** The trained facilitators, embedded within their communities, will continue to provide essential support to women and girls, ensuring that the project's impact is sustained. These facilitators can act as a first point of contact for women in need, helping them navigate legal, healthcare, and social services. This local, community-based network will be particularly relevant in areas where formal institutions may be inaccessible or less trusted.

**Empowerment of Local Leaders:** By focusing on building the capacity of local duty-bearers (community leaders, local service providers, etc.), the project ensures that women and girls have trusted advocates in their own communities. This creates a sustainable support structure, reducing dependence on external aid and ensuring long-term empowerment and protection for women and girls.

**Increased Access to Legal and Health Services:**

The development of a mobile app that provides information on legal rights, emergency contacts, and healthcare services has been a crucial tool, especially for women and girls in remote or underserved areas where access to physical services may be limited. Additionally, the project's efforts to link community facilitators with local service providers (legal, healthcare, etc.) have ensured that women and girls continue to have access to a broad range of essential services.

**How this Output Will Remain Relevant:**

**Sustained Access to Services:** The mobile app ensures women and girls can access critical information on their rights, healthcare options, and emergency services anytime, regardless of geographic or social constraints. As technology continues to evolve, the app can be updated and expanded to include more resources, ensuring that women and girls in remote areas continue to benefit from it.

**Holistic Support:** By establishing connections between community facilitators and local service providers, the project ensures that women have access to a comprehensive support system that addresses their multiple needs—legal, health, and social. These ongoing linkages will remain relevant as long as the need for integrated support services persists, ensuring a holistic approach to meeting the needs of women and girls.

**Behavioral Change Campaigns and Public Engagement:**

The project's innovative campaigns through theatre, radio, and social media have helped raise awareness about VAWG and early marriages. These public campaigns have contributed to a broader societal push for change, shifting attitudes and challenging harmful cultural practices that perpetuate gender-based violence.

**How this Output Will Remain Relevant:**

**Sustaining Societal Change:** The public engagement efforts will remain impactful because they provide an ongoing dialogue about women's rights and gender-based violence. This societal shift in attitudes will continue to make these topics visible, ensuring that they remain a part of public discourse and continue to challenge harmful practices.

**Reinforcement of Awareness:** Even though the project has concluded, reinforcement of engagement will continue through partnerships with local organizations, community facilitators, and government agencies that were empowered during the project. These stakeholders will carry forward the awareness campaigns, integrating the project's lessons into their ongoing activities. Additionally, the project's methodologies and resources have been incorporated into local and regional plans, ensuring that awareness of gender-based violence and women's rights continues to evolve and reach new generations.

## Conclusion

The Humqadam Project has established a sustainable and relevant framework to meet the ongoing needs of women and girls. By focusing on community-based support systems, local facilitators, and mobile tools, the project ensures that women continue to have access to essential services and support, especially in underserved areas. The awareness campaigns and capacity-building efforts within local institutions further ensure long-term impact by shifting cultural norms and strengthening institutional responses to gender-based violence and child marriage. These efforts, combined with the continued relevance of the mobile app and local facilitators, create a lasting foundation for the empowerment, protection, and support of women and girls, ensuring that the project's impact endures beyond its completion.

### *EQ.5: Were project strategies and activities relevant and appropriate to the needs of women and girls?*

The strategies and activities implemented by the Humqadam Project were not only highly relevant to the needs of women and girls, but also appropriate in addressing the challenges they face, particularly those at risk of DV and CEAM. The project was tailored to the specific context of the target areas, ensuring that each intervention was designed with an understanding of the unique social, cultural, and geographical challenges faced by women and girls in those regions. Here's why and how these strategies were both relevant and appropriate:

#### **1. Community-Based Support Systems**

**Relevance:** Women and girls in marginalized regions often experience barriers such as social isolation, lack of access to formal services, and cultural stigma when seeking help for domestic violence and early marriage. Community-based support systems are essential for reaching these women and girls, ensuring they have access to local and trusted services and support.

**Appropriateness:** The decision to create community-driven support structures was highly appropriate as it recognized that women in remote and rural areas are more likely to trust local facilitators who are embedded in their cultural context. This approach ensured that support was not only accessible but also culturally relevant, making it easier for women to seek help without fear of stigma or retaliation. The use of trained local facilitators ensured that the support provided was both relevant to the specific cultural and social challenges of the community and appropriate in the sense that it respected local norms while challenging harmful practices.

CEO of a CBO from, Benazirabad commenting about the strategies employed in the project in his KII on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024:

*"Our strategies have been grounded in close interactions and meetings with local communities and high officials. By ensuring that our activities and initiatives were culturally relevant, we facilitated a deeper understanding of the concepts, fostering greater engagement and impact within the community."*

## 2. Use of Technology and Mobile Tools

**Relevance:** Given the geographic isolation of many women and girls, particularly in rural or conflict-affected regions, access to services and information can be extremely limited. Technological barriers can often exacerbate these issues, particularly when women are unable to leave their homes due to social restrictions or fear of retaliation.

**Appropriateness:** The development of a mobile app to provide information on legal rights, healthcare, and emergency contacts was not only relevant but also highly appropriate. It recognized that in many of these regions, women face significant mobility constraints, and digital tools offer a practical, discreet way for women to access the support they need. By making critical information easily accessible through mobile technology, the project addressed the immediate need for confidential and safe access to services, while also creating an appropriate solution in areas where mobility or cultural norms limit access to physical institutions. However, despite its potential, the app's reach remained limited, with only 26.82% of surveyed women (118 out of 440) aware of its existence. Factors such as low digital literacy, lack of Smartphone access, and insufficient promotional efforts hindered broader adoption. While the app successfully addressed the need for accessible and private support services, its limited use underscores the importance of enhancing outreach.

## 3. Community Awareness Campaigns

**Relevance:** Raising awareness about gender-based violence and child marriage was crucial because these issues are often normalized within many communities, where women and girls may not even recognize the violence or harm they face. This lack of awareness can prevent women from seeking help and can perpetuate harmful practices.

**Appropriateness:** The approach of using community orientations, theatre productions, and radio messaging was highly appropriate because it took into account the local context and communication preferences. In rural areas, where access to formal education and media may be limited, using theatre and radio ensured that messages reached a broad audience in an engaging and easily understandable way. These methods are particularly appropriate for breaking cultural taboos around discussing sensitive issues such as domestic violence and child marriage. Moreover, the inclusion of men and boys in these campaigns was appropriate, as gender equality can only be achieved if both genders are part of the solution. This inclusive approach helped challenge entrenched norms, making the interventions both effective and appropriate for long-term cultural change.

A female Community facilitator from Mardan reflected on the strategy used in her KII conducted on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024:

“The training and community engagement strategies were highly relevant and beneficial, as they directly addressed the needs within the community”.

#### **4. Capacity Building and Strengthening Institutional Response**

##### **Relevance:**

Women and girls in marginalized regions often face barriers in accessing services due to the limited capacity of local institutions and the absence of gender-sensitive service providers. Without trusted local advocates, survivors of violence and early-age marriage struggle to find support. Additionally, the legal and institutional response to gender-based violence (GBV) and child marriage remains insufficient, creating further obstacles for women seeking justice and protection. Strengthening both community-based and institutional responses is crucial for ensuring long-term, systemic change.

##### **Appropriateness:**

The training of 260 community facilitators was a highly appropriate and relevant strategy, as these facilitators are deeply embedded within their communities, understand local cultural dynamics, and are trusted by the women and girls they serve. By building local capacity, the project ensured accessibility to support services in a culturally sensitive manner. Additionally, the training of local duty-bearers strengthened institutional responses, enabling community leaders, police, and social welfare representatives to respond effectively to cases of violence and exploitation.

Furthermore, the project's advocacy efforts targeting local government bodies and law enforcement agencies were critical in addressing systemic gaps in legal and institutional responses. By enhancing the capacity of local authorities to enforce gender-responsive laws, the project ensured that responses to GBV and child marriage were more effective and timely. Advocacy for legal reforms, such as the Balochistan Women Protection Bill (2024) and the CEAM Amendment Bill, reinforced the long-term sustainability of the intervention, making it an appropriate approach to creating lasting change.

Assistant Director, Local Government Lahore in her KII conducted on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024 Commented on the relevance of SG strategy in training Nikahkhawan,

*"Shirkat Gah's strategy of training Nikahkhawan and UC Secretaries is incredibly relevant, as these individuals are key players in preventing child/early-age marriage (CEAM) and facilitating civil documentation, which is essential for women to claim their rights and secure their futures."*

##### **Conclusion:**

The Humqadam Project's strategies and activities were not only highly relevant to the needs of women and girls but also appropriate in the context in which they were implemented. By focusing on community-based support, technological solutions, culturally sensitive awareness campaigns, capacity building, and institutional advocacy, the project addressed the root causes of gender inequality and violence in a way that was tailored to the specific challenges faced by women and girls in marginalized areas. These interventions were appropriate because they took into account the local cultural context, geographical constraints, and socio-economic realities of the communities, ensuring that the strategies were not only effective but also

sustainable. This holistic, context-driven approach ensured that the project's activities were impactful and will continue to provide relevant solutions for women and girls long into the future.

***EQ.6: Was the project able to adjust to any changes in context and needs of the primary beneficiaries during the project?***

The Humqadam Project primarily targeted women, including those working in fields, domestic work, and factories in urban areas. These women were often busy during the day and couldn't participate in activities. To make sure they could join, the project scheduled most community engagement and awareness activities in the evenings, when they were free from work. This approach helped ensure more women could take part and benefit from the project's support.

To ensure the safety and security of the community facilitators during times of heightened militant activity in Swat and Mardan, the project made adjustments to its capacity-building workshops. Rather than conducting the workshops in these high-risk areas, the project relocated them to safer regions. This was done to avoid both government surveillance and militant monitoring, ensuring that the facilitators could participate in the workshops without jeopardizing their safety. By moving the workshops to more secure locations, the project was able to continue its capacity-building efforts while prioritizing the well-being of the participants and maintaining the integrity of the training sessions.

During the 2022 floods in Benazirabad and Hyderabad, the Humqadam Project faced significant disruptions, as the severe flooding in these regions caused widespread displacement and created numerous barriers to carrying out planned activities. For at least six months, the project had to temporarily halt its operations, as both community engagement and capacity-building initiatives were rendered impossible due to the flooding's devastating effects. The inundation of homes, roads, and local infrastructures made it difficult to access beneficiaries and continue vital interventions.

Despite these challenges, SG responded promptly and effectively. Recognizing the urgent needs of the affected communities, SG initiated fundraising efforts outside of the project's allocated resources to raise additional funds. These funds were specifically directed towards meeting the immediate survival needs of the beneficiaries impacted by the floods. This swift response not only helped sustain the livelihoods of those affected but also underscored the importance of community solidarity and support in times of disaster. Furthermore, the emergency relief efforts were strategically aligned with the project's core messages on DV and CEAM. While providing immediate assistance, SG ensured that the project's broader goals, such as violence prevention and early marriage prevention, remained a priority.

## **Conclusion**

The Humqadam Project demonstrated exceptional adaptability and resilience in responding to various challenges throughout its implementation. By scheduling community engagement

activities in the evenings, the project ensured that women in rural and urban areas could participate despite their daytime work commitments. The project also adapted its capacity-building workshops by relocating them to safer regions during times of heightened militant activity in Swat and Mardan, ensuring the safety of community facilitators. When the 2022 floods in Benazirabad and Hyderabad disrupted activities, SG swiftly initiated fundraising efforts to provide emergency relief, meeting the urgent survival needs of beneficiaries while maintaining focus on its core messages of violence prevention and early marriage prevention. This flexible approach ensured the project's continued relevance and impact, even in the face of unexpected disruptions, reinforcing its commitment to supporting women and girls in challenging circumstances.

## Efficiency

### *EQ.7: to what extent was the project efficiently and cost effectively implemented?*

To address this question, the evaluation team's financial expert, Rana Sikandar Hayat, reviewed SG's budget and the financial reports submitted to UNTF. The analysis included a detailed breakdown of the three-year budget, highlighting expenditures on activities, salaries, and infrastructure.

Table 18: Budget and Spending Analysis of Humqadam

Repor ts	Years	Time Line	Budget	Spending	Spent %	Activities	M&E	Spe nt %	Staff	Spent %	Infrastruc ture	Spe nt %
1	Yea1	June-21 to Nov-21	66,230.00	18,031.66	27%	2,709.67	5,915.58	48%	6,943.78	39%	2,462.63	14%
2		Dec-21- to May-22	66,230.00	48,481.52	73%	29,050.82	2,216.00	64%	14,375.03	30%	2,839.67	6%
3	Year 2	June-22 to Nov-22	96,398.50	49,427.58	51%	15,466.47	4,032.47	39%	16,593.95	34%	13,334.69	27%
4		Dec-22- To May-23	96,398.50	74,195.61	77%	50,273.06	304.75	68%	16,908.73	23%	6,709.07	9%
5	Year 3 with NCE	June-23 to Nov-23	73,621.50	116,105.16	158%	89,396.49	5,170.15	81%	14,838.99	13%	6699.53	6%
6		Dec-23 to May-24	73,621.50	166,254.59	226%	117205.05	24710.34	85%	21,607.95	13%	2731.25	2%
7		May-24 to Aug-24										
<b>Total</b>			<b>472,500.00</b>	<b>472,496.12</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>304,101.56</b>	<b>42,349.29</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>91,268.43</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>34,776.84</b>	<b>7%</b>

The analysis of the first financial report submitted to UN Trust Fund (June 21 to November 21) highlighted significant under spending, with only 27% of the approved budget utilized during

the reporting period. The budget allocation included 48% for activities and M&E, 39% for salaries, and 14% for infrastructure, the latter being relatively high. SG attributed the delays in project implementation to the late approval of indicators by the UN Trust Fund, challenges in obtaining fieldwork permissions, and the security situation following the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, which created a complex refugee crisis. Additionally, the rise in COVID-19 infection rates in August further exacerbated these delays, hindering the timely execution of planned activities. (Page 11 of first report).

The second financial report (December 21 to May 22) showed improved spending trends, with 73% of the total planned budget for the period utilized: 64% on activities and M&E, 30% on salaries, and 6% on infrastructure costs. SG justified the remaining under spending in their report, citing restrictions imposed by the State Bank on SG's account, which prevented the receipt of funds in US dollars. Additionally, progress on policy-level work was delayed due to political uncertainty in the country, and the lack of EAD approval hindered SG's ability to collaborate with the Commission.

The third financial report (June 2022 to November 2022) indicated a downward trend in spending, with 51% of the total budget utilized: 39% on activities, 34% on salaries, and 27% on infrastructure costs. Field activities in Sindh and KP were suspended due to the floods, further impacting project implementation. Additionally, SG had to rely on its own resources as funds were delayed due to the lack of EAD approval, leading to cautious spending. Despite these challenges, staff salaries still needed to be paid, which contributed to the overall expenditure during this period.

The fourth report (December 22 to May 23) showed better performance compared to the previous report, with a total expenditure of 77%, broken down as 68% for activities, 23% for salaries, and 9% for infrastructure. Activities gained momentum with the improved flood situation in Sindh, and the activities resumed accordingly. KP district trainings were conducted in Lahore due to the non-availability of EAD approval. Funds were sent by UN Trust Fund but could not be credited (and were returned) to the SG account. A new account was opened in October 2022, and the third installment was received in January 2023.

The fifth report (June 2023 to November 2023) showed an upward trend in spending, with 158% of the planned expenditure: 81% on activities, 13% on salaries, and 6% on infrastructure. This was due to SG receiving approval from EAD, which allowed activities to accelerate. Despite this, SG did not receive the fifth tranche initially due to a low burn rate. SG submitted an off-cycle report to UNTF in June 2023, and after approval, the fifth tranche was received in October 2023. The first budget realignment was completed in November 2023, and Outcome 2 activities that could not be achieved due to the non-functioning of the commissions were canceled.

The last report showed maximum spending of 226%, with 85% allocated to activities, 13% to salaries, and 2% to infrastructure. The higher the activity level, the lower the overhead costs. The cumulative reporting showed 100% spending, with 73% allocated to activities, 19% to

salaries, and 7% to infrastructure. From the budget analysis, it can be inferred that the major activities were carried out during the final year of the project.

The project timeline was severely impacted by bureaucratic hurdles and unforeseen disasters, which led to significant delays. The sequence of activities was disrupted, affecting the coherence and logical flow of the entire project. One key component that was critical for the success of the project was the DV reporting and response mechanism. This crucial activity, along with exposure visits to service providers—designed to facilitate better coordination with duty bearers for improved response—was only implemented during the final quarter of the project and the No-Cost Extension (NCE) period. This late implementation undermined the intended outcomes, as it constituted a major part of the project's service delivery efforts.

Similarly, the app launch was delayed, and it occurred too late in the process to provide sufficient time to assess its real impact. The tight timeline meant that many of the activities, including the final-stage tasks, were rushed and became jumbled. As a result, there was a tendency to focus on completing tasks rather than reflecting on their effectiveness and overall quality, which ultimately compromised the project's impact. The cumulative effect of these delays and rushed activities has hindered the project's ability to fully achieve its intended objectives.

A male community facilitator from Lahore shared her thought that in a KII conducted on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024,

*"Implementing three years' worth of project activities in just two years in Lahore was a significant challenge. Since the first year was spent in Vehari before shifting to Lahore due to administrative reasons, community facilitators faced immense pressure, rushing from one activity to the next with little time for reflection and planning."* Several factors indicate that the project faced significant challenges that hindered its efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Delays in Implementation: Bureaucratic hurdles, such as delays in receiving approvals (e.g., from EAD), and external challenges like the Taliban takeover and COVID-19, severely impacted the project timeline. These delays disrupted the sequence of activities, reducing the overall coherence and flow of the project. Efficiency typically involves timely execution, and in this case, the project faced several bottlenecks that prevented it from proceeding as planned.

In the final stages, activities were rushed, leading to a lack of reflection and potentially lower quality. The late implementation of crucial activities such as the DV reporting and response mechanism, and exposure visits, affected their effectiveness. This undermines the efficiency of the project, as tasks were not carried out at optimal times and without adequate time for impact assessment.

Delays in the receipt of funds also strained the project, with SG having to rely on its own resources at times. This not only hindered project activities but also contributed to a more cautious spending approach, potentially leading to underutilization of resources at critical times.

The cost-effectiveness of the project can be highlighted through several innovative strategies that maximized impact while optimizing resources. The cascade model of training significantly reduced costs by building the capacity of community facilitators, who then disseminated knowledge at the grassroots level, eliminating the need for repeated centralized training sessions. The Humqadam App provided a low-cost, scalable solution for disseminating information and guidance, ensuring that critical resources reached a wide audience efficiently.

The project's effective use of community resources further enhanced cost efficiency. Trained community facilitators actively conducted sessions, supported survivors, and reduced reliance on external trainers, creating a self-sustaining outreach model. Collaborations with local organizations and civil society groups also helped minimize infrastructure costs by leveraging existing networks and resources for program implementation.

Additionally, the use of low-cost infotainment tools, such as theater performances and puppet shows, enabled widespread awareness with minimal resource investment compared to traditional awareness campaigns. These creative approaches not only saved costs but also resonated well with local audiences, fostering meaningful engagement and knowledge retention. Together, these strategies reflect the project's commitment to achieving its objectives in a cost-effective and sustainable manner.

Over time, spending trends improved as issues such as EAD approval delays and restricted funding were addressed, enabling the project to regain momentum. Notable cost-effective strategies included the cascade model of training, which empowered community facilitators to disseminate knowledge at the grassroots level, reducing centralized training costs. The introduction of the Humqadam App provided a scalable, low-cost solution to disseminate information and guidance, ensuring that critical resources reached a wide audience. Additionally, the use of low-cost infotainment tools such as theater performances and puppet shows maximized community engagement while minimizing costs.

However, the timeline disruptions resulted in the delayed implementation of critical components such as the DV and violence reporting workshop and exposure visits to service providers, which were only conducted in the project's final stages. This undermined the project's overall impact, as these activities were rushed, leaving limited time for reflection, quality assurance, or effective impact assessment. The late launch of the Humqadam App similarly limited its potential to create meaningful change during the project period.

While challenges like bureaucratic delays, floods, and a volatile political environment hindered the efficiency of the project, the innovative use of community resources and partnerships with local organizations highlighted its commitment to sustainability and cost-effectiveness. Despite the setbacks, the project successfully created a framework for localized ownership, capacity building, and resource optimization, ensuring that its outcomes could continue to benefit women and girls beyond the project's lifecycle. This balance of achievements and learnings offers valuable insights for improving efficiency and maximizing impact in similar future initiatives

## Conclusion

The Humqadam Project experienced a series of challenges that impacted its timeline and spending, particularly in the early stages. The first financial report highlighted some delays, mainly due to issues like the late approval of indicators, difficulties obtaining fieldwork permissions, and the broader impacts of the Taliban takeover and the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors, along with challenges like funding restrictions and the political situation, led to some underutilization of the budget. However, by the second financial period, spending began to improve, with more funds being allocated to activities and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). In the third and fourth periods, the project faced additional disruptions, including the floods in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but gradually regained momentum as conditions stabilized. The fifth report saw significant progress as EAD approval allowed for activities to accelerate. While there were delays, especially with critical components like the DV reporting mechanism, the project was ultimately able to align its activities and achieve 100% spending. The delays did impact the timing of some key initiatives, but the project's ability to adjust and realign, despite the challenges, demonstrates its resilience and commitment to achieving its goals.

## Sustainability

***EQ.8: To what extent will the achieved results be sustained, especially any positive changes in the lives of women and girls (project goal level) after project end?***

In the project proposal, SG outlined how the results of the Humqadam Project would be sustained after its completion.

### 1. Post Project Sustainability as per Project Design:

The project design focused on community ownership, facilitator empowerment, and systemic change to ensure long-term impact. Training female and male facilitators as independent change-makers provided sustained local support for women and girls in distress. Community-driven initiatives, such as SAIs and the VFF Campaign, promoted attitudinal and behavioral shifts within families and communities. Strong referral pathways connected survivors to essential services through CBOs and strategic partners. The upgraded mobile app was identified as a scalable, low-maintenance tool, with plans for institutionalization by the Ministry of Human Rights (MOHR) and provincial Commissions on the Status of Women (CSWs). Partnerships with women's commissions, district-level stakeholders, and women's departments aimed to institutionalize policy reforms and strengthen localized responses. Advocacy efforts sought to classify VAWG services as essential, ensuring uninterrupted access to justice, healthcare, and protection during crises. Together, these strategies established a sustainable framework for continued impact beyond the project's duration.

The sustainability of the positive changes achieved by the project, particularly in improving the lives of women and girls, is rooted in a multidimensional approach that combines community ownership, systemic support, and policy advocacy. Below is narrative detailing how the project's results are poised to endure beyond its completion.

## 1. Behavioral and Cultural Change

The Humqadam Project has significantly influenced attitudes and behaviors at individual, familial, and community levels, fostering a cultural shift towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

At the core of this transformation is the empowerment of women and girls, who have gained confidence, knowledge, and a clearer understanding of their rights. Equipped with these tools, women are making more informed decisions, taking on leadership roles in community initiatives, and influencing change within their families.

Through targeted awareness and training sessions, legal literacy workshops, and community dialogues (Gup Shup sessions), women gained critical knowledge about their rights and legal protections. By equipping women with legal knowledge and practical strategies, the project enabled them to recognize, resist, and report violations of their rights.

As a result, 65% of surveyed women (285 out of 440 respondents) reported increased awareness about their legal rights and the various forms of violence they may face. This heightened awareness has empowered women to make informed decisions, seek help when needed, and assert their rights within their families and communities.

Families are increasingly recognizing the value of girls' education and rejecting harmful practices such as early-age marriages.

The VFF campaign was a targeted intervention designed to reshape family dynamics by promoting women's rights, gender equality, and non-violent conflict resolution. The evaluation of 165 families across the four evaluation selected districts highlighted a notable decline in CEAM, as families increasingly prioritized education and personal development over early marriage. Among those interviewed:

- 53% (88 out of 165 families) reported delaying marriage for their daughters to ensure they complete their education and gain greater autonomy over their life choices.

These changes reflect a fundamental shift in societal values, where the rights and potential of women and girls are more widely acknowledged and respected.

The project also prioritized the engagement of men and boys as allies in combating VAWG and promoting gender equality. By involving men and boys in awareness campaigns, dialogues, and participatory activities, the project fostered a shared sense of responsibility for dismantling patriarchal norms. This inclusive approach not only normalized discussions about women's rights but also encouraged men to actively challenge harmful cultural practices within their own families and communities.

The project has made notable progress in increasing men's awareness of women's rights, with 38.4% of respondents (261 out of 679) reporting better understanding and recognition of women's rights and gender equality. As men become more aware of legal protections and the importance of women's empowerment, they are increasingly positioned as allies in challenging

harmful practices, such as DV and CEAM. This progress represents a critical step toward sustainable gender equality and long-term societal transformation.

The impact of these efforts is already visible. Reports from communities highlight a noticeable reduction in domestic violence and early marriages, alongside improved family communication and greater male awareness of the consequences of discriminatory practices. These behavioral shifts, which emerged from community dialogues, participatory tools, and tailored awareness campaigns, are evidence of the project's ability to ignite change.

The campaign also catalyzed a cultural shift toward healthier and more respectful family interactions, encouraging families to adopt non-violent approaches to conflict resolution and promote open, collaborative communication within the household.

54.5% of families (90 out of 165) reported a reduction in physical violence, indicating a move away from punitive and aggressive disciplinary practices.

47% of families (78 out of 165) acknowledged a decrease in verbal abuse, reflecting stronger family relationships and improved emotional well-being.

These findings highlight the campaign's impact in fostering safer, more supportive home environments, where mutual respect and constructive dialogue replace harmful behaviors and traditional power dynamics.

Out of 679 community survey participants, 202 people (32.48%) expressed their commitment to raising awareness about issues such as early-age marriages, domestic violence, and women's rights. This commitment is a clear sign of sustainability in behavioral change. By empowering participants with the confidence and knowledge to challenge harmful practices and educate others, the project has ensured that these positive shifts in attitudes and behaviors will continue to grow. As women and men actively work to raise awareness and promote healthier norms, they are reinforcing the foundation for lasting social change, ensuring that the progress made is not just temporary but a stepping stone toward a more equitable and supportive community.

## **2. Community Ownership and Capacity building for Long Term impact**

The project emphasized community-driven change, recognizing that sustainable impact requires equipping local leaders with the tools to drive progress. By training 260 community facilitators, women and men, the project made a significant grassroots investment in strengthening local capacity. Equipped with practical skills, these facilitators became trusted local resources, addressing VAWG, DV, and CEAM beyond the project's lifecycle. They played a key role in educating communities about legal rights, facilitating discussions on key issues, and guiding individuals to support services, helping to keep these concerns a priority. With their relevant local knowledge and established trust, they have the potential to support ongoing initiatives and community-led solutions, contributing to the sustainability of the project's impact. Their role as a link between communities and support systems may help maintain awareness, engagement, and access to essential resources at the local level.

Notably, 8 out of 20 facilitators (40%) interviewed during the evaluation expressed a clear intention to continue raising awareness and driving change in their communities, and 14 (66%) pledged supporting women and girls at risk of violence. This commitment highlights the project's ability to instill ownership and accountability, ensuring that its outcomes are sustained by those directly impacted. By embedding these skills at the community level, the project created a ripple effect, where local leaders take charge of advocating for women's rights and challenging harmful practices, paving the way for ongoing transformation.

A female community facilitator/CBO representative from Lahore expressed her opinion about the sustainability of the project in her KII:

*"The effects of the project will be long-lasting. Just like the birth certificate registration program, which ended long ago but still brings cases to us; this initiative has created a sustainable impact. People are now empowered to navigate processes independently, such as obtaining birth certificates, which they previously relied on us for. Women and men have reached the Union Council themselves, using the knowledge and connections we facilitated. They are no longer dependent on us, and they now understand the locations and steps required, ensuring continued progress."*

### **3. Institutional Support, Referral Pathways and Networks**

The project's sustainability is evident in the strong networks established between community members, CBOs, and service providers, which continue to function independently as referral pathways. These pathways ensure that survivors of VAWG and CEAM have ongoing access to essential services like legal aid, counseling, and shelters. By fostering collaboration and coordination among stakeholders, the project has created a system capable of addressing these issues effectively, even after its conclusion.

The training provided to Nikahkhawans, duty bearers, and institutional stakeholders has resulted in a significant increase in legal awareness and the improved enforcement of preventive measures. For instance, Nikahkhawans now routinely verify ages before officiating marriages, directly reducing the prevalence of child marriages. These outcomes reflect the project's success in embedding sustainable practices within community and institutional frameworks, ensuring long-term impact.

Deputy Secretary WDD, Quetta shared her thoughts in a KII conducted on ....

*"The support for women's empowerment and protection will continue beyond the project through collaborative efforts among government bodies, private sector organizations, and civil society networks. Tasks like addressing early marriage, NADRA-related issues, and legal registrations align with the government's mission for women's welfare. Such partnerships create a sustainable framework for ongoing advocacy and service delivery."*

PCSW advocate shared his thought on sustainability in KII:

*"The sustainability of the project is evident in the continued engagement of trained participants, including Nikahkhawans, Registrars, and Union Council Secretaries, who remain connected through platforms like WhatsApp even a year after the training, I was the trainer there. They actively seek*

*guidance on procedures, such as identifying underage marriages, showcasing the lasting impact of Humqadam's focus on empowering key stakeholders involved in daily decision-making processes."*

#### **4. Leveraging Technology for Sustainability**

The upgraded App for women, girls, and gender equality advocates provides a digital resource to access information, services, and support.

Plans to institutionalize the App through partnerships with the Ministry of Human Rights (MOHR) and provincial Commissions on the Status of Women (CSWs) did not materialize. However, efforts were made to ensure its continued availability with minimal maintenance. Its sustained usage is supported through SG's networks of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and human rights defenders, who continue to promote and facilitate access to the platform.

District Officer, Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment, Mardan, shared his thought on project sustainability during his KII:

*"The Shirkat Gah Humqadam App is a unique resource, providing essential information and guidance for women and girls at risk of violence and CEAM. I downloaded the App myself and encouraged all my staff to do the same. It has been extremely helpful in facilitating support for women facing GBV and child protection issues. This remarkable work by SG will have a long-term impact, continuing to benefit women and girls at risk of violence."*

#### **5. Institutionalization of Changes**

The project has made important progress in strengthening localized institutional responses by fostering partnerships with women's commissions, district-level partners, women's departments, and other relevant institutions involved in the prevention, protection, and redress of VAW/G. These partnerships have contributed to aligning existing services with the project's goals, helping institutions like social welfare departments, police authorities, and legal aid centers address cases of violence against women and girls with greater efficiency and sensitivity.

At the district level, the project worked to realign practices, improving the capacity of local institutions to respond to VAW/G cases. For example, police officers and duty bearers were sensitized to adopt survivor-centered approaches, while social welfare departments and women's commissions provided avenues for legal and psychosocial support. Although challenges remain, these changes represent meaningful steps toward enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of localized responses.

Advocacy efforts also sought to address gaps in service continuity by promoting policy-level changes, such as categorizing VAW/G services as essential during crises. This initiative ensures survivors can access justice, healthcare, and social support even in emergencies, such as pandemics or natural disasters, helping institutions remain responsive under challenging circumstances.

The project's modest yet meaningful achievements demonstrate its commitment to fostering practical changes within existing systems and working with local institutions to gradually improve the prevention, protection, and redress mechanisms for VAW/G. These steps contribute to a stronger, more sustainable support network for women and girls in affected communities.

## **6. What else could be done?**

Establishing a Community of Practice (CoP) as a digital platform could ensure the long-term sustainability of the Humqadam Project's outcomes by fostering collaboration, learning, and support among facilitators, community members, and stakeholders. The CoP would allow members to share best practices, address challenges, and drive grassroots initiatives such as awareness campaigns and referral pathways. As a digital platform, it could integrate tools like the Humqadam App to facilitate easy access to resources, policy updates, and training materials, enabling ongoing engagement. SG could take responsibility for coordinating the CoP, ensuring regular interactions through webinars, forums, and discussion groups, while acting as a bridge between community members and institutional stakeholders like women's commissions and social welfare departments. This approach would not only sustain project outcomes but also institutionalize best practices, empower local actors, and promote collective ownership, ensuring the project's impact continues to grow through long-term engagement and support.

## **Conclusion**

The Humqadam Project fostered lasting change through behavioral transformation, community ownership, institutional strengthening, and technological solutions. A significant cultural shift was evident, with 53% of interviewed (165) VF Families delaying child marriages, 54.5% reporting reduced physical violence, and 47% acknowledging decreased verbal abuse, contributing to healthier family dynamics. The engagement of men led to 38.4% of community survey male respondents gaining awareness of women's rights, reinforcing community-driven advocacy and gender-inclusive change. Sustainability was further ensured through trained facilitators, with 66% of 21 community facilitators interviewed, pledging continued support for at-risk women and girls, and strengthened referral pathways between CBOs, duty-bearers, and service providers, improving institutional responses to gender-based violence. While plans for government-led institutionalization of the Humqadam App did not materialize, its continued availability through SG's networks ensures access to legal resources and support services. The project's impact is reflected in the increased agency of women and girls, improved institutional responses, and shifting societal attitudes, reinforcing sustained progress toward gender equality and protection against violence.

## Impact

***EQ.9:** To what extent has the project contributed to ending violence against women, gender equality and/or women’s empowerment (both intended and unintended impact)?*

### **Intended Impact**

#### **Humqadam Project: Addressing VAW, Promoting Gender Equality, and Advancing Women’s Empowerment**

The Humqadam Project has played a transformative role in addressing VAWG, promoting gender equality, and advancing women’s empowerment. Through awareness campaigns, legal advocacy, community engagement, and leadership development, the project has successfully challenged deep-rooted patriarchal norms, strengthened institutional responsiveness, and equipped women with the knowledge and skills necessary to assert their rights.

A key pillar of this transformation has been the mobilization of Community Facilitators as social capital, who served as local change agents, building trust, disseminating information, and providing critical linkages between communities and institutional support systems. These facilitators, embedded within their communities, have played a pivotal role in ensuring that awareness efforts translate into long-term behavioral shifts and sustained impact.

By fostering attitudinal shifts, mobilizing local leadership, and ensuring institutional accountability, the project has catalyzed meaningful progress in reducing domestic violence, delaying early-age marriages, increasing women’s participation in decision-making, and improving female mobility. Additionally, policy advocacy efforts have contributed to ongoing discussions on the CEAM Bill and the Violence against Women Bill, laying the foundation for stronger legal protections.

The project’s three key pillars—addressing violence against women and girls, promoting gender equality, and advancing women’s empowerment—have collectively contributed to creating a society where women and girls can live free from violence, exercise their rights, and fully participate in all aspects of life.

#### **1. Addressing VAWG: Changing Attitudes, Strengthening Support Systems, and Advancing Policy Advocacy**

Violence against women and girls is one of the most significant barriers to gender equality, affecting individuals, families, and entire communities. The Humqadam Project directly tackled this issue by implementing community awareness initiatives, legal literacy sessions, policy advocacy, and survivor support systems. Through these interventions, 45% of surveyed respondents (308 out of 679) reported a positive shift in their views on VAWG, reflecting a growing recognition that domestic violence, coercion, and early marriages are critical issues requiring intervention and collective action.

The impact of this awareness is visible in changing family dynamics. 54.5% of VF Families (90 out of 165) reported a decrease in physical violence, and 47% (78 out of 165) acknowledged a

reduction in verbal abuse, demonstrating an improvement in communication and healthier conflict resolution strategies. Women from various communities shared how men have become more conscious of their words and actions, creating a more respectful and supportive home environment. A female participant from Lahore noted that there has been a noticeable decrease in verbal violence, while another from Mardan shared that men have started treating women with more respect after attending project sessions.

A female CEO of partner CBO from Quetta shared in her KII

“The uses of abusive language reduced after the project, females were allowed to go outside, family started to register their children, the domestic violence reduced, and Nikkahnama registration in union council increased”.

One of the most notable successes of Humqadam has been its role in delaying early marriages and promoting girls' education. 53% of VF Families (88 out of 165) reported delaying their daughters' marriages in favor of education and personal growth. This shift was made possible through awareness campaigns, legal education efforts, and engagement with local religious leaders (Nikahkhawans) to reinforce age verification requirements. In Benazirabad, a Nikahkhan who previously officiate marriages without questioning age requirements shared that after attending Humqadam training sessions, he refused to perform a marriage where the bride was underage and successfully convinced the family to delay it. Similar stories emerged from Quetta and Mardan, where religious leaders acknowledged that they now verify ages before officiating marriages, reflecting a major cultural shift toward legal compliance and the protection of young girls.

### **Policy Advocacy: Strengthening Legal Protections against Violence and Child Marriages**

Beyond community engagement, the Humqadam Project has played an active role in policy advocacy, supporting legal reforms that protect women and girls from violence and coercion. The project has contributed to ongoing advocacy for the passage of the Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (CEAM) Bill in Balochistan, which seeks to legally reinforce the minimum age of marriage and prevent underage marriages. Similarly, Humqadam has been involved in pushing for the Violence Against Women Bill, which proposes legal protections for survivors of domestic violence and gender-based violence (GBV), including access to shelters, legal aid, and mechanisms to prevent and respond to violence.

Although both bills are still awaiting passage, the project has mobilized civil society organizations, community leaders, and legal experts to support legislative action, ensuring those survivors' voices and community perspectives are integrated into policy discussions.

### **2. Promoting Gender Equality: Engaging Men and Reshaping Social Norms**

Achieving gender equality requires not only empowering women but also transforming social attitudes, engaging men as allies, and challenging harmful traditions. The Humqadam Project fostered shared responsibility in promoting respectful relationships and supporting women's participation in leadership and decision-making.

The success of these efforts is reflected in survey results, where 38.4% of male respondents (261 out of 679) reported an increased awareness of women's rights, and 58.4% of community survey respondents (397 out of 679) observed positive changes in how women and girls were treated and respected.

A notable transformation has been the increased participation of men in discussions about gender equality and their support for women's involvement in family decision-making. A female participant from Youhanabad, Lahore, emphasized this shift, stating that girls are now included in family decision-making, which never used to happen before.

The project's gender equality efforts have also challenged rigid gender norms in traditionally conservative communities. By engaging men in awareness sessions, legal education, and discussions on gender equity, Humqadam has encouraged a gradual cultural shift toward recognizing women's roles beyond traditional domestic spheres.

### **3. Advancing Women's Empowerment: Building Knowledge, Agency, and Mobility**

Women's empowerment is the foundation of sustainable gender equality, requiring not just awareness, but active participation in leadership, decision-making, and economic opportunities. The Humqadam Project enhanced women's legal literacy, expanded their leadership roles, and improved their mobility, ensuring they could assert their rights and contribute to their communities.

- 65% of surveyed women (285 out of 440) reported increased awareness of their rights
- 50% of VF Families (82 out of 165) reported an increase in legal documentation
- 27% of VF Families (45 out of 165) reported improved mobility for women

Historically, mobility restrictions have prevented women from accessing education, employment, and healthcare. Through Humqadam's efforts, more women are now able to move freely for work, participate in decision-making forums, and engage in social and economic activities. A female participant from Quetta described this shift:

"Before, women barely left their homes. Now, they are going to markets, attending community meetings, and even participating in local decision-making."

By breaking down barriers to movement, Humqadam has facilitated women to:

- Seek employment and participate in economic activities
- Access education and healthcare services
- Engage in community discussions and leadership roles

The project also leveraged digital solutions, launching the Humqadam App, which continues to provide women with legal resources, emergency contacts, and GBV support services. Although the App was not institutionalized by the government, its availability through SG ensures sustained access for women in need.

The Humqadam Project has successfully reduced violence, engaged men in gender equality efforts, and empowered women. Through policy advocacy, community mobilization, and education, the project has created a strong foundation for long-term change.

While legislative progress remains ongoing, the project's role in advocating for the CEAM Bill and the Violence against Women Bill reflects a commitment to ensuring legal protections for women and girls. Moving forward, the continued investment in women's leadership, policy engagement, and community-driven solutions will be essential in ensuring that progress toward gender equality remains strong and irreversible.

Commenting about the project impact in contributing to gender equality and women's rights a female CBO representative/community facilitator from Lahore said:

*"The project has led to significant positive changes in attitudes toward violence and gender equality. Women, who previously remained silent, have started speaking out about their experiences with violence and injustice. Men have also become more open to discussing these issues, which is a positive shift. One example is a man sharing his sister's story of injustice, which would have been unspoken in the past. Additionally, a father's resistance to buying a motorbike for his daughter changed after attending the project's sessions, reflecting a shift in mindset. Another impactful case involved a young woman who, after attending a session, was able to stand up to her father and avoid returning to an abusive situation, despite initial family opposition. These stories highlight how the project has fostered greater awareness, encouraged speaking out against abuse, and empowered women to challenge oppressive situations, leading to a broader cultural shift in attitudes toward gender-based violence and empowerment."*

### **Unintended impact**

#### **Increased Resistance & Domestic Backlash against Women**

As women gained awareness about their rights and began asserting themselves, some families, especially male members—reacted with hostility. Several facilitators reported cases where women who spoke up faced increased domestic restrictions or even violence as a reaction to their newfound confidence.

A community facilitator from Mardan highlighted how women sometimes faced backlash when they became aware of their rights:

*"After attending an awareness session, a woman from Mardan shared that she had stood up to her abusive husband for the first time. In response, he became aggressive and imposed even stricter restrictions on her movement. Despite this, she remained determined to learn more about her rights and secretly found a way to attend another session. Her story reflected both the challenges women faced and their persistence in improving their lives."*

### **Fear of Community Stigma & Increased Discretion**

While many women became aware of their rights, some hesitated to act due to fear of social stigma and family judgment. Survivors of domestic violence who sought help sometimes faced negative labeling within their communities. As a result, some women hid their participation in Humqadam activities, attending sessions discreetly to avoid confrontation at home. This shows the importance of integrating confidential support mechanisms and working to reduce stigma in conservative communities. A girl in a community in Lahore attended the sessions secretly, fearing her father would stop her from participating. She later asked the facilitator if she could continue sessions without her family knowing.

### **Misinterpretation of the Project as a "Divorce Promotion Initiative"**

Some community members misunderstood Humqadam's message, assuming that educating women about their legal rights was encouraging divorce rather than promoting safety and empowerment. This misconception led to resistance in some areas, with men and elders opposing the project, believing it would "break families." Clearer messaging emphasizing mutual respect, family well-being, and non-violent relationships is essential to counteract such misunderstandings.

### **Women Taking Leadership Roles in Their Communities**

One of the most positive unintended impacts was that several women, many of whom had never spoken publicly, became local leaders and role models. Some took the initiative to lead community discussions, organize informal awareness sessions, and support other women facing similar challenges. This unexpected empowerment highlights the need for further leadership training and networking opportunities for these emerging female leaders.

### **Family Members Starting to Support Women's Rights**

Although some families resisted change, others embraced it positively, particularly younger fathers, brothers, and husbands. Some men who attended awareness sessions changed their perspectives, encouraging their daughters to pursue education or their wives to participate in decision-making.

### **Increased Demand for Women's Economic Opportunities**

As women became more aware of their rights, many expressed a strong desire for financial independence. This led to increased demand for vocational training, small business support, and employment opportunities. In some areas, women requested access to sewing machines, financial literacy training, and microloans to start businesses. This highlights the importance of integrating economic empowerment programs alongside awareness initiatives.

### **Unintended Digital Exclusion for Women without Mobile Phones**

While Humqadam used digital tools for outreach, many women, especially in conservative households, lacked access to mobile phones due to family restrictions. It excludes women to benefit from a valuable guidance tool.

## Conclusion:

The Humqadam Project has played a transformative role in addressing VAWG, promoting gender equality, and advancing women's empowerment. By fostering attitudinal shifts, strengthening institutional responsiveness, and mobilizing local facilitators, the project successfully empowered women to assert their rights, participate in decision-making, and access legal protections. It has challenged deeply rooted patriarchal norms, delayed early marriages, improved women's mobility, and encouraged men to support gender equality efforts. The project's policy advocacy contributions have also laid a strong foundation for ongoing legal reforms aimed at protecting women's rights.

Beyond its intended impact, the project also triggered a range of unintended consequences—both positive and challenging. The rise in female leadership and increased demand for economic opportunities underscored the program's success in shifting mindsets and equipping women with the confidence to advocate for themselves. However, the backlash from certain families, misinterpretations of the project's objectives, and digital exclusion of women without access to technology highlighted the deep-seated resistance to change in some communities. Despite these challenges, the emergence of male allies, Nkakhawans verifying marriage ages, and growing support for women's rights within families demonstrates that the project has catalyzed long-term change that extends beyond its duration.

## Knowledge Generation

***EQ10.** To what extent has the project generated new knowledge, identified promising or emerging practices in the field of EVAW/G that should be documented and shared with other practitioners?*

Several key lessons were learned during the implementation of the Humqadam project, which can serve as valuable guidance for similar initiatives in the future. Below are some of the most significant takeaways:

***Tailored Interventions Matter:*** The project underscored the importance of designing localized strategies to address cultural resistance, particularly in regions like Quetta and Benazirabad, where patriarchal norms entrenched slowed progress. Interventions that engage community leaders, religious scholars, and local influencers are crucial in fostering acceptance of gender-sensitive practices. Adapting project activities to align with regional socio-cultural dynamics ensures greater receptivity and impact.

***Male Engagement is Crucial:*** While the project successfully engaged some men and boys as allies, their participation remained limited. This highlighted the critical need for targeted campaigns that emphasize the role of men in promoting gender Equality and preventing violence. Using relatable narratives, interactive workshops, and male role models can help challenge traditional notions of masculinity and foster shared responsibility. Programs aimed at boys and young men, particularly in educational settings, can instill values of respect and equality from an early age.

**Digital Innovations and Scalability Potential:** The features of the Humqadam app demonstrated that technology can effectively bridge service gaps for survivors, particularly in resource-constrained and remote areas. Its multilingual and offline-accessible features made it inclusive and user-friendly, allowing a diverse range of individuals to access critical information and support. The app's reach highlighted the potential for digital solutions in addressing gender-based violence, offering survivors discreet access to legal resources, emergency contacts, and support services. However, digital exclusion remained a significant challenge, particularly for women in conservative households where mobile phone access was restricted by social norms. As a result, the app primarily benefited educated, urban women and girls, while those facing mobility restrictions and digital illiteracy remained underserved. This underscores the unequal access to technology in gender empowerment efforts, where the most marginalized groups often face the greatest barriers to digital inclusion.

**Grassroots Ownership is Key:** Empowering community facilitators and local leaders proved essential for ensuring the sustainability of project outcomes. Initiatives like Social Action Initiatives (SAIs) created a sense of ownership and responsibility within communities, enabling them to continue advocacy and support efforts independently. Providing ongoing mentorship, small grants for community-led initiatives, and recognition for their contributions can further sustain grassroots leadership.

**Integrated Approaches Yield Results:** The project demonstrated that combining awareness campaigns, policy advocacy, and direct support services creates a holistic framework that addresses both immediate needs and systemic barriers. Awareness campaigns like the VFF initiative reduced stigma and fostered open dialogue, while advocacy efforts influenced legal reforms. Integrating survivor support with advocacy ensured that beneficiaries experienced tangible benefits, reinforcing the credibility and effectiveness of the project.

**Disruptions Require Preparedness:** The COVID-19 pandemic and the 2022 floods significantly disrupted project activities, service delivery, and community outreach. These crises highlighted the need for building resilience into project design, including contingency plans for emergencies. Flexible programming, digital service delivery options, and decentralized support systems can ensure continuity during unforeseen disruptions. Strengthening local capacities to respond to crises will also mitigate their impact on vulnerable populations.

**Investing in Multi-Stakeholder Engagement:** The project's significant progress in policy advocacy was evident in its efforts to support the Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024, secure commitment from five political parties to back the Balochistan Early Age Marriage Restraint Bill and draft the Person with Disability Policy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, addressing the needs of one of the most marginalized segment of society. These achievements underscore the critical role of collaborative efforts involving legislative bodies, civil society organizations, and community stakeholders in driving meaningful policy change. By engaging diverse actors fosters collective accountability and amplifies the reach and impact of interventions. While none of these initiatives have yet reached the stage of formal approval the ground work has been laid, providing strong foundation for future legislative advancement.

***Survivor-Centric Models Work:*** Centering survivors in program design and implementation was instrumental in ensuring relevance and effectiveness. The project's focus on survivor needs, including access to legal aid, healthcare, and psychosocial support, built trust and encouraged utilization of services. Incorporating survivor feedback into program refinement further enhances the responsiveness and impact of interventions.

Humqadam Project can be considered a survivor-centric model because its interventions were designed to prioritize the needs, safety, dignity, and agency of survivors of VAWG. The project integrated trauma-informed, rights-based, and empowerment-driven approaches that placed survivors at the core of its programming, ensuring that they had access to support, protection, and justice.

### **Key Features of a Survivor-Centric Approach in Humqadam**

#### **Safety and Protection as a Core Priority**

Humqadam ensured that survivors of domestic violence and gender-based violence (GBV) had access to safe spaces, legal aid, and psychosocial support. By advocating for shelters, help lines, and protective mechanisms, the project aligned with the principle of "Do No Harm", a fundamental element of survivor-centered models.

#### **Empowering Survivors through Knowledge and Legal Literacy**

A survivor-centric model ensures that survivors understand their rights, have access to justice, and are empowered to make informed decisions. Humqadam's legal literacy sessions provided survivors with knowledge about their legal rights, available services, and pathways to justice. Women who previously lacked awareness of legal protections were educated on how to file cases against perpetrators, and access support services.

#### **Promoting Survivor Agency and Decision-Making**

Unlike traditional interventions that often make decisions on behalf of survivors, Humqadam respected survivors' autonomy and choices. The project ensured that survivors were given control over their recovery journey, whether it was seeking legal action, accessing counseling, or participating in support networks. Women who attended Humqadam sessions were not pressured to take legal action but were given the tools and knowledge to decide for themselves based on their circumstances. That is why when out of 600 survivors only 88 opted for legal action.

#### **Trauma-Informed Psychological and Emotional Support**

Recognizing that survivors of violence experience deep emotional and psychological trauma, Humqadam integrated trauma-informed approaches that focused on healing, resilience, and emotional well-being. The project provided access to counseling through community facilitators, support groups, and emotional healing sessions for survivors. A survivor of

domestic violence, after attending Humqadam support groups, reported feeling heard and validated for the first time, which motivated her to rebuild her life independently.

### **Male Engagement to Create Safe Family Environments**

A survivor-centric model does not only focus on survivors but also works to create environments that prevent violence from occurring in the first place. Humqadam actively engaged men as allies through its VFF Campaign, encouraging them to reject violence, sign pledges, and model positive behaviors in their homes and communities. Hundreds of men who signed the VFF pledge were tracked for behavioral change, with many reporting a reduction in aggressive behavior and an improvement in communication at home.

### **Policy Advocacy to Strengthen Survivor Protections**

A survivor-centric approach goes beyond direct service provision and seeks to create systemic change to ensure long-term protection and justice for survivors. Humqadam's policy advocacy on the Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (CEFM) Bill and the Violence against Women (VAW) Bill demonstrated its commitment to institutionalizing legal protections for survivors. By working with legislators, political parties and civil society, Humqadam ensured that survivor perspectives were included in policy discussions, reinforcing legal and social support mechanisms for women and girls facing violence.

***Cultural Sensitivity is Non-Negotiable:*** Addressing deeply ingrained norms around violence and gender roles requires approaches that respect and engage with cultural contexts rather than confront them head-on. The project's use of culturally resonant tools like "Gup Shup" sessions and Community Theater demonstrated the value of tactful advocacy that fosters dialogue rather than resistance.

***Strengthening Institutional Support:*** Building the capacity of duty bearers, including police, healthcare workers, and social workers, to adopt gender-sensitive practices created systemic improvements. However, gaps in institutional accountability and enforcement of laws remain significant barriers. Future projects must emphasize ongoing training, resource allocation, and mechanisms for monitoring institutional performance to sustain systemic change.

These lessons provide a comprehensive foundation for designing future programs that address VAWG and CEAM while promoting sustainable and scalable solutions for gender equality.

## **Case Study: The Violence-Free Family (VFF) Campaign – A Model for Replication**

### **1. Objective of the VFF Campaign**

The VFF Campaign was designed as a targeted intervention to address domestic violence, promote gender equality, and foster non-violent family environments. The campaign aimed to create sustainable, long-term behavioral and attitudinal changes by engaging communities, educating families, and encouraging men to take an active role in rejecting violence. The specific objectives of the campaign were:

- Reduce the prevalence of domestic violence and improve safety for women and children.

- Promote gender equality by challenging harmful gender norms and stereotypes.
- Encourage men's active involvement in building respectful, non-violent family relationships.
- Equip families with conflict resolution skills to handle disputes peacefully.
- Sustain long-term change by embedding non-violence principles in community and institutional structures.

## **2. Methodology: How the VFF Campaign was implemented**

The campaign employed a multi-faceted approach, integrating community engagement, education, and behavior change strategies to ensure widespread impact. The key methodological components included:

### **Engaging Men through the VFF Pledge**

One of the most innovative aspects of the campaign was actively involving men as key agents of change. The campaign encouraged men to sign a public pledge committing to:

- Reject all forms of domestic violence in their homes and communities.
- Uphold gender equality and ensure respect for women and children.
- Model healthy, non-violent behaviors in their families and communities.

Men were introduced to the pledge through workshops, awareness campaigns, and community events. Follow-up monitoring and surveys assessed the extent to which they upheld their commitments.

### **Family Workshops and Education**

The campaign organized interactive workshops for families, focusing on:

- Conflict resolution and communication skills to reduce family disputes.
- Understanding and challenging gender norms that justify violence.
- Legal rights and protections for survivors of domestic violence.

### **Community-Based Awareness Campaigns**

The campaign used multi-platform awareness efforts to reach a broader audience, including: Theatre, puppet shows and radio messaging

### **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact Assessment**

The campaign's progress was tracked through monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, including:

- Baseline and endline surveys to measure changes in attitudes toward domestic violence and gender equality.
- Pledge tracking to assess men's behavior before and after signing.
- Focus group discussions (FGDs) to collect community insights on shifting behaviors.
- Regular field visits to evaluate campaign implementation and participant engagement.

## **3. Outcomes: The Impact of the VFF Campaign**

The VFF campaign achieved measurable success, creating positive behavioral shifts in families and communities. Key outcomes included:

- **Reduction in Domestic Violence:** Post-campaign evaluations showed a decline in reported incidents of domestic violence, with families adopting non-violent conflict resolution strategies.
- **Shift in Attitudes:** Surveys indicated a positive change in perceptions about gender equality, with more men recognizing the importance of shared responsibilities and respect within the household.
- **Men's Commitment to Non-Violence:** Hundreds of men signed the VFF pledge, with follow-up assessments showing that many upheld their commitments, leading to healthier family dynamics.
- **Improved Family Communication:** Participants reported greater openness in discussing family matters, reducing misunderstandings and fostering mutual respect.
- **Community Engagement and Sustainability:** The campaign's outreach efforts led to continued discussions on non-violence within communities, ensuring that the impact would extend beyond the campaign's duration.

#### **Conclusion: The VFF Campaign as a Scalable Model**

The VFF campaign successfully demonstrated that sustainable change in family dynamics is possible when communities are actively engaged. By involving men, educating families, and fostering open discussions on gender equality, the campaign created a foundation for long-term behavioral transformation. The multi-pronged methodology: workshops, public pledges, media engagement, and rigorous impact assessment, ensured that its effects were widespread and measurable. As a model for replication, the VFF campaign showcases how strategic interventions can address domestic violence and promote a culture of mutual respect and non-violence within families.

#### **Conclusion:**

The Humqadam Project has contributed significantly to knowledge generation in the field of Ending Violence against Women and Girls (EVAW/G) by identifying emerging practices, effective intervention strategies, and lessons that can inform future programming. One of the project's key takeaways is the importance of localized, culturally sensitive interventions, demonstrating that engaging religious scholars, community leaders, and influencers is essential for overcoming patriarchal resistance, particularly in conservative regions like Quetta and Benazirabad.

The project also highlighted the critical role of male engagement, reinforcing that behavioral change requires targeted interventions for men and boys. While some progress was made in shifting attitudes, the limited participation of men emphasized the need for structured programs that integrate gender equality education into schools, workplaces, and religious discourse.

Another significant area of learning was the potential of digital innovations in bridging service gaps for survivors. The Humqadam app showcased the scalability of tech-based solutions, providing survivors with discreet access to legal resources and emergency contacts. However, the project also uncovered digital exclusion challenges, as many women in conservative households lacked access to mobile phones, underscoring the need for multi-channel outreach strategies that combine digital and offline approaches.

The VFF campaign provided further insights into community-driven approaches to EVAW/G, demonstrating that men's public pledges and structured follow-up mechanisms can reinforce long-term behavioral change. Similarly, the policy advocacy efforts on the Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024, the Balochistan Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill, and the PWD Policy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa offered valuable lessons on multi-stakeholder engagement and legal reform processes.

Finally, Humqadam underscored the effectiveness of survivor-centric programming, reinforcing that legal literacy, trauma-informed support, and agency-driven interventions are key to sustainable impact. These findings contribute to broader discourse on EVAW/G, offering a replicable model that balances awareness, advocacy, and direct survivor support. The project's knowledge outputs provide a strong evidence base for policymakers, practitioners, and civil society actors working to advance gender equality and violence prevention.

***EQ.11: Has the project contributed to developing new methodologies or tools in EVAW/G intervention, prevention, or survivor support? If so, how can these be adapted for broader application?***

The project developed a new digital tool and GBV response guide. The Humqadam App is an innovative tool designed to empower survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) by offering them immediate access to a range of support services and information. The App provides quick access to emergency services, relevant laws and a navigation guide for case reporting. As digital technology continues to play an increasingly important role in service delivery, the app aims to bridge gaps in accessibility and support, especially for women and girls in remote or under-served areas. The Humqadam App serves as both a safety resource and an educational tool, providing users with the ability to take proactive steps toward safety, well-being, and justice.

#### **Broader Application and Adaptation:**

The Humqadam App can be adapted for broader use in different regions and communities by:

- **Localization:** Tailoring the app to different languages, legal systems, and cultural contexts ensures that it serves diverse populations. Localized versions of the app could include country-specific legal information, culturally relevant educational content, and region-specific resources.
- **Collaboration with Local Governments and Organizations:** Collaborating with local governments, law enforcement agencies, NGOs, and health services to integrate their data into the app ensures that users have access to updated, reliable resources and support networks. Partnerships can also help to build trust in the app.
- **Customizing Safety Protocols:** In certain regions where surveillance is high or where abusers have significant power, the app can be tailored to offer more robust security features, such as encrypted messaging, two-factor authentication, or secure data storage to protect the identities of users.
- **Mobile-First Access:** Given the high penetration of mobile phones even in remote areas, making the app available across a variety of devices: smart phones, tablets, and even low-cost phones, will maximize its accessibility. Additionally, the app could be designed to function in low-connectivity areas, allowing it to work offline for basic features.

## **Conclusion:**

The Humqadam App represents a transformative tool in the fight against gender-based violence, offering survivors the ability to seek help, find resources, and plan for safety, all from the privacy and security of their mobile devices. Its adaptability makes it a valuable resource for communities worldwide, ensuring that survivors in diverse contexts have the support they need to escape violence and rebuild their lives. The app's scalability, security, and comprehensive features offer great potential for global application, particularly in underserved or high-risk areas. By integrating the app into existing local networks and tailoring it to specific cultural and legal contexts, its impact can be expanded, ensuring that no survivor is left without a way to access support.

## **Gender equality and Human Rights**

***EQ.12: To what extent have human rights based and gender responsive approaches been incorporated throughout the project?***

The Humqadam project has been designed and implemented with a strong emphasis on human rights-based and gender-responsive approaches, ensuring that its interventions are aligned with the fundamental principles of human dignity, equality, and justice. These approaches have been integrated across all stages of the project from planning and design to implementation and evaluation to ensure that the project addresses the specific needs of women and girls while respecting and upholding their rights. Below are the key ways in which these approaches have been incorporated throughout the project:

### **1. Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)**

A human rights-based approach focuses on ensuring that all individuals are treated with dignity and their fundamental rights are respected and protected. In the context of the Humqadam project, this approach has been embedded in several critical areas:

#### **a. Protection and Empowerment of Survivors**

The project prioritized the protection of survivors of gender-based violence by ensuring they have access to justice, safety, and essential support services. It is grounded in the principle that every individual has the right to live a life free from violence and discrimination.

The Humqadam Project ensured the protection and empowerment of survivors of VAWG through a comprehensive survivor-centric approach. The project provided safe spaces, legal aid, crisis response services, and community-based protection networks to ensure survivors' immediate safety and access to justice.

To foster long-term empowerment, Humqadam focused on legal literacy, trauma-informed psycho-social support, and survivor-led decision-making. Additionally, the VFF campaign engaged men as allies to prevent violence at its root, promoting gender equality and non-violent family environments. The project also played a critical role in policy advocacy, influencing legal reforms such as the Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024 and the Balochistan Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill, ensuring systemic protections for survivors.

While the Humqadam Project made significant strides in addressing VAWG, promoting gender equality, and strengthening legal protections for survivors, it did not incorporate economic empowerment initiatives, which are essential for self-reliance and long-term empowerment.

Economic independence is a crucial factor in breaking cycles of abuse, as many survivors of domestic violence and gender-based violence (GBV) remain trapped in abusive environments due to financial dependence on their perpetrators. Without access to livelihood opportunities, financial literacy, or skills development, survivors may struggle to leave violent situations or rebuild their lives independently.

Although Humqadam focused on awareness, policy advocacy, and protection services, the absence of economic interventions created a critical gap in the empowerment process. Programs that include vocational training, microfinance opportunities, employment linkages, and entrepreneurship support have proven to be effective tools in ensuring that survivors can sustain themselves financially and regain control over their futures.

Integrating economic empowerment alongside survivor support services would have strengthened the project's overall impact by ensuring that women not only escaped violence but also had the means to sustain a life free from it. While policy advocacy and behavioral change efforts are fundamental, true empowerment is incomplete without financial independence, which provides survivors with security, autonomy, and the ability to make their own life choices.

## **b. Accountability and Non-Discrimination**

The project encouraged accountability by working with local law enforcement and government authorities to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions. By integrating legal assistance and confidential reporting mechanisms, survivors were empowered to take legal action, reinforcing their right to justice.

The Humqadam Project played a crucial role in ensuring justice for survivors of VAWG by working with law enforcement agencies, government authorities, and legal aid providers to strengthen accountability mechanisms for perpetrators. The project engaged with police officers on gender-sensitive approaches, provided legal literacy and linking survivors to legal aid providers, and provided training on confidential reporting mechanisms to encourage survivors to seek justice without fear of retaliation or stigma.

In addition to legal interventions, Humqadam emphasized non-discriminatory access to services, ensuring that survivors from marginalized communities, including transgender individuals, ethnic and religious minorities, and women in rural areas, could benefit from legal aid, psychosocial support, and protection services. The project actively conducted community outreach, raising awareness about survivors' rights and equipping local service providers with training to prevent bias and discrimination in their response.

By integrating legal empowerment, institutional engagement, and inclusive survivor-centered services, Humqadam reinforced survivors' right to justice while working toward a more equitable and accessible system for addressing gender-based violence. This comprehensive

approach not only held perpetrators accountable but also ensured that all survivors, regardless of their background, had equal access to support, justice, and protection.

### **c. Participation and Inclusion**

Participatory engagement is a key element of the human rights-based approach, and the Humqadam project had actively engaged communities, including both men and women, in discussions about ending violence and promoting gender equality. Men's engagement through workshops and pledges reflects the principle of inclusion, as they are not just recipients of the message but are also agents of change. Survivors are also included in the project's design and implementation, with feedback mechanisms that ensure their voices are heard. This ensures that the project respects and upholds their right to participate in decisions that affect their lives.

## **2. Gender-Responsive Approach**

A gender-responsive approach recognizes that women and men, and girls and boys, face different challenges and need tailored support. The Humqadam project has integrated gender-sensitive strategies in several ways to address the gendered nature of violence and ensure that the specific needs of women and girls are met.

### **a. Addressing the Root Causes of Gender-Based Violence**

SG conducted a gender analysis through Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) sessions in the communities, as well as during the first workshop on the Gendered Impact of COVID-19. This approach ensured that gender perspectives, social dynamics, and power imbalances were thoroughly examined within the specific cultural and regional contexts of the project areas.

The PRA sessions allowed direct engagement with community members, including women, men, youth, religious leaders, and marginalized groups, to assess local gender norms, power structures, and barriers that affect gender equality and access to justice. By using community-driven insights, SG was able to identify specific challenges faced by women and girls, such as restrictions on mobility, economic dependence, barriers to legal services, and the societal stigma attached to reporting violence. The sessions also revealed the role of men and boys in either perpetuating or preventing violence, helping to shape male engagement strategies within the Humqadam project.

During the workshop on the Gendered Impact of COVID-19, SG further analyzed how the pandemic exacerbated gender inequalities, particularly in terms of increased domestic violence, loss of income for women, reduced access to healthcare and legal services, and the heightened burden of unpaid care work. The discussions also focused on how gender dynamics shifted due to the economic crisis, school closures, and limitations in movement, further highlighting the vulnerabilities of women, girls, and marginalized groups.

Through these gender analysis activities, SG was able to incorporate gender-sensitive approaches into the Humqadam project, ensuring that interventions were context-specific, addressing the root causes of gender-based violence (GBV), promoting legal awareness, and

fostering male allyship in violence prevention efforts. The insights gained from these assessments helped shape targeted interventions, such as community engagement strategies, survivor support services, and advocacy efforts for stronger gender-inclusive policies.

### **b. Tailored Services for Women and Girls**

The safe spaces and peer support networks created by the project are designed with a gender-sensitive lens, ensuring that women and girls have access to support systems where they feel safe and empowered to speak up about their experiences.

The Humqadam Project adopted a gender-sensitive approach in creating safe spaces and peer support networks, ensuring that women and girls had access to secure and confidential environments where they could seek support without fear or stigma. These spaces were meant to be women-centered, providing survivors with a safe and supportive environment to share their experiences and access psychosocial support. Recognizing the barriers that often prevent women from speaking out, the project emphasized privacy and confidentiality, making sure those survivors felt respected and protected. The peer support networks further reinforced this by connecting women with others who had faced similar challenges, allowing them to share experiences, find solidarity, and build confidence in a safe and understanding environment. Trained female facilitators played a key role in guiding these discussions, ensuring that support was non-judgmental and responsive to the unique needs of each survivor.

Furthermore the Humqadam App is particularly tailored to the needs of women and girls, offering digital safety tools, access to resources, and safety planning specifically aimed at survivors of gender-based violence. The app's features, like confidential reporting and resource directories, ensure that women have an accessible, secure way to seek help without fear of retaliation or exposure.

### **c. Empowerment of Women**

The Humqadam Project places women's empowerment at its core by enhancing their agency, autonomy, and active participation in addressing violence and gender inequality. The project ensures that women are not just recipients of support but also key actors in shaping solutions within their communities.

One of the ways Humqadam fosters empowerment is by providing women with access to critical resources, legal knowledge, and support services, helping them understand and exercise their rights. Through awareness sessions and legal literacy workshops, women gain the confidence to challenge injustices, make informed decisions, and seek justice when needed. The project also prioritizes healing and self-care, offering psychosocial support, informal counseling, and peer networks, ensuring that women have the emotional strength and community backing to move forward.

A significant aspect of Humqadam's empowerment strategy is creating leadership opportunities for women. The project actively encourages women to take on leadership roles in advocacy, community engagement, and violence prevention efforts. Women who have benefitted from

the project are supported in becoming facilitators, and peer advocates, enabling them to share their experiences, inspire others, and contribute to long-term social change.

By focusing on women's agency, self-reliance, and leadership development, Humqadam ensures that women are not just protected, but also empowered to drive change in their communities, challenging harmful norms and creating safer, more equitable spaces for future generations.

### **3. Gender-Responsive Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Humqadam project employs a gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation system to assess its effectiveness in promoting gender equality and protecting human rights. This includes: Tracking gender-disaggregated data to measure the participation of men and women in the program, as well as the effectiveness of the services provided to each group. Using gender-sensitive indicators to evaluate the success of interventions, such as changes in the attitudes of men towards gender equality and the reduction in incidents of gender-based violence. Gathering feedback from women and girls to ensure that their needs are being met and that they feel empowered and safe.

## Conclusions:

The Humqadam project successfully addressed GBV and CEAM through community mobilization, capacity building, and policy advocacy, achieving measurable reductions in harmful practices. Despite challenges like cultural resistance, operational delays, and limited app awareness, the project delivered significant outcomes within its timeframe. Overall, it made meaningful progress toward its objectives, laying a valuable foundation for long-term change.

### Effectiveness

**Goal Level:** The Humqadam Project aimed to strengthen community support, response mechanisms, and policy advocacy for women and girls at risk of DV and child/early-age marriage (CEAM). It exceeded its outreach targets, engaging 22,983 participants through 600 CEAM and 80 DV awareness sessions, surpassing the goal of 17,310. Among 440 surveyed women, 96% attended CEAM sessions and 91% attended DV sessions, indicating increased awareness of legal rights and available support services.

To build community-based support, 260 facilitators (131 female, 129 male) were trained to connect at-risk women with institutional services. The project assisted 600 survivors, with 88 receiving legal, psychological, and counseling support, while 42 survivors accessed formal services in the evaluation districts. Community engagement activities, such as Gup Shup sessions (38% participation) and community orientations (34%), created safe spaces for women to seek guidance.

However, challenges remained in sustaining community support, as no follow-up assessments were conducted, and the role of LHWs was limited. The long-term impact of trained facilitators was also undocumented.

The project introduced Referral Directories and the Humqadam App to improve survivor support. However, distribution of directories to community women was unclear, and app awareness was low (26.8%), with no data on downloads or usage, making its impact uncertain.

Despite political hurdles, the project successfully tabled three policy actions:

- Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024 – Allocating Rs. 260 million for GBV prevention.
- Balochistan Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill 2024 – Addressing child marriages (45% prevalence in Balochistan, UNESCO study).
- KP Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Policy and Draft Law – Incorporating a gender-sensitive approach.

Legislative progress in Sindh and KP was delayed due to administrative challenges, but discussions on these policies continue.

The Humqadam Project made notable progress in outreach, survivor support, and policy advocacy. While challenges remained in sustaining community support and guidance tool adoption, it laid a strong foundation for gender equality and violence prevention. Overall, its

effectiveness is rated as medium, with strong achievements in awareness and policy engagement but gaps in long-term sustainability.

### **Outcome Level**

Outcome 1: The project aimed to improve access to community-based support for survivors and at-risk women and girls in six districts by June 2024. It was achieved at a medium level, successfully meeting Indicators 1.1 and 1.3 but falling short on Indicator 1.2. The project exceeded targets by facilitating access to response mechanisms and strengthening community engagement through 240 Social Action Initiatives (SAIs), involving 4,618 participants (2,877 women and 1,741 men). Over 85% of participants found exposure visits, legal aid, and awareness sessions useful. However, the goal of 33% of families becoming violence-free was not met, though reductions in physical (60.6%) and verbal violence (48.4%) were observed. While the VFF campaign increased awareness, there was no clear evidence confirming the targeted percentage of violence-free families.

Outcome 2: The project aimed to enhance gender-responsive state protection mechanisms across four provinces by June 2024, achieving a medium level of success. While policy advocacy and engagement with key stakeholders showed strong progress, gaps remained in legislative approvals, impact assessments, and full implementation. Under Indicator 2.1, SG's advocacy led to multi-party consensus on the Balochistan Child Marriage Restraint Bill, but Assembly dissolution delayed its passage. Similarly, SG refined the KP-PWD Bill but progress stalled due to the absence of a Social Welfare Minister. Under Indicator 2.2, 128 duty bearers were engaged, 83 LHWs were trained, and 117 Nikahkhawans improved their legal awareness, with 10 refusing to perform underage marriages, reflecting real-world impact despite regional inconsistencies. Under Indicator 2.3, the Humqadam GBV Response App was launched late in the project, with 50% of interviewed duty bearers actively using it, though tracking mechanisms were insufficient to confirm broader adoption. Overall, while the project effectively influenced policy discussions and raised awareness, challenges in final legislative approvals, structured assessments, and tracking usage resulted in a medium achievement rating for Outcome 2.

### **Output Level**

Output 1.1: The project successfully raised awareness on VAWG, legal protections, and gender rights, engaging 22,983 individuals and surpassing its target. While positive attitude shifts were observed, regional disparities existed, with higher awareness in Mardan (48.7%) and Lahore (30%) compared to Quetta (14.5%) and Benazirabad, where tribal justice systems and limited female education posed challenges. Legal literacy gaps remained, with only 45.6% of surveyed participants demonstrating improved knowledge, and male engagement was low (25.48%). The VFF pledge campaign (1,677 pledges) and birth registrations (800 completed) were highly successful, reflecting strong community engagement. Overall, effectiveness was medium to high due to strong community participation but limited legal knowledge retention in some regions.

Output 1.2: The project trained 240 community facilitators, equipping them with knowledge, skills, and links to key service providers to prevent and address VAWG. 94% of facilitators attended gender impact sessions, and 89% received legal and response mechanism training. However, complex legal concepts posed challenges, and exposure visits occurred too late to reinforce learning effectively. Participation in SAIs training was lowest (66%), though those who attended successfully implemented initiatives like radio programs and civic documentation campaigns. The absence of structured pre- and post-training assessments limited the ability to measure knowledge retention and practical application, leading to an overall medium effectiveness rating.

Output 2.1: The project strengthened institutional response mechanisms by identifying service provision gaps and developing three policy briefs, achieving its quantitative target. Advocacy efforts led to progress in KP and Balochistan, including Cabinet approval of the Child Marriage Restraint Act amendment and strong political backing for the Women Protection Bill. However, formal legislative approval remained pending, limiting full implementation. Despite these delays, institutional reforms and legal advocacy efforts laid a strong foundation for future policy advancements, resulting in medium effectiveness.

Output 2.2: The project enhanced gender sensitization among service providers and duty bearers, training 83 LHWs, 117 Nikahkhawans, and engaging 120 duty bearers. 64% of LHWs and 70% of Nikahkhawans reported improved awareness of legal provisions, with some Nikahkhawans refusing to perform underage marriages. Behavioral changes were observed in recognizing GBV beyond physical violence and introducing SOPs for handling GBV cases. However, the absence of structured impact assessments, cultural resistance, and late engagement of duty bearers limited deeper institutional changes, resulting in medium effectiveness.

Output 2.3: The Humqadam App and Referral Directories were launched to improve access to GBV response services. The app included a resource directory, legal information, and offline accessibility. While praised by stakeholders, delays in rollout, low publicity, and limited awareness restricted adoption. Short post-launch assessment periods made it difficult to measure impact. Although these tools represented significant progress, their effectiveness remained low due to implementation challenges and insufficient stakeholder engagement.

The project demonstrated medium to high effectiveness in community engagement, awareness, and policy advocacy, with notable success in VFF pledges, birth registrations, and legislative progress. However, legal literacy gaps, lack of structured impact assessments, regional disparities, and implementation delays in digital tools affected overall effectiveness.

## **Relevance**

The Humqadam Project established a sustainable and relevant framework to support women and girls, particularly in underserved areas. By focusing on community-based support systems, trained local facilitators, and mobile tools, the project ensures continued access to essential services. Awareness campaigns and capacity-building efforts have helped shift cultural norms

and strengthen institutional responses to gender-based violence and child marriage, creating a lasting foundation for empowerment and protection.

The project's strategies were highly relevant and context-appropriate, addressing gender inequality and violence through community engagement, technological solutions, culturally sensitive awareness campaigns, and institutional advocacy. By considering local cultural contexts, geographical constraints, and socio-economic realities, the interventions were both effective and sustainable, ensuring that their impact endures beyond project completion.

### **Efficiency**

The Humqadam Project experienced a series of challenges that impacted its timeline and spending, particularly in the early stages. The first financial report highlighted some delays, mainly due to issues like the late approval of indicators, difficulties obtaining fieldwork permissions, and the broader impacts of the Taliban takeover and the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors, along with challenges like funding restrictions and the political situation, led to some underutilization of the budget. However, by the second financial period, spending began to improve, with more funds being allocated to activities and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). In the third and fourth periods, the project faced additional disruptions, including the floods in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but gradually regained momentum as conditions stabilized. The fifth report saw significant progress as EAD approval allowed for activities to accelerate. While there were delays, especially with critical components like the DV reporting mechanism, the project was ultimately able to align its activities and achieve 100% spending. The delays did impact the timing of some key initiatives, but the project's ability to adjust and realign, despite the challenges, demonstrates its resilience and commitment to achieving its goals.

### **Sustainability**

The Humqadam Project established lasting change through behavioral transformation, community ownership, institutional strengthening, and technological solutions. A significant cultural shift was evident, with 53% of interviewed (165) VF Families delaying child marriages, 54.5% reporting reduced physical violence, and 47% acknowledging decreased verbal abuse, contributing to healthier family dynamics. The engagement of men led to 38.4% of community survey male respondents gaining awareness of women's rights, reinforcing community-driven advocacy and gender-inclusive change. Sustainability was further ensured through trained facilitators, with 66% of 21 community facilitators interviewed, pledging continued support for at-risk women and girls, and strengthened referral pathways between CBOs, duty-bearers, and service providers, improving institutional responses to gender-based violence. While plans for government-led institutionalization of the Humqadam App did not materialize, its continued availability through SG's networks ensures access to legal resources and support services. The project's impact is reflected in the increased agency of women and girls, improved institutional responses, and shifting societal attitudes, reinforcing sustained progress toward gender equality and protection against violence.

## **Impact**

The Humqadam Project has played a transformative role in addressing VAWG, promoting gender equality, and advancing women's empowerment. By fostering attitudinal shifts, strengthening institutional responsiveness, and mobilizing local facilitators, the project successfully empowered women to assert their rights, participate in decision-making, and access legal protections. It has challenged deeply rooted patriarchal norms, delayed early marriages, improved women's mobility, and encouraged men to support gender equality efforts. The project's policy advocacy contributions have also laid a strong foundation for ongoing legal reforms aimed at protecting women's rights.

Beyond its intended impact, the project also triggered a range of unintended consequences—both positive and challenging. The rise in female leadership and increased demand for economic opportunities underscored the program's success in shifting mindsets and equipping women with the confidence to advocate for themselves. However, the backlash from certain families, misinterpretations of the project's objectives, and digital exclusion of women without access to technology highlighted the deep-seated resistance to change in some communities. Despite these challenges, the emergence of male allies, Nkakhawans verifying marriage ages, and growing support for women's rights within families demonstrates that the project has catalyzed long-term change that extends beyond its duration.

## **Knowledge Generation**

The Humqadam Project has contributed significantly to knowledge generation in the field of Ending Violence against Women and Girls (EVAW/G) by identifying emerging practices, effective intervention strategies, and lessons that can inform future programming. One of the project's key takeaways is the importance of localized, culturally sensitive interventions, demonstrating that engaging religious scholars, community leaders, and influencers is essential for overcoming patriarchal resistance, particularly in conservative regions like Quetta and Benazirabad.

The project also highlighted the critical role of male engagement, reinforcing that behavioral change requires targeted interventions for men and boys. While some progress was made in shifting attitudes, the limited participation of men emphasized the need for structured programs that integrate gender equality education into schools, workplaces, and religious discourse.

Another significant area of learning was the potential of digital innovations in bridging service gaps for survivors. The Humqadam app showcased the scalability of tech-based solutions, providing survivors with discreet access to legal resources and emergency contacts. However, the project also uncovered digital exclusion challenges, as many women in conservative households lacked access to mobile phones, underscoring the need for multi-channel outreach strategies that combine digital and offline approaches.

The VFF campaign provided further insights into community-driven approaches to EVAW/G, demonstrating that men's public pledges and structured follow-up mechanisms can reinforce long-term behavioral change. Similarly, the policy advocacy efforts on the Balochistan Women

Protection Bill 2024, the Balochistan Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill, and the PWD Policy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa offered valuable lessons on multi-stakeholder engagement and legal reform processes.

Finally, Humqadam underscored the effectiveness of survivor-centric programming, reinforcing that legal literacy, trauma-informed support, and agency-driven interventions are key to sustainable impact. These findings contribute to broader discourse on EAWG, offering a replicable model that balances awareness, advocacy, and direct survivor support. The project's knowledge outputs provide a strong evidence base for policymakers, practitioners, and civil society actors working to advance gender equality and violence prevention.

### **Gender Equality and Human Rights**

The Humqadam Project effectively incorporated human rights-based and gender-responsive approaches to address VAWG while ensuring protection, empowerment, and systemic accountability. By providing legal aid, survivor-centered safe spaces, and policy advocacy, the project reinforced survivors' rights and access to justice. It also engaged law enforcement and institutional actors to hold perpetrators accountable and foster a non-discriminatory response to gender-based violence.

A key aspect of the project was its gender-sensitive approach, which recognized the distinct challenges faced by women and girls. Through community engagement, awareness campaigns, and male allyship initiatives, Humqadam worked to shift harmful social norms and promote shared responsibility in violence prevention. However, while the project made significant progress in legal and social empowerment, the lack of economic empowerment interventions highlighted a gap in ensuring survivors' long-term independence.

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendations for SG, Practitioners and Donors**

**1. Expand Male Engagement Strategies:** While the Humqadam project successfully involved men through pledges and workshops, their participation remained limited. Future initiatives should introduce structured programs targeting men and boys, such as youth engagement in schools, mentorship programs, and community role models who advocate for gender equality and violence prevention. Collaborating with religious scholars, local elders, and male influencers can help challenge harmful gender norms and reinforce positive masculinity to prevent early-age marriage and domestic violence.

**2. Strengthen Digital Literacy and Technology Integration:** The Humqadam App was developed as a digital support tool for survivors, but low adoption (26.8% awareness) limited its impact. To maximize its effectiveness, future projects should enhance digital literacy among women, especially in rural areas, ensuring they understand and can access online legal, psychological, and emergency services. Additionally, incorporating real-time chat support, survivor case tracking, and integration with helpline services can make digital interventions more responsive and accessible for those in crisis.

**3. Prioritize Localized and Context-Sensitive Interventions:** The project's Gup Shup sessions and awareness campaigns were effective but faced resistance in conservative communities, limiting engagement. Future programs should conduct region-specific assessments before designing interventions, ensuring they align with local socio-cultural contexts. Partnering with local NGOs, community elders, and women leaders will help in adapting strategies to specific regions, making interventions more widely accepted and sustainable.

**4. Build Resilience into Project Design:** External disruptions like COVID-19 and the 2022 floods affected the project's implementation, demonstrating the need for crisis-responsive program models. Future initiatives should incorporate emergency preparedness measures, including contingency funds for survivors, decentralized community-led support structures, and digital service delivery mechanisms. Training community facilitators and local institutions to handle crisis situations will ensure uninterrupted survivor assistance and advocacy.

**5. Enhance Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:** The project played a key role in policy advocacy, particularly in tabling the Balochistan Women Protection Bill 2024 and the Early-Age Marriage Restraint Bill, but legislative delays slowed progress. To amplify policy influence and advocacy, future initiatives should broaden collaborations beyond civil society organizations to include private sector stakeholders, academia, and media. These partnerships can increase pressure on policymakers, ensure consistent advocacy efforts, and create broader awareness campaigns on VAWG.

**6. Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Accountability:** Training sessions for duty bearers, law enforcement officials, and service providers improved gender-sensitive responses, but sustaining these practices requires institutionalization. Future programs should work toward embedding gender-responsive Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) into local institutions, ensuring that police, health workers, and legal officers continue applying best practices beyond project timelines. Establishing monitoring frameworks to track institutional performance will reinforce accountability and effectiveness in handling VAWG and CEAM cases.

**7. Maintain and Strengthen Survivor-Centric Models:** While Humqadam effectively provided legal aid, psychosocial support, and safe spaces for survivors, economic empowerment was missing, limiting survivors' ability to rebuild independent lives. Future interventions should incorporate economic rehabilitation efforts, including vocational training, small business grants, financial literacy programs, and employment linkages. Supporting survivor-led advocacy groups and peer support networks will further reinforce long-term empowerment and resilience.

**8. Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Systems:** The project successfully measured short-term outcomes, but long-term impact tracking was limited. Future initiatives should introduce longitudinal studies to assess whether behavioral changes, community support systems, and policy implementations remain effective post-project. Developing a real-time data tracking system can provide insights into survivor follow-ups, institutional responses, and the effectiveness of intervention programs, ensuring continuous learning and adaptation of strategies.

By implementing these recommendations, SG and donors can build upon Humqadam's successes while addressing gaps in sustainability, economic empowerment, and institutional accountability. Strengthening multi-sector collaboration, community ownership, and digital inclusion will further enhance gender equality and violence prevention efforts.

## ANNEXURES

## Annexure 1: Documents Consulted for Evaluation

### **Background Papers and Studies**

- Center for Reproductive Rights. (2018). *Ending impunity for child marriage in Pakistan: Normative and implementation gaps*.
- National Commission on the Status of Women & UN Women Pakistan. (2020). *costing study on child marriage in Pakistan: A report on Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*. Supported by UK Aid.
- Solotaroff, J. L., & Pande, R. P. (2014). *Violence against women and girls: Lessons from South Asia*. The World Bank.
- National Commission for Human Rights. (2023, March). *Domestic violence policy brief*.
- Khan, A., Khwaja, A., & Jawed, A. (2020, December). *Navigating civic spaces during pandemic: Pakistan report*.
- World Health Organization. (2020, April 7). *COVID-19 and violence against women: What the health sector/system can do*.
- Government of Punjab & UNODC. *Gender and pandemic: Urgent call for action – Advocacy brief 4*
- Heinrich Böll Foundation. (2023, June). *E-paper: Shrinking spaces for civil society in Pakistan*.

### **Project Documents**

- Project Proposal
- Project Reports (Activity Reports, Monitoring Reports, Evaluation Reports, Progress and Annual Reports)
- Violence Free Family Pledge Campaign Report
- VFF Baseline and End line Reports
- Training Modules and workshop reports
- IEC Material
- Case Studies from Field
- Theatrical scripts
- Policy Brief of PWD
- Key Stakeholders Consultation Reports

### **Evaluation Guidelines:**

- World Health Organization (WHO). (2016). *Ethical and safety recommendations for intervention research on violence against women*. World Health Organization.
- United Nations Evaluation Group (UNGEM). *Ethical guidelines for evaluation*.

- United Nations. (2007). *Indicators to measure violence against women: Report of the Expert Group Meeting*. Geneva, Switzerland.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2010). *DAC guidelines and reference series: Quality standards for development evaluation*.
- OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation. *Better criteria for better evaluation: Revised evaluation criteria, definitions, and principles for use*. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

#### **UNTF Evaluation Reports of other Projects**

- SORADI. (2023, March). *Final evaluation report: Community driven FGM/C abandonment and women empowerment project, Somaliland*. SORADI.
- 2021, October. *Final evaluation report: Preventing violence against women and girls with disabilities in Cambodia: A community mobilization model project*.
- Musavi. (2020). *Inception report: External evaluation of the Drivers of Change project of Shirkat Gah*.
- Musavi. (2020, March). *External evaluation of Drivers of Change project: Final report*.

## Annexure 2: Beneficiary Data Sheet

The beneficiary data sheet is a key tool for the evaluation which quantifies the individuals who directly benefited from the project (primary), as well as those individuals the project worked with to change the lives of the primary beneficiaries (secondary). This **should** be annexed to the evaluation report. Further guidance is available for evaluator/s on request. If it is not possible to collect or reliably provide this data, the evaluator/s should explain in the report.

### TOTAL BENEFICIARIES REACHED BY THE PROJECT – example

Note: **"The below figures are for the entire project and not just for the 4 districts engaged with during the evaluation".**

Type of Primary Beneficiary	Number
Female domestic workers	
Female migrant workers	
Women/ girls survivors of violence	88
Women prisoners	
Women and girls in general	22,983
VFF Family	8680 Female (3.5 x 2480)
Other (Specify here:)	1,081,500 Females
<b>TOTAL PRIMARY BENEFICIARIES REACHED</b>	<b>1113251</b>
Type of Secondary Beneficiary	Number
Members of Community Based Organizations	26
Government Officials (i.e. decision makers, policy implementers)	125 Female
Government Officials (i.e., decision makers, policy implementers)	121 Males
Duty Bearers (UC Secretary)	11 Female
Duty Bearer (Nikah Registrar)	130 Male
Lady Health Workers (LHWs)	110 Female
Men and/ or boys	15588
Community facilitators women	131
Community facilitators Men	129
Private sector employers	
Social/ welfare workers	
Uniformed personnel (i.e., Police, military, peace keeping)	
Other (Specify here:)	1,081,500 Men
<b>TOTAL SECONDARY BENEFICIARIES</b>	<b>1097845</b>
Indirect beneficiaries reached	Number
Other (total only)	1,500,250 (This is the number of SAIs. In SAIs SG also had some radio programs hence the large number of indirect beneficiaries).
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>3,711,346 ( excluded the 26 CBOs as these are not beneficiaries', these are the organizations).</b>

## Annexure 3: Consultancy TORs

Consultancy call for external evaluation of Hum-Qadam – Partners for Change project-a 3-year intervention implemented by Shirkat Gah –Women’s Resource Centre, aimed to reduce

## VAWG & CEAM

Consultant for the final evaluation of Hum-Qadam – Partners for Change

Location:	Pakistan
Application deadline:	15 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
Languages required:	Urdu & English
Starting date:	1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024
Expected duration of assignment:	2 Months

### 1. Background and Context

#### 1.1 Background and context of the project

The COVID-19 health pandemic saw a surge in violence against women and girls, especially domestic violence. Field reports from 23 districts, on-going research and literature confirm this for Pakistan and showcase how women trapped in homes with abusers had difficulty accessing help. The lockdown disrupted VAWG response mechanisms and services, including shelters, police stations and the judicial system. Survivors and those at risk of VAWG could only rely on a handful of people to facilitate access to information and services, underscoring the vitality of immediately available local resource persons. On-line assistance/services became vital but became a challenge for legal aid and other institutions. The extended closure of schools combined with continuing financial strains may precipitate child/early age marriages (CEAM).

#### 1.2 Description of the project that is being evaluated

The Hum-Qadam project aimed to result in women and girls' access to a strong well-equipped support system around VAWG, especially domestic violence and CEAM; enhanced access to information and services through a telephone App; improved community attitudes and practices; better networking of key stakeholders; and advocacy for more gender responsive institutionalized changes in laws, policies and practices.

Hum-Qadam created a pool of informed capable community facilitators as a first line of support in 6 districts (2 each in Sindh and Khyber-Pakhtunkwa, 1 each in Punjab and Baluchistan) finalized in consultation with stakeholders in particular the Commissions on the Status of Women in KP and Sindh. It implied virtual help by expanding an existing VAWG-focused APP (developed under a previous intervention) featuring directories of available public and private sector services at the provincial level and for selected districts along with navigation guidelines. The project engaged communities in awareness raising to prevent and address VAWG such as pledges of Violence Free Families, and gender sensitized duty-bearers and private service providers. The project also collaborated with women's institutions to advocate and institutionalize gender-responsive state measures to prevent and redress VAWG, especially in Sindh and KP.

The Hum-Qadam – Partners for Change project aimed to ensure women and girl survivors and those at risk of DV or CEAM have enhanced access to robust community support, improved remote guidance tools and more COVID-19 appropriate protection systems in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Punjab, and Baluchistan. This project focused on resulting in women and girls’ access to a strong well-equipped support system of local female and male facilitators as a first line of support around VAWG especially DV and CEAM; improved community attitudes and practices through campaigns, mass messaging, rewarding behavioural changes reducing violence, such a demonstrating being Violence Free Families; sensitized networked key stakeholders in 30 communities of districts Mardan, Swat, Benazirabad, Hyderabad, Vehari and Quetta. The idea was to enhance remote access to information about rights/services and navigation guidelines through an upgraded VAWG- focused telephone App in 16 districts: above 6 plus Karachi, Mirpurkhas, Shahdaskot, Muzaffargarh, Lahore, Okara, Kasur, Toba Tek Singh, Peshawar, and Jaffarabad.

The reason for selecting these communities was that we had worked in 4 of them in our previous UNTF project and wanted to build on our work or strengthen the intervention.

2 new communities were added as we had good experience and data from our work in other donor funded projects. Only 2 are Urban. We had to switch from Vehari to Lahore in Punjab due to NOC issues.

The purpose behind the evaluation is to see the impact brought forth in this project, how successful we were in fulfilling our objectives, which areas require more work (for future prospects), how gender sensitive were our practices and assess the knowledge gained and its usefulness.

- a) Name of the project: Hum-Qadam – Partner for Change
- b) Implementing Organization: Shirkat Gah - Women’s Resource Centre (SG)
- c) Project duration: 3 years Project start date: 1/6/2021
- d) Project end date: 31/8/2024
- e) Current project implementation status with the timeframe to complete the project
- f) Implementation is on-going; project plans to conclude by August 2024.
- g) Description of the specific forms of violence addressed by the project

The different forms of violence that are addressed by this project includes intimate partner physical and sexual violence, non-partner physical and sexual violence, violence against the girl child, early/child marriage, forced marriage, and ‘honor’ crimes.

- h) Main objectives of the project

To ensure women and girls at increased risk of DV or CEAM who were unable to access response mechanisms due to COVID-19 conditions have enhanced access to robust community

support in six districts, improved guidance tools in 16 districts and more COVID-19 appropriate protection systems in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Sind, Baluchistan and Punjab.

i) Description of targeted primary and secondary beneficiaries

Primary beneficiaries	Women and girls’ survivors or those at risk of VAW/G and CEAM in the communities of Lahore, Quetta, Hyderabad, Benazirabad, Swat, Lahore and Mardan -1000
Secondary beneficiaries	(1) Women and men community facilitators (240) (2) Health professionals (120) (3) Government officials (duty-bearers and service providers) (200) (4) Men and Boys

g) The geographic context, such as the region, country and landscape, and the geographical coverage of this project.

Country of implementation: Pakistan

Project Districts: Lahore, Quetta, Hyderabad, Benazirabad, Swat and Mardan

Project Sites:

5 villages/communities from each site were selected

h) Key partners involved in the project, including the implementing partners and other key stakeholders

Shirkat Gah- Women’s Resource Centre (SG) is the implementer of the Humqadqam – Partners for Change project funded by UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. The project was implemented by SG office staff and male and female teams of facilitators trained in each district.

Key stakeholders of the project include:

(6) Project Implementing team

(7) Women and girls

(8) Filed facilitators (females and males)

- Received Capacity building on Personal status law, documentation and violence against women laws
- Part of awareness campaigns esp. the Violence Free Family Campaign
- Women and girls’ survivors of violence facilitated in the project

(9) Men and boys

- Received Capacity building on Personal status law, documentation and violence against women laws
- Part of awareness campaigns esp. the Violence Free Family Campaign

(10)Duty Bearers

- Received gender sensitization trainings

- Part of the exposure visits and those that have conducted awareness sessions in the field
- Duty bearers here include local government officials, marriage registrars, health officials including medico legal officers, lawyers, police.

**i) Budget and expenditure**

Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		No Cost Extension		Project Total			
Total budget (USD)	Total Expenditure (USD)	Total budget (USD)	Total Expenditure (USD)	Total budget (USD)	Total Expenditure (USD)	Total budget (USD)	Total Projected Expenditure (USD)	Project Total Budget (USD)	Project Total Expenditure (USD)	Balance (USD)	Projected Delivery Rate (%)
159,960.0	67,636.4	285,120.6	123,727.5	308,636.1	228,060.7	80,575.4	80,575.4	500,000.0	473,727.5	192,531.0	94.75%

**j) Key assumptions of the project**

If

Community members are more sensitive to & reject VAWG &

There are sufficient facilitators-cum-change-makers to help women and girls in distress with the requisite knowledge and know how & mobilize/sensitize the community

If more WHRDs and gender equality activists have access to knowledge and how to navigate the system

Then this will change the local ecosystem

If

Local State institutions are more gender-responsive &

Women’s commissions and other state initiatives help institutionalize better responses down to the community level & help advocate necessary changes in the law and policies

Then this will change the state eco-system

Together this will bring about sustainable institutionalized changes in the overall ecosystem related to VAWG

**1.3 Results chain of the project**

**Project Goal:** Women and girls at increased risk of domestic violence or child/early age marriages and unable to access response mechanisms because of Covid-19 have enhanced access to robust community support in Vehari, Mardan, Swat, Quetta, Hyderabad, and Benazirabad districts; improved guidance tools in the above districts and Peshawar, Jafferabad, Karachi, Larkana, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Multan, Okara, Toba Tek Singh, Kasur; Covid-19 appropriate protection systems in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Punjab, and Baluchistan by June 2024.

Two outcomes contribute to this overall objective: (1) changing local ecosystems around VAW/G in 30 communities of six districts (2) helping to ensure that state and private sector response and protection mechanisms are continuous, more gender-responsive, appropriate, and effective in four provinces during/post-COVID-19.

The first outcome will see women and girl survivors and those at risk enjoying a reinforced community-based and owned support system to prevent and redress VAW/G, especially DV and CEAM, catalyzing and reinforcing rights-seeking behaviour amongst women and girls. This will be achieved through two concrete project outputs:

1. Improved attitudes and practices amongst community men and women resulting from increased understanding of GBV, knowledge of rights, legal ramifications and negative health implications of VAW/G, in particular DV, CEAM and forced marriages. Awareness sessions to change attitudes will include: theatre performances, door-to – door campaigns such as registering births especially of girls to guard against CEAM, SAIs and media messaging (especially TV and radio). Families, especially male household heads, will be mobilized to sign pledges to be violence-free families (VFF), verified progress will be publicly rewarded to incentivize positive practices. Gup Shup sessions with women and men will deepen understanding and encourage self-initiated collective actions. Communities linked to project-sensitized service providers and duty-bearers, will have improved access to services. Activities will expand the knowledge base of women and girls including on protection mechanisms and how to access these.

2. Well-informed and connected community-based women and men facilitator cohorts will support survivors/those at risk and re-orient community attitudes and practices using project-acquired/enhanced linkages, skills – like communication and negotiation – and knowledge, including on COVID-19's inter-linked impact on VAW/G, health, education and livelihoods; provincial laws and judicial procedures; incorporating women's financial protections in marriage contracts, strategies to exit abusive marriages; preventative and post-marriage options for CEAM. Networking will create robust referral pathways for VAW/G.

The second outcome will see improved state and non-state response and protection mechanisms through three concrete results:

1. Better-equipped women's commissions, women's departments, other government departments and policy-makers acting to ameliorate institutional VAW/G response and

prevention measures thanks to generated evidence, consultations, mitigating policy options for COVID-19/other emergencies.

2. Improved responses to VAW/G and better implementation of existing provisions by service providers and duty-bearers (e.g. police, shelter, legal aid providers, helplines, marriage registrars, and local government officials) with better capabilities for survivor recognition and support in six districts for better coordination of responses.

3. Survivors/at risk females, CSOs and W/HRDs in at least 16 districts, will have better access to GBV-services through upgraded App and printed materials. Community facilitators, CBOs, W/HRDs, duty-bearers and service providers trained to use App in at least six districts.

Outcome 1: Women and girl survivors and those at risk of VAWG, especially domestic violence and child/early age marriages, in districts Mardan, Swat, Benazirabad, Hyderabad, Vehari, and Quetta have improved access to strengthened community-based support for prevention, protection and redressal by June 2024.

Output 1.1 Communities in 30 villages of six districts have improved attitudes regarding women & Girls' rights and increased knowledge of laws and protection mechanisms for VAW/G by June 2024

Activities:

1.1.1: Community awareness sessions on health & legal implications of and prevention of EAM and forced marriages

1.1.2: Community awareness sessions on DV; how & where to report and available services

1.1.3: Theatre, VFF & other campaigns, Mass media messaging focused on DV & EAM

1.1.4: Community Orientations & Gup Shup (Chit chat) of community women and men on DV EAM and VFF

1.1.5: Birth registration campaigns esp. of girl as a means to guard against EAM

Output 1.2 Female and male community facilitators equipped with requisite knowledge, skills and links to key service providers, response mechanisms and district officials better able to change attitudes and practices, prevent and address VAW/G in their communities.

1.2.1: Training and orientation of facilitators on gender understanding the gendered impact of COVID

(1) Orientation of project

(2) Understanding the gendered impact of COVID-19 (Link to VAWG, health, education and economics)

1.2.2: Trainings and refreshers on VAW/G, Family laws & reproductive health implications, best practices for prevention and dealing with cases; Exit strategies from abusive marriages; Financial protections for women in marriage contracts

1.2.3: Trainings and refreshers on Social Action Initiatives; communication & negotiation; introduction of Violence Free Families

1.2.4: SAI's carried out in the field

1.2.5: Network/linking /referral activities/actors through visits to: Shelters, CSW committees; women department offices; SWD offices and institutions; Police; Courts; Prosecutor's office; health practitioners, hospitals providing medico-legal facilities; Legal aid providers etc.

Outcome 2 STATE AND OTHER RESPONSE AND PROTECTION MECHANISMS ARE MORE GENDER-RESPONSIVE, APPROPRIATE, AND EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED IN FOUR PROVINCES BY JUNE 2024

Output 2.1 Women's commissions, women's departments and policy makers better equipped to improve institutional response and prevention measures around VAW/G especially in COVID-19 and other emergency contexts by June 2024

2.1.1: Online & physical networking/ consultations with Women's Commissions, women's departments, other government officials on existing gaps & bottlenecks for effective response/service provision around VAW/G

2.1.2: Orientation of commission staff/other officials on telephone app as well as lacuna and obstacles to effective implementation of women protection laws & services

*2.1.3: Formulate mitigating Policy Options for COVID-19/other emergency situations for provinces esp. KP*

*& Punjab; Advocacy promoting these & already formulated options in Sindh (changed to working with Baluchistan commission as Sindh commission not available.)*

Output 2.2 Improved responses of VAW/G service providers and duty-bearers (police, shelter, legal aid, helplines & local government) in six districts by June 2024

2.2.1: Networking meetings with CSW District Committee members, local duty-bearers, legal aid providers, police, shelter staff, elected/former councilors and community facilitators

2.2.2: Sensitization of health outreach workers and councillors (e.g. LHW/Vs) on survivor recognition & Support

2.2.3: Session with Marriage Registrars and Union Council secretaries/local government officers on family laws and their responsibilities

*2.2.4: Formation and strengthening of 2 district Sindh CSW GBV Committees & strengthening of 2 KP CSW*

*District Committees on effective monitoring & implementation of laws & policies (changed to working with Baluchistan commission as KP & Sindh commission not available.)*

Output 2.3 Duty-bearers, women, girl survivors & at risk in 6 districts and CSOs and W/HRDs in 16 districts, and have enhanced information and tools to access preventive and response services/authorities by June 2024

2.3.1: Updating, expanding & adapting for non-android phones of VAW/G Hum-Qadam telephone App

## **2. Purpose of the evaluation**

To evaluate progress against indicators and assess impact and record lessons learnt. This evaluation will help SG to understand our (strengths and weaknesses and challenges managed, risks addressed, successes made) and for using these lessons for designing future projects.

### **2.1 Why the evaluation needs to be done**

The Hum-Qadam – Partners for Change is concluding in May 2024 and the purpose of the evaluation will be to assess the effectiveness, impact, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, and to identify key successes and lessons learnt of the project to feed into future interventions by SG to address GBV.

### **2.2 How the evaluation results will be used, by whom and when.**

Relevant findings, lessons learnt, best practices and recommendations generated from this evaluation will be shared with key stakeholders of the project and will be used by SG (the implementing organization), UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women (the donor) and other relevant stakeholders to guide and inform future projects design and implementation. The purpose of the evaluation is both to highlight the potential successes of the project but also to reflect on the challenges faced by the project during implementation.

## **3 Evaluation objectives and scope**

### **3.1 Scope of Evaluation:**

- Timeframe:

This evaluation will cover the project duration June 2021- May 2024

- Geographical Coverage: All project sites: Lahore, Hyderabad, Benazirabad, Quetta, Swat & Mardan
- Target groups to be covered: This evaluation needs to cover the target primary and secondary beneficiaries as well as broader stakeholders.

### **3.2 Objectives of Evaluation: What are the main objectives that this evaluation must achieve?**

To evaluate the impact of the Hum-Qadam – Partners for Change project in strengthening women and girls to be prevent and respond to VAWG and CEAM in their families and communities. In particular:

- Y To evaluate the entire project (June 2021- May 2024), against the effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, impact and knowledge creation criteria, as well as the cross-cutting gender equality and human rights criteria (*defined below*);
- Y To identify key lessons and promising or emerging good practices in the field of ending violence against women and girls, for learning purposes (*this is defined under the knowledge generation criteria below*).

## **4 Evaluation Questions**

Evaluation Criteria	Mandatory Evaluation Question
<p>Effectiveness</p> <p><i>A measure of the extent to which a project attains its objectives / results (as set out in the project document and results framework) in accordance with the theory of change.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs (project results) achieved and how?</li> <li>2. To what extent has this project positively changed the thinking, behaviour, and decision making of the women and/or girls in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by this project? Why?</li> <li>3. What are the key changes in the lived realities experienced by women and/or girls engaged in the project?</li> <li>4. To what extent has this project positively changed the thinking &amp; behaviour of the men and/or boys in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by this project?</li> <li>5. To what extent was the project successful in gender sensitizing and linking duty bearers with women and girls to address violence against women and girls in the district?</li> <li>6. To what extent did the capacity building sessions increase/enhance participant’s knowledge and understanding of gender, their legal rights, the law on EAM and services available for them in their districts? Did the trained participants pass on the knowledge they gained with the families and in their community?</li> <li>7. To what extent did the Violence Free Family Campaign bring about the desired behavior change by improving the lives of women and girls.</li> </ol>
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>The extent to which the project is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group and the context.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. To what extent do the achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls?</li> <li>9. Were project strategies and activities relevant and appropriate to the needs of women and girls?</li> <li>10. Was the project able to adjust to any changes in context and needs of the primary beneficiaries during the project?</li> </ol>
<p>Efficiency</p> <p><i>Measures the outputs -qualitative and quantitative – in relation to the inputs.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. To what extent was the project efficiently and cost-effectively implemented? The evaluator will consider if activities were implemented on time, fidelity of implementation to planning (incl. budget) and whether activities were designed to make the best use of financial and human resources.</li> </ol>

<p><i>It is an economic term which refers to whether the project was delivered cost effectively.</i></p>	
<p><i>Sustainability Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of a project are likely to continue after the project/funding ends.</i></p>	<p>10. To what extent will the achieved results be sustained, especially any positive changes in the lives of women and girls (project goal level) after project end? Are achievements in protection and behavior change likely to sustain after funding ends; what plans do stakeholders have to continue their work after the project ends; what services are available to support beneficiaries after the project ends?</p> <p>11. Did women and girls obtain basic documentation i.e. birth certificates, ID cards and registered Nikah Nama's that allow them to access basic rights and services?</p>
<p><i>Impact Assesses the changes that can be attributed to a particular project relating specifically to higher-level impact (both intended and unintended).</i></p>	<p>12. To what extent has the project contributed to ending violence against women, gender equality and/or women's empowerment (both intended and unintended impact)?</p> <p>13. Are women and girls more aware of their rights, and do they have better access to available services?</p> <p>14. Are communities more aware of EAM and better responding to VAWG in their communities?</p> <p>15. To what extent are survivors of GBV (Women and girls) reporting cases and accessing redressal mechanisms (both formal and informal)?</p>
<p><i>Knowledge generation Assesses whether there are any promising practices that can be shared with other practitioners.</i></p>	<p>18. To what extent has the project generated new knowledge, identified promising or emerging practices in the field of EAW/G that should be documented and shared with other practitioners?</p>

Gender Equality and Human Rights	<p>Cross-cutting criteria: the evaluation should consider the extent to which human rights based and gender responsive approaches have been incorporated through-out the project and to what extent.</p> <p>19. To what extent have human rights based and gender responsive approaches been incorporated throughout the project?</p> <p>Note: Evaluator must incorporate an assessment of human rights and gender responsiveness throughout the evaluation questions above; ensuring the evaluation approach and methods of data collection are gender responsive (e.g. women and girls must feel safe to share information); specify that the evaluation data must be disaggregated by sex and other social criteria of importance to the project's subject.</p>
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The evaluation approach, process and methods should be tailored according to the evaluation objectives and characteristics of key stakeholders. Besides focusing on project outcomes and impact, it is also important to identify examples of good practices and give recommendations for the improvement of implemented activities. The evaluation approach and methods must be informed by feminist theory and approaches, be gender responsive, collect sex disaggregated data and must be tailored according to context and cultural sensitivities. The evaluator(s) should propose the evaluation design and methodology in their proposal. The evaluation process should include the following phases: developing evaluation design, primary and secondary data collection plan and method, field focus group discussions and interviews of key stakeholders. The evaluation team will be expected to visit all four sites and visit at least 5 of the villages in each site. Evaluation methods should include: - (1) content analysis of the collected data, documents and literature (including data collected during the process of project implementation, such as Violence Free Family Verification results, End line report on communities' understanding of Violence Against Women, M&E reports, reports of follow-up meetings, progress and annual reports); (2)- field visits , focus groups and interviews with different groups of beneficiaries and stakeholders; & (3) case studies illustrating examples of good practice.

**5.1 Proposed evaluation design:** In their proposals, applicants are expected to give an overview of the evaluation design they propose using.

**5.2 Data sources:** This would comprise of desk review of Pakistan's gender empowerment policies, relevant laws and affirmative actions including our theory of change (ToC).

**5.3 Proposed data collection methods:** This will comprise of desk review (as mentioned above), KII's and FGDs in all six districts.

**5.4 Proposed sampling methods:** A minimum of 10% - 15% people engaged in this project will be selected as the sample. This sample is selected keeping the rational in mind how hard it is to

get 100% people to show up at the end of the 3-year project. Applicants are expected to specify the specific sampling methods that they propose using.

**5.5 Field visits:** Field visits will be conducted in all six districts; the venue will be arranged by SG. The timeline per district will be shared by the external evaluators' team.

## **6. Evaluation Ethics**

The evaluator/s must put in place specific safeguards and protocols to protect the safety (both physical and psychological) of respondents and those collecting the data as well as to prevent harm in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. This must ensure the rights of the individual are protected and participation in the evaluation does not result in further violation of their rights. The evaluator/s must have a plan in place to:

- Y Protect the rights of respondents, including privacy and confidentiality;
- Y Elaborate on how informed consent will be obtained and to ensure that the names of individuals consulted during data collection will not be made public;
- Y If the project involves children (under 18 years old\*) the evaluator/s must consider additional risks and need for parental consent;
- Y The evaluator/s must be trained in collecting sensitive information and specifically data relating to violence against women and select any members of the evaluation team on these issues.
- Y Data collection tools must be designed in a way that is culturally appropriate and does not create distress for respondents;
- Y Data collection visits should be organized at the appropriate time and place to minimize risk to respondents;
- Y The interviewer or data collector must be able to provide information on how individuals in situations of risk can seek support (referrals to organizations that can provide counselling support, for example)

### **Resources:**

- ② [WHO, "Ethical and safety recommendations for intervention research on violence against women", \(2016\)](#)
- ② [WHO, "Ethical and safely recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies" \(2007\)](#)
- ② [WHO/PATH, "Researching violence against women: a practical guide for researchers and activists", \(2005\)](#)
- ② [UNICEF's "Child and youth participation guide" \(various resources\)](#)

## Annexure 4: Evaluation Matrix

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Data Collection Methods</b>	<b>Data Sources</b>	<b>Analysis Methods</b>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	To what extent were the intended project goals, outcomes, and outputs achieved?	Achievement levels of outcomes and outputs compared to targets	Surveys, FGDs, KIIs	Beneficiaries, Project Records, Duty Bearers	Descriptive & Thematic Analysis
	What factors contributed to or hindered the achievement of these goals, outcomes, and outputs?	Identification of facilitating or hindering factors (e.g., socio-economic, cultural)	KIIs, FGDs, Project Document Review	Project Staff, Duty Bearers, Community Facilitators Community Women and men	Root Cause Analysis, Thematic Analysis
	How were challenges addressed during project implementation?	Types and effectiveness of strategies to overcome challenges	KIIs, Document Review	Project Staff, Project Documents	Content Analysis
<b>Relevance</b>	To what extent do the achieved results remain relevant to the needs of women and girls?	Continued alignment of outcomes with beneficiaries' needs	FGDs, Surveys, Document Review	Beneficiaries, Project Reports	Trend & Thematic Analysis
	Were project strategies and activities relevant and appropriate to the needs of women and girls?	Participant satisfaction with project relevance	FGDs, KIIs	Beneficiaries, Project Staff	Thematic Analysis
	Was the project able to adjust to	Flexibility and adaptability	KIIs, Document	Project Staff,	Process Analysis

	any changes in context and needs?	of project strategies	Review	Project Reports	
<b>Efficiency</b>	To what extent was the project efficiently and cost-effectively implemented?	Cost-effectiveness ratio, budget utilization rates, value for money	Financial Review, KIIs	Project Financial Records, Project Staff	Cost-Benefit Analysis, Descriptive Analysis
<b>Sustainability</b>	To what extent will the achieved results be sustained, especially positive changes in the lives of women and girls after project end?	Evidence of lasting behavior change, continuation of support structures, beneficiaries' ability to maintain practices	FGDs, Surveys, KIIs	Beneficiaries, Community Women and men Duty Bearers Project Staff	Thematic Analysis,
<b>Impact</b>	To what extent has the project contributed to ending violence against women, promoting gender equality, and empowering women (intended and unintended impacts)?	Changes in reported VAWG incidents, increased gender equality initiatives, empowerment actions taken	Surveys, FGDs, KIIs	Beneficiaries, Community Leaders, Duty Bearers	Comparative Analysis, Thematic Analysis
<b>Knowledge Generation</b>	To what extent has the project generated new knowledge, identified promising or	Number and description of new practices, level of innovation,	KIIs, FGDs, Document Review	Project Staff, Beneficiaries, Partner Organizations	Content Analysis, Thematic Analysis

	emerging practices in the field of Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW/G) that should be documented and shared with other practitioners?	relevance to EVAW/G			
	Has the project contributed to developing new methodologies or tools in EVAW/G intervention, prevention, or survivor support? If so, how can these be adapted for broader application?	Types of methodologies/ tools created, adaptability of tools to other contexts, feedback on tool effectiveness	KIIs, FGDs, Documentation of Tools	Project Staff, Duty Bearers, Partner Organizations	Content Analysis, Comparative Analysis
<b>Gender Equality &amp; Human Rights</b>	To what extent were human rights and gender-responsive approaches incorporated throughout the project?	Inclusion of gender-responsive elements, disaggregation of data by sex and social criteria	FGDs, KIIs, Document Review	Project Records, Beneficiaries	Gender Analysis

## Annexure 5: Data Collection Tools

### **PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION**

By signing this pledge, I hereby commit to discussing and applying the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and to adopting the associated ethical behaviours.

#### **INTEGRITY**

I will actively adhere to the moral values and professional standards of evaluation practice as outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and following the values of the United Nations. Specifically, I will be:

- Honest and truthful in my communication and actions.
- Professional, engaging in credible and trustworthy behaviour, alongside competence, commitment and ongoing reflective practice.
- Independent, impartial and incorruptible.

#### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

I will be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken and responsible for honouring commitments, without qualification or exception; I will report potential or actual harms observed. Specifically, I will be: Transparent regarding evaluation purpose and actions taken, establishing trust and increasing accountability for performance to the public, particularly those populations affected by the evaluation.

- Responsive as questions or events arise, adapting plans as required and referring to appropriate channels where corruption, fraud, sexual exploitation or abuse or other misconduct or waste of resources is identified.
- Responsible for meeting the evaluation purpose and for actions taken and for ensuring redress and recognition as needed.

#### **RESPECT**

I will engage with all stakeholders of an evaluation in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, personal agency and characteristics.

Specifically, I will ensure:

- Access to the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders – whether powerless or powerful – with due attention to factors that could impede access such as sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability.
- Meaningful participation and equitable treatment of all relevant stakeholders in the evaluation processes, from design to dissemination. This includes engaging various stakeholders, particularly affected people, so they can actively inform the evaluation approach and products rather than being solely a subject of data collection.
- Fair representation of different voices and perspectives in evaluation products (reports, webinars, etc.).

## BENEFICIENCE

I will strive to do good for people and planet while minimizing harm arising from evaluation as an intervention. Specifically, I will ensure:

- Explicit and ongoing consideration of risks and benefits from evaluation processes.
- Maximum benefits at systemic (including environmental), organizational and programmatic levels.
- No harm. I will not proceed where harm cannot be mitigated.
- Evaluation makes an overall positive contribution to human and natural systems and the mission of the United Nations.

I commit to playing my part in ensuring that evaluations are conducted according to the Charter of the United Nations and the ethical requirements laid down above and contained within the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. When this is not possible, I will report the situation to my supervisor, designated focal points or channels and will actively seek an appropriate response.

Signature

Date

**Consent Form for Interviews/FGDs**

Respondent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Role in the Project: \_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_

Village: \_\_\_\_\_

Please read and tick the following boxes to confirm your understanding and agreement: Be assured that everything you share will be anonymized, and it will not be possible for anyone to identify that you participated in the study or determine what you shared...

I confirm that I have been fully informed about the purpose and scope of the Evaluation Study, and I have had the opportunity to ask any questions regarding my participation.

I voluntarily agree to take part in the Study/interview.

I understand that my participation is completely voluntary, and I am free to withdraw at any point without needing to provide a reason.

I agree to the interview being audio recorded. I understand that all the information I provide will remain confidential and will only be accessed by the research team.

I agree to the use of anonymized quotes from my responses in the Evaluation Report and any related project publications or reports.

Respondent's Signature

Date:

Interviewer's Signature

Date:

## **KII Questions Guide for key personnel of the implementing team**

Date of Interview:

Type of Participant:

Gender:

Name of Participant:

### *Project Design & Implementation*

1. How and when did you become a part of the Hum-Qadam project?
2. What were your responsibilities in the project / what was your role in the project?
3. What were the primary objectives and goals of the project?
4. On a rate of 1-5 (5 being completely), in your opinion/experience to what extent were these objectives met? [*evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and relevance*]
  - (Probe for concrete examples of impact and change observed in the communities and the systemic changes seen in the ecosystems)
5. How were the community participants and facilitators identified and reached? [*evaluation criteria: relevance and efficiency*]
  - (Probe for challenges in engaging the community and facilitators and mitigation and management strategies implemented and their impact on the overall delivery and success of the project)
6. What specific strategies and interventions were implemented? [*evaluation criteria: relevance and efficiency*]
  - (Probe for explanation on the process of adaptation to the local context)
7. How were community baselines conducted to assess needs and understanding and prevalence of VAWG in the intervention site? [*evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness, relevance and efficiency*]
  - (Probe for explanation on the strategies contextualized and employed for the baselines)
8. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being completely), in your opinion to what extent was this baseline used in the project design and implementation? [*evaluation criteria: relevance*]
  - (Probe for examples and explanation of how the baseline data was used in the final project design and implementation)

### *Training & Capacity Building Activities*

9. What training and capacity-building activities were conducted for the:
  - project team
  - community facilitators
  - community members
  - (Probe for examples and explanations on how, if at all, were the capacity building activities and interventions contextualized and localized) [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness and relevance*]

10. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being completely), in your opinion to how useful were these activities? *[evaluation criteria: effectiveness, impact and efficiency]*
- (Probe for examples and learnings from the field and overall project achievements to support the answer/rating)

#### *Project Management*

11. What two aspects regarding the management of the project do you think were most effective and why? *[evaluation criteria: efficiency]*
12. In your opinion and experience, on a scale of 1-5 (5 being completely) how effectively were the project activities planned? *[evaluation criteria: efficiency]*
13. In your opinion and experience, on a scale of 1-5 (5 being completely) how effectively were the project activities budgeted? *[evaluation criteria: efficiency]*
- (Probe for specific examples and learnings in light of COVID-19 and floods and the local socioeconomic and sociopolitical contexts) *[evaluation criteria: relevance]*
14. What two aspects regarding the management of the project do you think required improvement and why? *[evaluation criteria: efficiency]*
- (Probe on how these aspects were addressed or can be addressed for future projects)

#### *Monitoring and Evaluation*

15. What methods were used for data collection and monitoring? *[evaluation criteria: efficiency]*
- (Probe which of these methods were effective in capturing the necessary information and metrics and fulfilling the M&E criteria)
16. In your opinion and in light of the project achievements, on a scale of 1-5, to what extent were these methods effective in capturing the necessary information? *[evaluation criteria: efficiency]*
- (Probe for examples to support the answer, and explain what did not work well or could have been improved)
17. What indicators and metrics were used to measure the project's success? *[evaluation criteria: efficiency]*
- (Probe for how the metrics were developed and the basis of the metric in light of the project design and overall goal & objectives)
18. In your opinion and in light of the project achievements, on a scale of 1-5, to what extent was the feedback from the participants and stakeholders collected and incorporated into the project? *[evaluation criteria: relevance]*
- (Probe for examples of how the feedback from participants and stakeholders collected and incorporated into the project)

### *Outcomes and Impact*

19. What changes in behaviour or attitudes towards VAWG/CEAM were observed among the community? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
- (Probe for examples of any notable changes in community norms or practices and strategies or field activities that were most impactful)
20. What changes in behaviour or attitudes towards VAWG were observed among the facilitators? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
- (Probe for examples of any notable changes in facilitators' approach of helping survivors – survivors being helped by the facilitators where they applied project learnings; and challenges (observed/reported) when supporting survivors of VAWG/DV/CEAM)
21. On a scale of 1-5, in your opinion, how effective were the community campaigns and SAIs? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
- (Probe for examples of how the project impacted the broader community; how the community campaigns, SAI and VFF campaigns were conducted)
22. On a scale of 1-5, in your opinion, how effective was the VFF campaign? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
- (Probe for examples on contextualization of the VFF campaigns and the results and impacts of the VFF campaigns from the field) *[evaluation criteria: relevance]*

### *Way Forward: Challenges, Sustainability & Recommendations*

23. What were the main challenges encountered during the project implementation? How were these addressed? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and efficiency]*
24. What key lessons have been learned from this project? How can these lessons inform future VAWG prevention initiatives? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness, efficiency and relevance]*
25. What recommendations do you have for improving or changing the project design and implementation (for future projects and programs)? *[evaluation criteria: sustainability]*
- (Probe for the possibility and opportunities for scaling up the project and the requirements to do so effectively, in light of responses and discussions from the previous questions and overall experience of the project)
26. On a scale of 1 to 5, how sustainable are the changes made by the project? *[evaluation criteria: sustainability]*

## **KII Questions Guide for key personnel of the implementing CBO**

Date of Interview:

Type of Participant:

Gender:

Name of Participant:

Name of CBO:

### Project Design and Implementation

1. How and when did you become a part of the Hum-Qadam project?
2. What were your responsibilities in the project / what was your role in the project?
3. What were the primary objectives and goals of the project?
4. On a rate of 1-5 (5 being completely), in your opinion/experience to what extent were these objectives met? [*evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and relevance*]
  - (Probe for concrete examples of impact and change observed in the communities and the systemic changes seen in the ecosystems)
5. How were the community participants and facilitators identified, reached and engaged? [*evaluation criteria: relevance and efficiency*]
  - (Probe for challenges in engaging the community and facilitators and mitigation and management strategies implemented and their impact on the overall delivery and success of the project)
6. What specific strategies and interventions were implemented? [*evaluation criteria: relevance and efficiency*]
  - (Probe for explanation on the process of adaptation to the local context)

### Training & Capacity Building Activities

7. What training and capacity-building activities were conducted for your CBO/project team?
  - (Probe for examples and explanations on how, if at all, were the capacity building activities and interventions were contextualized and localized) [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness and relevance*]
8. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being completely), in your opinion to what extent how useful were these capacity-building activities? [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness, impact and efficiency*]
  - (Probe for examples and learnings from the field and overall project achievements to support the answer/rating)
9. What training and capacity-building activities were conducted (by you or the SG team) for the community facilitators?
  - (Probe for examples and explanations on how, if at all, were the capacity building activities and interventions were contextualized and localized) [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness and relevance*]
10. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being completely), in your opinion to what extent how effective were these capacity-building activities? [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness, impact and efficiency*]

- (Probe for examples and learnings from the field and overall project achievements to support the answer/rating)
11. What training and capacity-building activities were conducted for the community members (in your target communities) by you or the community facilitators?
- (Probe for examples and explanations on how, if at all, were the capacity building activities and interventions were contextualized and localized) [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness and relevance*]
12. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being completely), in your opinion to what extent how effective were these capacity-building activities? [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness, impact and efficiency*]
- (Probe for examples and learnings from the field and overall project achievements to support the answer/rating)

#### *Project Management*

13. What two aspects regarding the management of the project do you think were most effective and why? [*evaluation criteria: efficiency*]
14. In your opinion and experience, on a scale of 1-5 (5 being completely) how effectively were the project activities planned? [*evaluation criteria: efficiency*]
15. In your opinion and experience, on a scale of 1-5 (5 being completely) how effectively were the project activities budgeted? [*evaluation criteria: efficiency*]
- (Probe for specific examples and learnings in light of COVID-19 and floods and the local socioeconomic and sociopolitical contexts) [*evaluation criteria: relevance*]
16. What two aspects regarding the management of the project do you think required improvement and why? [*evaluation criteria: efficiency*]
- (Probe on how these aspects were addressed or can be addressed for future projects)

#### *Monitoring and Evaluation*

17. In your opinion and in light of the project achievements, on a scale of 1-5, to what extent was the feedback from the participants and stakeholders collected and incorporated into the project? [*evaluation criteria: relevance*]
- (Probe for examples of how the feedback from participants and stakeholders collected and incorporated into the project)

#### *Outcomes and Impact*

18. What changes in behaviour or attitudes towards VAWG/CEAM were observed among the community? [*evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability*]
- (Probe for examples of any notable changes in community norms or practices and strategies or field activities that were most impactful)
19. What changes in behaviour or attitudes towards VAWG were observed among the facilitators? [*evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability*]

- (Probe for examples of any notable changes in facilitators' approach of helping survivors – survivors being helped by the facilitators where they applied project learnings; and challenges (observed/reported) when supporting survivors of VAWG/DV/CEAM)
20. On a scale of 1-5, in your opinion, how effective were the community campaigns and SAIs? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
- (Probe for examples of how the project impacted the broader community; how the community campaigns, SAI and VFF campaigns were conducted)
21. On a scale of 1-5, in your opinion, how effective was the VFF campaign? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
- (Probe for examples on contextualization of the VFF campaigns and the results and impacts of the VFF campaigns from the field) *[evaluation criteria: relevance]*

*Way Forward: Challenges, Sustainability & Recommendations*

22. What were the main challenges encountered during the project implementation? How were these addressed? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and efficiency]*
23. What key lessons have been learned from this project? How can these lessons inform future VAWG prevention initiatives? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness, efficiency and relevance]*
24. What recommendations do you have for improving or changing the project design and implementation (for future projects and programs)? *[evaluation criteria: sustainability]*
- (Probe for the possibility and opportunities for scaling up the project and the requirements to do so effectively, in light of responses and discussions from the previous questions and overall experience of the project)
25. On a scale of 1 to 5, how sustainable are the changes made by the project? *[evaluation criteria: sustainability]*

## **KII Questions Guide for Community Facilitators**

Date of Interview:

Type of Participant:

Name of Participant:

Gender:

1. How and when did you become a part of the Hum-Qadam project?
2. In your view/experience, what was the objective of the project?
3. In your view/experience, what were the challenges that women and girls faced in your community?
4. How did you as a community facilitator address these challenges?
5. What do you think worked best (in your community) and why? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and relevance]*
6. What were your challenges as a community facilitator?
7. How did you (as a community facilitator) deal with these challenges? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and relevance]*
  - (Probe: specifically challenges regarding Domestic Violence and Early Age Marriage – in context of the project and the trainings and the Social Action Initiatives and networking and referral systems development in light of COVID-19, flood and other emergencies)
8. What trainings did you receive? Which ones were the most useful? What could be improved? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and relevance]*
9. Any resource material that you used (in the field or in your work and community)? What could have been improved? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness, knowledge generation and relevance]*
  - (Probe: relate the question/discussion to the previous responses, with specific examples of the trainings and resource material to their implementing activities – questions 2-9 are inter-related and should be discussed in context with each other – how could the trainings and resource materials be improved for more contextual relevance or relevance to their work and communities)
10. Do you think the project strategies implemented and activities undertaken, were relevant and appropriately addressed the needs of your community, especially women and girls? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and relevance]*
  - (Probe for examples of when strategies were adapted to respond to the situation on the ground i.e. COVID-19, floods or other emergencies and contextual differences – activities in the field that were relevant, useful and well-received, and which were not)

11. Over the course of your involvement in the project, what do you think was the most significant change that you experienced within yourself as part of the project? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and relevance]*
  - (Probe: what behavioural and attitudinal changes have the participants/community facilitators have seen in themselves and their practices, particularly in the context of VAWG, DV and CEAM in their community/context)
12. How has being a part of Hum-Qadam, changed the way you work for the community? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and relevance]*
  - (Probe: Concrete examples (from the field/community) of support given to specific survivors for DV and CEAM)
13. What were the key changes that you have seen in the community because of your work during the project? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
  - (Probe: Practical changes seen/observed in the lives of, and, behaviour and thinking of women, girls, men and boys in the community)
14. What specific forms of violence were addressed by this project and how? *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
  - (Probe: discuss the relevance and impact of the Social Action Initiatives and VFF campaign and awareness campaigns and materials; and the feedback of the networking and referral initiatives)
15. Moving forward, what messages/ trainings/ tools will you continue using and share in your community? *[evaluation criteria: knowledge creation and sustainability]*
16. Is there anything else you would like to say about your experience with the Hum-Qadam project?

## Survey with Community Women and Men

Demographic Information – to be filled by surveyor/interviewer for record purposes	
Date	
Village/Community	
Gender	
Age	
Participant Code	

*Important Note: The surveyor completing this form should encourage the participant to provide responses in their own words, actively listening as they narrate their experiences. The surveyor should allow the participant ample time to recall details and express their thoughts fully, refraining from guiding their responses or influencing their recall. Based on the participant's responses, the surveyor can then check the relevant boxes that correspond to the information provided. It will ensure that the participant feels comfortable and that the responses genuinely reflect their perspective, resulting in an accurate representation of their experiences and insights.*

Survey Questions on the Project (to be asked by the community member)

1. When did you become a part of the Hum-Qadam project?  
 3 years       2 years       1 year       Less than 1 year
2. Which activities/sessions/campaigns did you participate in/attend? (Select all that apply)  
 Awareness sessions on CEAM (number of sessions 1, 2, 3, 4...)  
 Awareness session on VAWG and DV (number of sessions 1, 2, 3, 4...)  
 Theatre  
 VFF Campaign/Session  
 Radio Program  
 Community Orientation  
 Gup Shup Sessions  
 Birth Registration Campaign  
 Police Station Visit  
 Courthouse Visit  
 Shelter/DUA Visit  
 Medical Response Provider Visit
3. Which of the following activities did you find most useful?  
 Awareness sessions on CEAM (number of sessions 1, 2, 3, 4...)

Awareness session on VAWG and DV (number of sessions 1, 2, 3, 4...)

Theatre

VFF Campaign/Session

Radio Program

Community Orientation

Gup Shup Sessions

Birth Registration Campaign

Police Station Visit

Courthouse Visit

Shelter/DUA Visit

Medical Response Provider Visit

4. Before this project how did you perceive VAWG & CEAM?

VAWG is a common occurrence

VAWG is a myth

VAWG is not a very big problem

VAWG is a part of our culture

There is/should be no minimum age for marriage

Girls should be married as soon as they have reached puberty

There is no such thing as early marriage

There is no such thing as forced marriage

Children should marry whoever and whenever their parents think/feel is appropriate

Marriages, especially for girls should be done as early as possible

I was not aware that there are different forms of violence

5. Do you feel this perception has changed after the project intervention?

Yes

No

Somewhat

6. Please explain with examples

7. In your opinion, which types of violence are most prevalent in your community?

Intimate partner physical violence

Intimate partner sexual violence

Non-Intimate partner physical violence

Non-Intimate partner sexual violence

Violence against the girl child

Early/child marriage

Forced marriage

Honor crimes

Other

8. Did the project address these forms of violence?

- Yes  No  Somewhat

9. How effectively did the facilitators share the knowledge on such topics throughout the project?

- Completely/Very Well  Somewhat  Not at all/Not clearly

10. What types of assistance were you provided by the project? Please select all that apply

- Documentation support of women and girls  
 Birth registration  
 B-form  
 CNIC  
 Nikkah Certificate  
 Assisting survivors of violence  
 Legal assistance  
 Connecting individuals with Duty Bearers or relevant officials  
 Awareness raising and capacity building  
 Spreading awareness on the rights of women and girls amongst male members of the community  
 Sharing information about services and redressal mechanisms with women from the community  
 Assisted women in learning about their rights in the marriage certificate  
 Other

11. How has the project impacted you on a personal level? Please select all that apply

- A positive change in my thinking regarding issue of VAWG  
 A positive change in my thinking regarding issue of CEAM  
 Increased awareness and knowledge on types and forms of violence  
 Increased self-confidence  
 Increased knowledge about my legal rights, protections and services available for me in the area  
 Increased knowledge about how to help other members of the community, especially women and girls  
 Increased motivation to help others and work to reduce VAWG  
 Increased motivation to help others and work to reduce CEAM  
 Feeling of empowerment

12. Did you share the learnings from the project with anyone?

- Yes  No  Somewhat

13. With whom and what did you share?

14. What changes have you observed in your community and around you as a result of the Hum-Qadam project? Please select all that apply

- Overall increased and better treatment of and attitude towards women and girls
- Decrease/reduction in VAWG
- Increased support for victims of VAWG
- Decrease/reduction in CEAM
- Women and girls are more aware about various forms of VAWG
- Men are more aware about various forms of VAWG
- Men are more aware of women's rights
- There has been an increase in reporting of cases of VAWG by women and girls in the area
- Women and girls are more aware of their legal rights (on divorce, right to identity: birth registration, CNIC, protection against violence)
- There has been an increase in the number of marriage and birth registrations in the area
- Women and girls have better access to support and redressal mechanisms to combat VAWG
- There has been a reduction in violence against women & girls in your community

15. Do you know about the Hum-Qadam app?  Yes  No

16. Have you used the app?  Yes  No

17. If yes, please specify.

18. The Hum-Qadam project is now completed. How do you plan to continue implementing the learnings from this project?

## **VFF Interview**

Interview with two members in the family. One Male member and one female member

Demographic Information – to be filled by surveyor/interviewer for record purposes	
Date	
Village/Community	
Gender	
Relationship/Position in the Family/HH	
Age	
Participant Code	

1. How long have you/your family/household been a part of the Hum-Qadam project and the Violence Free Family campaign?  
 3 years       2 years       1 year       Less than 1 year
2. How did you become part of the campaign – how were you and your family chosen?
3. What in your understanding were the objectives/goals of the VFF campaign?
4. Did you complete and sign the VFF Pledge?  
 Yes       No
5. What did you agree to, as part of signing the Pledge?
6. Did the Project team conduct a Baseline survey at time of or before the start of the campaign?  
 Yes       No       Don't know
7. Were you part of the endline survey?  
 Yes       No
8. Have there been any changes in your family dynamics since joining the VFF campaign?  
 Yes       Somewhat       Not at all
9. If yes/somewhat, what changes did you notice in your family after making the pledge?  
 Improvement in mobility – women & girls are being able to freely go outdoors  
 Economic independence – women & girls are being able to work  
 Right to education – girls & daughters being able to go to school/college  
 Right to inheritance – women & girls are being able to obtain their lawful inheritance  
 Democratic and civil right – women & girls are allowed to vote  
 Right to decision making – women & girls are involved in the decision-making pertaining to the household and family  
 Right to choose – women & girls now have a say in their own marriages  
 Decrease in physical violence within the family

- Decrease in verbal violence within the family
  - Decrease in CEAM in the family
  - Increase in documentation for women and girls including
  - Birth registration
  - B-Form
  - CNIC
  - Nikahnama Registration Certificate
10. Can you share concrete examples of the changes in the actions and decisions of the family?
  11. How have the campaign helped address issues of domestic violence or child marriage in your family? (Ask for concrete examples of the specific strategies that were most practiced and effective, explaining further why they were so)
  12. What impact has the VFF campaign had on your community? (Ask for examples highlighting examples of changes in attitudes or behaviors among other families in the community and local ecosystem)
  13. What messages or lessons from the VFF campaign do you think are most important to share with others?
  14. Will you continue to use and share these messages after the campaign ends?
  15. Any additional thoughts or reflections about your/your family's experience with the VFF campaign?

### **KII Questions Guide for Female Survivor (of VAWG/DV/CEAM)**

Date of KII:

Code of Participant: *(only for internal record purposes – please ensure the participant that she and her responses will remain anonymous, and under no circumstance will the principles of confidentiality be breached)*

1. How and when did you become a part of the Hum-Qadam project?
  - (Probe the respondent to elaborate and discuss the activities, interventions, sessions or campaigns that prompted her to seek support from the Hum-Qadam project, and share her reality and situation leading up to her involvement with the project) *[evaluation criteria: relevance, impact and effectiveness]*
2. How did the project Hum-Qadam help you or provided you necessary support to change your situation?
  - (Probe, in light of her previous response, elaborate on the specific strategies and interventions employed by the project or the community facilitator, or CBO or duty-bearer or service provider, that helped her situation, and how the situation changed) *[evaluation criteria: relevance, impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*

*In case the response received is unclear, haphazard or is making the respondent uncomfortable, you can break-down the questions in the following manner:*

3. What specific forms of support did you receive from the facilitator/Hum-Qadam team or any other community representative or service provider?
  - (Probe the respondent to provide details on the type of support extended in the form of legal information, counselling, linkages with protection mechanisms, service providers and/or duty-bearers, referral directory and app) *[evaluation criteria: relevance and effectiveness]*
4. How did this support help you in changing or moving out of your situation?
  - (Probe the respondent to share concrete examples of the improvements and changes in her daily life as well as her overall situation in light of safety, protection, well-being, health, support from community and family and overall empowerment) *[evaluation criteria: relevance, impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
5. What challenges did you face when trying to change your situation with regard to your situation and contextual reality of the form of VAWG you were/are a victim of or were facing?
  - (Probe, in light of her responses and overall discussion/conversation, for her to provide examples of strategies and their usefulness, employed by the facilitator or representative to overcome the challenges) *[evaluation criteria: relevance, impact and effectiveness]*
6. What kind of knowledge did you gain from being connected to the facilitator or being part of the Hum-Qadam project and why?
  - (Probe the respondent to share some of her learnings and how she has been able to utilize them in the most beneficial way possible for her and why) *[evaluation criteria: knowledge creation, relevance, impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
7. How has your perception of issues of VAWG, DV, CEAM and other aspects of women's rights, safety and protection changed *if at all*, over the course of the project?
  - (Probe the responded to discuss how she has applied these changes in both the personal and community aspects of her daily life, with examples) *[evaluation criteria: knowledge creation, impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
8. What impact has the project interventions had on your family and community?
  - (Probe for examples of changes in attitudes or behaviors among other/community/family women, girls, men and boys) *[evaluation criteria: impact, effectiveness and sustainability]*
9. What messages or lessons from the intervention do you think were most important to share with others?
  - (Probe the respondent to share if and how she may plan to continue using and sharing these messages) *[evaluation criteria: knowledge creation and sustainability]*

10. Do you think/In your opinion has the Hum-Qadam project been successful in bringing about a positive change in the way women and girls are treated across all spheres? *[evaluation criteria: effectiveness, impact and sustainability]*
- (Probe the respondent to share concrete examples, *if possible*, of changes in mobility and safety of women and girls, registrations and documentations such as birth registrations, NICs and Nikkahnamas, education for girls and the incidences of CEAM and DV)
11. Can you suggest further topics or issues pertaining to women and girls that should be addressed or resolved at a deeper level? *[evaluation criteria: sustainability]*
- (Probe the respondents on how interventions could be further improved and which groups of the community and their ecosystem need to be further addressed or developed)
12. Any additional thoughts or reflections you would like to share about your experience with the project?

**FGD Questions Guide for Nikahkhawan/Marriage Registrars**

Date of FGD:

Type of Participants:

Gender:

No. of Participants:

S. No.	Name	District	Village/UC/Community

1. For how long have you been performing your services as Nikahkhawan?
- (Probe respondents to give details pertaining to the community they are providing their services, and their overall role in the community in addition to being a Nikahkhawan) *[evaluation criteria: relevance]*
2. Did you ever receive any formal training to perform your duties as Nikahkhawan?
- (Probe respondents to share details of the type of trainings (if yes), and their key learnings and take aways from the identified trainings – if not, probe the respondent why not, and whether in their opinion any such trainings are required or necessary) *[evaluation criteria: relevance]*

3. How do you define early age marriage?
  - Probe the respondents to share their understanding and opinion of the “appropriate” age for marriage for girls and boys, and provide reasons for their opinion, as well as comment on the standard practices and norms in their community and their opinion about them) [*evaluation criteria: relevance*]
4. When did you attend the training/sessions conducted by Shirkat Gah/Hum-Qadam Project representatives/facilitators?
  - Probe the respondents to share their understanding and key take aways from the sessions attended and interventions participated in and their perception and opinion of the content and subject of the sessions, the extent to which they agree or disagree with the content and why) [*evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness and knowledge creation*]
5. Were you aware of the laws related to early age marriage and the legal consequences of violating them?
  - (Probe the participants to comment on their understanding of the laws pertaining to CEAM, and the potential impact it has had or will have on their work) [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness, knowledge creation and impact*]
6. As a Nikahkawan, what role do you believe you have in preventing early age marriages?
  - (Probe the participants to share examples of how they have fulfilled this role, if at all) [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness and impact*]
7. To what extent have the project activities, particularly the orientation, info and awareness sessions contributed to changes/improvements in your understanding of the negative impacts of CEAM, laws and responses to stop cases of CEAM or provide support for victims of CEAM?
  - (Probe the participants to share examples of these changes from their daily lives) [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness, impact and sustainability*]
8. Have you ever refused to perform a Nike (marriage ceremony) due to concerns about the bride or groom's age before attending the training?
  - (Probe participants to in as much detail as possible describe one such case, how the community and the concerned parties reacted, and how they handled the situation) [*evaluation criteria: relevance*]
9. Have you ever refused to perform a Nikah (marriage ceremony) due to concerns about the bride or groom's age after attending the training?
  - (Probe participants to in as much detail as possible describe one such case, how the community and the concerned parties reacted, and how they handled the situation) [*evaluation criteria: effectiveness and impact*]
10. Are you familiar with local resources and support systems for women and girls at risk of early marriage or violence?

- (Probe participants to share their understanding in light of various services and service providers such as legal aid, shelters, and hotlines) *[evaluation criteria: knowledge creation and impact]*
11. How do you think Nikahkhawan can influence community attitudes and behaviors regarding early age marriage?
- (Probe participants to share their understanding and opinion in the context of their community, norms and practices) *[evaluation criteria: impact and sustainability]*
12. What challenges do you face in discouraging early age marriages within your community?
- (Probe participants to share the contextual realities of their community, norms and practices and share examples of how they have or plan to address the challenges) *[evaluation criteria: effectiveness and sustainability]*
13. In your opinion, what actions can be taken to reduce the incidence of early age marriage in your community?
- (Probe participants to suggest actionable interventions in light of their contexts and community) *[evaluation criteria: effectiveness and sustainability]*

### **KII Questions Guide for duty-bearers**

Date of KII:

Name of Participant:

Position/Role of Participant:

1. Can you briefly tell us about yourself?
  - (Probe the participant to provide details of the nature or their position and role, duration of employment, type of work, and their involvement in the project) *[evaluation criteria: relevance]*
2. What is your understanding of VAWG, particularly in the context of your area or community?
  - (Probe the respondent to discuss with examples, the situation regarding VAWG in their area, and sharing the key factors that affect or perpetuate VAWG) *[evaluation criteria: relevance and effectiveness]*
3. How did you become involved and what has your experience been in the project?
  - (Probe and refer to the previous discussion and how their work and involvement in the project has supported their work, or how their work has supported the project) *[evaluation criteria: relevance and effectiveness]*
4. What training/ orientation have you received in the project?
  - (Probe the respondent to share their main take-aways/learnings from the project interventions they have been a part of, and, give examples of how they have applied the learnings in their work) *[evaluation criteria: effectiveness, impact and knowledge creation]*

5. In your opinion, to what extent did your involvement in the project changed or enhanced your thinking and understanding of VAWG/DV/CEAM?
  - (Probe the respondent to support their answer with examples from their work and specific actions/interventions/strategies they may have employed as part of the project or otherwise) *[evaluation criteria: effectiveness, impact, knowledge creation and sustainability]*
6. What was your communication with the community facilitators like?
  - (Probe the respondent to share examples of the nature of communication with the community facilitators in terms of the types of cases referred to them *if any*, the support they provided, and whether this communication/ relationship will continue after the project) *[evaluation criteria: effectiveness, impact and sustainability]*
7. What challenges did you face, *if any*, in being a part of this project, or providing the necessary support for the cases referred to you?
  - (Probe the respondent to discuss the challenges, with examples, of how their work may have been hindered and mitigation strategies employed) *[evaluation criteria: effectiveness and impact]*
8. Please share some lessons learnt for the future and how better can we improve such programs?
  - (Probe the respondent to shed light on further topics or issues pertaining to women and girls that should be addressed or resolved at a deeper level and how interventions could be further improved and which groups of the community and their ecosystem need to be further addressed or developed)? *[evaluation criteria: sustainability]*
9. Is there anything that we have missed in the discussion that you would like to share with us or expand upon?

**Guiding Questions for KII with the Commission Chair Baluchistan, Parliamentarians and Consultant who drafted PWD Policy in KP.**

Purpose and Profile

The project engaged with women's commissions and departments in KP and Baluchistan to advocate for gender-responsive policies. It collaborated with provincial parliamentarians (female) on initiatives like the Baluchistan Women Protection Bill 2024 and the Early Age Marriage Bill. Additionally, a policy brief on KP's PWDs law was developed with input from key stakeholders. KIIs will be conducted with the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women Baluchistan and two parliamentarians involved in advocating for the Domestic Violence and Child Early Age Marriage Bills.

The purpose of this KII guide is to explore the quality of work conducted.

Baluchistan Commission on the Status of Women Chairperson

- Are you familiar with the Shirkat Gah Hum-Qadam Project?
- Could you describe the specific activities that were undertaken in collaboration with the Commission to promote gender-responsive policies and legislation in Baluchistan? What were the main objectives of these activities, and how did they contribute to advancing gender equality in the province?
- What were the key challenges faced during the advocacy for gender-responsive legislation, and how were these challenges addressed? Could you provide examples of specific obstacles and how the project worked to overcome them?"
- What kind of support did you receive from Shirkat Gah throughout the project? How would you assess the effectiveness of the collaboration in advancing policy changes? Were there any gaps or areas where support could have been stronger?"
- In your opinion, how relevant was this initiative to the local context and the broader efforts to advance gender-responsive policies? How well did it address the specific needs of women and marginalized groups in Baluchistan?"
- In your opinion, how effective is the Hum-Qadam App in supporting gender-based violence (GBV) survivors and promoting gender-responsive policies? Could you share any feedback or observations you've gathered regarding its use?
- Do you believe the Hum-Qadam App has the potential to address gender-based violence (GBV) issues in Quetta? What do you think could enhance its effectiveness in reaching survivors and providing adequate support?"
- What do you believe has been the broader impact of the Hum-Qadam Project in your region, both in terms of policy changes and shifts in societal attitudes toward gender-based violence and Child early Age Marriage?
- In your opinion, how will the advocacy efforts initiated through this project be sustained after its completion? What strategies or mechanisms do you believe are necessary to ensure the continued progress of gender-responsive legislation and how can stakeholders—including policymakers, civil society, and local communities—remain engaged in driving these efforts forward?

#### **Guiding Questions for KII with the Parliamentarians from Baluchistan**

- Are you familiar with the Shirkat Gah Hum-Qadam Project?
- Could you describe the specific activities you participated in as part of this project? What were the main objectives of these activities, and how did they contribute to advancing gender equality within the province?
- In your opinion, how relevant is the Shirkat Gah Hum-Qadam Project to the local context of Baluchistan? How effectively has it addressed the specific needs of women and marginalized groups in the region?

- You were involved in advocating for the Baluchistan Women Protection Bill 2024 and the Early Age Marriage (EAM) Bill. What were the primary challenges encountered during these advocacy efforts for gender-responsive legislation? Could you provide specific examples of obstacles faced and how the project worked to overcome them?
- How would you assess the effectiveness of the Hum-Qadam App in supporting survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and promoting gender-responsive policies? Have you received any feedback or observed any outcomes related to its use?
- Do you believe the Hum-Qadam App has the potential to effectively address GBV issues in Quetta? What, in your view, could enhance its effectiveness in reaching survivors and providing the necessary support?
- In your view, what has been the broader impact of the Hum-Qadam Project in your region, both in terms of policy shifts and societal attitudes toward gender-based violence and child early age marriage?
- In your opinion, how will the advocacy efforts initiated through this project be sustained after its completion?
- What strategies or mechanisms do you believe are necessary to ensure the continued progress of gender-responsive legislation and how can stakeholders—including policymakers, civil society, and local communities—remain engaged in driving these efforts forward?

#### **KII with the Consultant who drafted the policy**

- Are you familiar with Shirkat Gah Hum-Qadam Project?
- Could you describe the specific activities you participated in as part of this project?
- Can you describe your role in drafting the PWD policy? What was your primary responsibility in the development of this policy?
- What key challenges or gaps in existing legislation or practices did you identify when drafting the PWD policy? How did the policy aim to address these challenges?
- What kind of engagement took place with key stakeholders, such as disability rights organizations, government officials, and affected communities, during the drafting process? How did their input influence the final policy?
- What kind of support did you receive from Shirkat Gah during the drafting of the PWD policy?
- In your view, how sustainable is the PWD policy in the long term? What mechanisms have been included to ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of the policy over time?
- How well does the PWD policy align with the specific needs and context of persons with disabilities in the region?

- In your opinion, what are the key steps required for the approval of this policy? What processes need to be followed, and which stakeholders or government bodies will play a crucial role in ensuring its adoption? Additionally, what challenges or potential barriers do you foresee in the approval process, and how can these be addressed to expedite the policy's approval?
- What do you believe will be the immediate and long-term impacts of this policy on persons with disabilities in the region? How will it contribute to improving access to services, rights, and opportunities for the PWD community?
- Looking back on the drafting process, what lessons were learned that could be applied to future policies for marginalized groups? Do you have any recommendations for improving the policy framework for persons with disabilities moving forward?