



LIFE, LIBERTY, EQUALITY, DIGNITY



Sindh Human Rights Commission

Annual Report

2023-2024



LIFE, LIBERTY, EQUALITY, DIGNITY



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Acronyms

AAS	Autism Awareness and Support Services
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AIGP	Additional Inspector General of Police
BPS	Basic Pay Scale
BSWA	Bhittai Social Watch & Advocacy
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CNIC	Computerized National Identity Card
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSSP	Civil Society Support Programme
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DEO	Director of Education
DIG	Deputy Inspector General
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
GSP+	Generalized System of Preference Plus
HMC	Hyderabad Municipal Corporation
HRDD	Human Rights Due Diligence
IBA	Institute of Business Administration
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IG	Inspector General
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITA	Idara e Taleem o Aagahi
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
JJSA	Juvenile Justice System Act
JM	Judicial Member
JIT	Joint Investigation Team
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LAS	Legal Aid Society

LEAs	Law Enforcement Agencies
MCMC	Mid-Career Management Course
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRDO	Marvi Rural Development Organisations
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
MPA	Member of Provincial Assembly
NADRA	National Database and Registration Authority
NAP	National Action Plan
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid (Kirkens Nødhjelp)
NCRC	National Commission on the Rights of Child
NGDP	National Gender Data Portal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
NILAT	National Institute of Labour Administration & Training
NIM	National Institute of Management
NMRF	National Reporting Mechanism Framework
NPA	National Police Academy
OSPCs	One Stop Protection centers
PCSW	Provincial Commission on the Status of Women
PESTLE	Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal, and Environmental
PIPS	Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services
PLA	Pakistan Labour Academy
PPPP	Pakistan Peoples' Party Parliamentarians
PRO	Public Relations Officer
PSI	Public Services International
SCP	Sindh Child Protection
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SESSI	Sindh Employees Social Security Institution
SGA&CD	Services General Administration and Coordination Department
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

SGOC	Sindh Government Officers Club
SGDP	Sindh Gender Data Portal
SHRC	Sindh Human Rights Commission
SHRDN	Sindh Human Rights Defenders Network
SHOPS	Station House Officer Police Station
SMC	Senior Management Course
SMHA	Sindh Mental Health Authority
SNHRIs	Sub-national Human Rights Institutions
SOHRIS	State of Human Rights in Sindh
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPARC	Society for the Protection of the Rights of Children
SPCS	Sindh Prisons & Correction Service
SPHRA	Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act
SSDO	Sustainable Social Development Organisations
SSP	Senior Superintendent of Police
SSWMB	Sindh Solid Waste Management Board
WLA	Sindh Women Lawyers Alliance
SZABIST	Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology
TIC	Treaty Implementation Cells
TMR	Training Management and Research
ToTs	Training of Trainers
UDHR	Universal Declaration on Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UTPs	Under Trial Prisoners
VAWC	Violence against Women and Children
WAWs	Women Agricultural Workers
WES	Women Empowerment Spaces
WCPSs	Women and Children Police Stations



Message from the Chief Minister of Sindh

The evolution of human rights discourse in Sindh reflects our province's journey from tradition to modernity. Historically, human rights were safeguarded through customary practices and community-led mechanisms. However, as societal complexities grew and new challenges emerged, the need for a structured, institutional approach became evident. The Government of Sindh has responded proactively by establishing key institutions to deter rights violations and enhance service delivery. These include the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC), the Provincial Commission on the Status of Women, and the Sindh Child Protection Authority, all of which work collectively to uphold and protect human rights across the province.

Sindh takes great pride in being the only province in Pakistan with a dedicated Human Rights Institution, the Sindh Human Rights

Commission (SHRC), vested with broad powers to protect fundamental rights. The establishment and continued empowerment of the SHRC underscore our unwavering commitment to justice, dignity, and equality for all. The Commission has played a pivotal role in addressing critical issues, including labour rights, gender-based violence, child protection, and the rights of minorities. Through strategic partnerships, policy reforms, and advocacy initiatives, it has significantly advanced the cause of human rights in Sindh.

The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has always placed human rights at the core of its governance philosophy, which is reflected in our progressive legislation and people-centric policies. We have enacted landmark laws such as the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, and the Sindh Home-Based Workers Act, reinforcing our commitment to social justice and equality.

Looking ahead, our vision is clear- Sindh must continue to lead in protecting and promoting human rights. Strengthening the enforcement of existing laws, fostering greater collaboration between government agencies and civil society, and leveraging technology to enhance transparency and accessibility remain our top priorities. We are committed to ensuring that every citizen of Sindh enjoys their fundamental rights without fear or discrimination.

Together, we can build a more just, inclusive, and prosperous Sindh and Pakistan.

Syed Murad Ali Shah
Chief Minister, Sindh



Message from the **Special Assistant** to the Chief Minister on Human Rights

It is a matter of immense pride to witness the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) steadfastly fulfilling its mandate of promoting, protecting, and advancing human rights across the province. The Commission has played a pivotal role in strengthening institutional mechanisms, ensuring access to justice, and addressing human rights violations through its proactive interventions, policy recommendations, and advocacy efforts.

The Government of Sindh remains committed to upholding fundamental rights and ensuring the protection of marginalized communities. Under the visionary leadership of Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and the guidance of Chief Minister Sindh, the province has made remarkable strides in institutionalizing human rights protection. Landmark legislative reforms, progressive policies, and the strengthening of oversight bodies like SHRC reflect our unwavering dedication to fostering an inclusive, just, and rights-respecting society.

I commend the tireless efforts of the SHRC, whose initiatives—from addressing labor rights violations to advocating for legal reforms and conducting awareness campaigns—have significantly contributed to the realization of human rights in Sindh. The Government of Sindh will continue to support and empower the Commission to expand its outreach, enhance its capacity, and ensure effective implementation of human rights frameworks.

Together, we reaffirm our resolve to build a Sindh where dignity, equality, and justice are not just ideals but lived realities for every citizen.

Rajvir Singh Sodha

Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Human Rights



Message from the **Chief Secretary** Government of Sindh

The Government of Sindh has consistently demonstrated its commitment to strengthening institutional frameworks that safeguard human rights, promote social justice, and ensure effective governance. The establishment and operationalization of progressive bodies such as the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) serve as a testament to our dedication to institutionalizing human rights protection and enhancing the rule of law in the province.

Institutions like SHRC play a crucial role in not only identifying gaps in the implementation of laws but also in providing administrative and technical support to the government in addressing these challenges. By conducting independent inquiries, recommending legal and policy reforms, and facilitating multi-stakeholder engagements, the Commission has emerged as a key ally in advancing the broader objectives of public service and good governance.

Sindh has made remarkable progress in enhancing its institutional infrastructure, whether through the establishment of commissions dedicated to human rights and women's empowerment, or through legal reforms aimed at strengthening protections for vulnerable communities. These efforts reflect the government's unwavering resolve to ensure that justice, dignity, and equality remain at the core of its governance model.

I commend the Sindh Human Rights Commission for its relentless efforts in safeguarding human rights, advocating for legal reforms, and ensuring that the voices of marginalized communities are heard. The Government of Sindh will continue to support and collaborate with SHRC and other key institutions to reinforce our shared vision of a just and equitable society.

Asif Hyder Shah

Chief Secretary, Government of Sindh



Message from the Chairperson

It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I present this Annual Report, the first in my tenure as Chairperson of the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC). The past year has been both challenging and inspiring. It has been characterized by significant progress in our mission to protect and promote human rights across Sindh. I am deeply grateful to the Government of Sindh for entrusting me with this important task and I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my predecessor, Justice (R) Majida Rizvi, whose dedication has laid the solid foundation on which we continue to build. Her contributions have been instrumental in making the SHRC the respected institution that it is today.

The amendment of the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011, in March 2023 was a defining moment in our journey. This amendment not only expanded the scope of our mandate but also enhanced our ability to address the evolving human rights challenges in the province. In response, the Commission immediately embarked on a strategic planning process and engaged stakeholders from various sectors to chart a clear, actionable path forward. I am pleased to report that this strategic plan is now actively guiding our work and philosophy and ensuring that we remain focused on our goals.

Over the past year, the Commission has achieved important milestones in its mandate to address human rights violations and abuses through the handling of complaints. We received over 300 complaints on issues such as police misconduct, property disputes and domestic violence. Through a transparent and rigorous process, we have ensured that more than half of these cases have been resolved, offering redress and justice to those affected. We have also strengthened our complaints handling framework by introducing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to improve fairness, efficiency and accessibility for all complainants.

Beyond individual cases, the SHRC has played a role in driving systemic change through policy and legal reforms. Our advocacy work has resulted in meaningful developments aimed at closing long-standing gaps in human rights protections, particularly for children, women, workers, transgender and minority communities. By working closely with legislators and civil society, we have tried to influence key policy and legislative changes that better align with international human rights obligations. During this time, we have seen the Sindh government adopt the Sindh Human Rights Policy 2023, which is a major development. Additionally, our efforts to raise awareness has been instrumental in changing societal attitudes. Through community outreach programmes, public hearings, workshops trainings and media campaigns, we have created a greater understanding of human rights issues and empowered people to demand their rights and hold institutions accountable. During this time, we have strengthened our partnerships with government agencies, civil society organisations and international organisations, all of which have played an important role in amplifying our work.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the entire SHRC team, whose commitment has been nothing short of inspiring. Their tireless efforts have been instrumental in advancing the Commission's mission. I also extend my appreciation to our partners, stakeholders and the people of Sindh for their continued cooperation and support. Together, we have made great progress, and while challenges remain, I am confident that our collective efforts will continue to promote a more just, equitable and humane society.

Looking ahead, we are determined to deepen our community engagement, expand our advocacy efforts and continue to push for legislative and institutional reforms that protect the rights of all citizens, especially the

most vulnerable. We move forward with the belief that every person deserves dignity, equality and respect. This report is a testament to our continued commitment to these principles.

Sincerely,

Iqbal Ahmed Detho

Chairperson,

Sindh Human Rights Commission

Overview of Sindh Human Rights Commission

Human rights are the fundamental rights and freedoms that belong to every individual, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. These rights are universal, inalienable, and interconnected, forming the basis for dignity, equality, and justice in society.

According to the United Nations (UN), human rights encompass civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, covering key areas like: (i) right to life, liberty, and security of person, (ii) freedom from torture and slavery, (iii) Freedom of expression, thought, conscience, and religion, and (iv) right to work, education, and participation in cultural life.

National and Sub-National Human Rights Institutions

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) are state-mandated, quasi-judicial bodies responsible for protecting and promoting human rights at the national level. These institutions operate under a broad constitutional or legal mandate and work independently of the government. Their functions include monitoring human rights violations, advocating for legal reforms, and ensuring that both civil and political as well as economic, social, and cultural rights are upheld.

Sub-national human rights institutions (SNHRIs) are established at the regional or local level to address human rights concerns specific to their respective jurisdictions. While SNHRIs share the core mandate of protecting and promoting human rights, similar to NHRIs, they focus on localized issues and adapt their approach to the needs of their region. Both NHRIs and SNHRIs operate independently from the government and have a broad scope, but the structure, powers, and functions of SNHRIs may differ due to their sub-national focus.

Historical Context

The enactment of the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act in 2011 provides a legal foundation for the promotion and protection of human rights in Sindh and a framework for dealing with human rights violations and abuses. The Act led to the establishment of the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) in 2013 under Section 3 (1) of the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act (SPHRA), 2011. This was an important step towards decentralizing human rights at the provincial level and aligning Sindh's human rights mechanisms with Pakistan's broader legal framework and international obligations. It reflects the province's commitment to upholding human rights standards.

The SPHRA, 2011 was amended in 2023. The Commission was given new responsibilities, including the task of investigating reported violations and abuses and assessing the working conditions of business enterprises. The Commission is to serve as an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) body and accountability mechanism for business-related abuses.

Introduction to the Sindh Human Rights Commission

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Vision

To create an enabling environment where Human rights are promoted and protected in Sindh through monitoring and oversight.

Mission

To promote and protect human rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973 and other international obligations and commitments as a state party.

Providing remedy for fair investigation and redressal through state machinery to respond to violations/abuses of human rights;

- Integrating human rights awareness and education; and
- Bringing all state's laws, policies, institutions and practices in conformity with human rights obligations enshrined in the constitution and other international treaties and conventions ratified by Pakistan.

Power and Functions of the Commission

Section 4 of Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011 outlines the powers and functions of the Commission. These include:

Complaint Handling and Inquiries (Individual/Collective)

- Inquire, Suo moto or on a petition presented to it by a victim or any person on his behalf, into complaint of:
 - (a) Violation of human rights or abetment thereof.
 - (b) Negligence in the prevention of such violation by a public servant.
- Recommend to Government the remedial measures including action to be taken against the persons involved in violation of human rights.
- Serve as an alternate dispute resolution and accountability mechanism for business-related abuse of human rights and providing easy access to remedy.
- Visit, under intimation to Government, any jail or institution under the control of Government where persons are kept or detained or admitted for purpose of treatment, reformation or protection to see the living conditions of the inmates and make recommendations thereon.
- Visit any business enterprise or corporate entity, with prior intimation to the concerned corporate entity's supervisory body or authority, to ascertain the reported violations or abuse and the working conditions of employees, workers, or inmates of the supply chain or the value chain, as the case may be.

Legislative Review (Laws, Policies, Legislative Instruments)

- Formulate, implement and regularly update policies with a view to protect human rights.
- Review the safeguards provided by or under the Constitution or any law for the time being in force for protection of human rights and also in the sphere of Business and Human Rights and National Action Plan on Business and Human rights to ensure accountability and access to remedy as an alternate dispute forum and to recommend measures for effective implementation of laid down procedure and for due diligence in business enterprises.

Research and Fact-finding

- Study treaties and other international instruments on human rights and make recommendations for their effective implementation.
- Undertake and promote research in the field of human rights.
- Publish or cause to be published the various policies, details, data and information relevant to the affairs of the Commission on a regular basis and ensure reasonable access of the public to the same.

Promotion, Advocacy, Education, and Trainings

- Spread human rights literacy among various sections of society.
- Promote awareness of the safeguards available for protection of human rights through print and electronic media, seminars, and other available means.

- Encourage the efforts of non-governmental organisations and institutions working in the field of human rights.

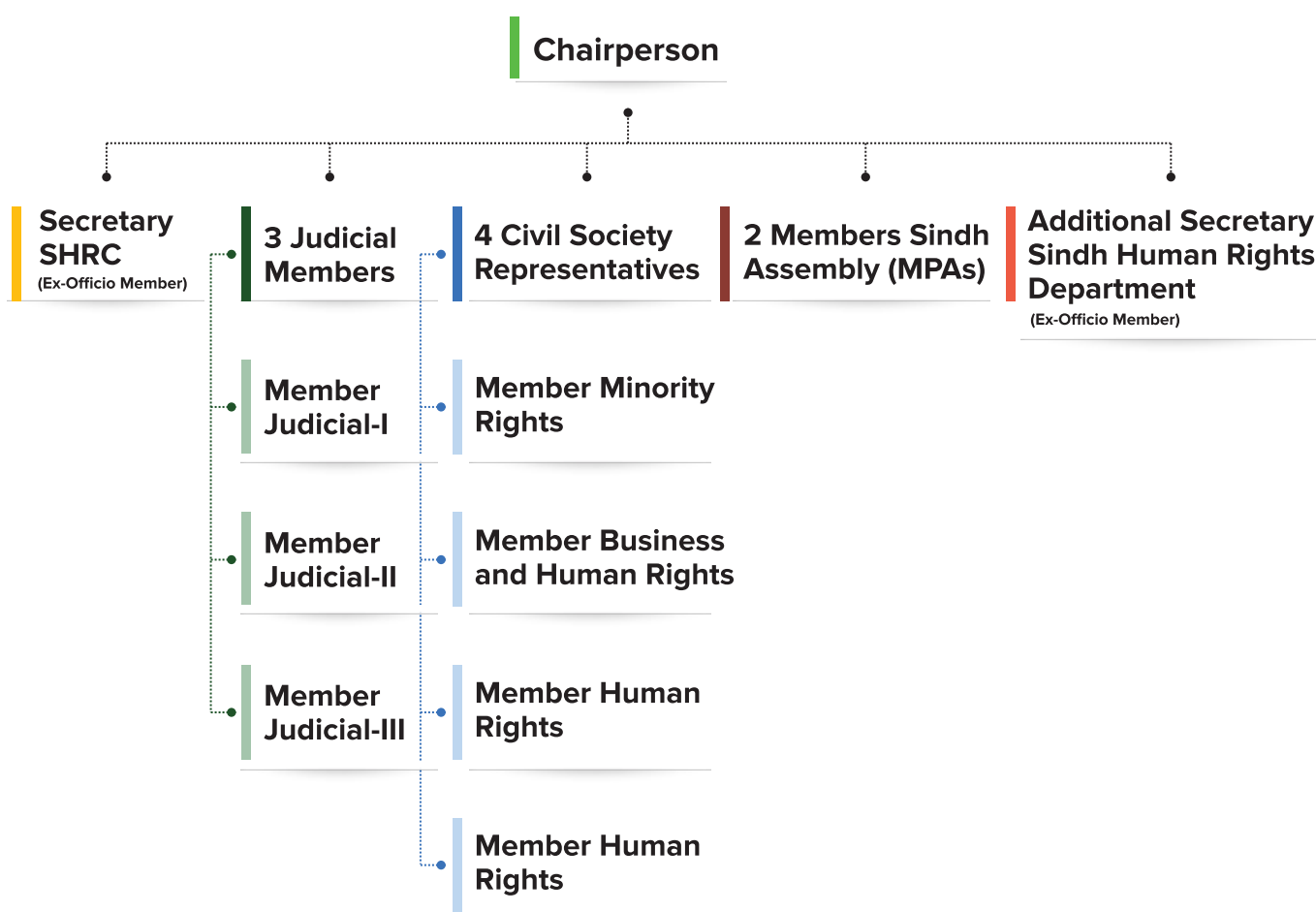
Review Implementation of International Human Rights Instruments and Compliance of International Treaties

- Study treaties and other international instruments on human rights and make recommendations for their effective implementation.



Composition of the Sindh Human Rights Commission

The SHRC consists of a chairperson, ten members and a secretary. Of the total ten members, three are full-time judicial members retired from sessions courts, two are political representatives nominated by the Speaker Provincial Assembly of Sindh, one Additional Secretary or a Deputy Secretary of the Department of Human Rights nominated by the Secretary of the Human Rights Department and four are representatives of civil society with experience in the field of human rights, at least one of whom belongs to a minority and one has experience in the field of business and human rights. The members and the chairperson are appointed for a single non-renewable term of four years.



Government appoints Iqbal Ahmed Detho as the Chairperson of SHRC

The Government of Sindh appointed Iqbal Ahmed Detho as Chairperson of the SHRC for a four-year term with effect from 21 March 2023. Iqbal Ahmed Detho holds a Master of Science in Human Rights from the London School of Economics. The new Chairperson has more than two decades of experience as a committed human rights professional and has held numerous leadership positions, including as a Member (Sindh) of the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) and as Honorary Secretary General of Amnesty International Pakistan (2001-2006). In his career, he has worked in the areas of legislation, policy development, research and human rights advocacy. He has contributed to various national and international human rights initiatives.

SHRC CORE TEAM

(2023-2024)



Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho
Chairperson



Mr. Arshad Noor Khan
Member Judicial



Mr. M. Aslam Sheikh
Member Judicial



Mr. Safdar Hussain Talpur
Member Judicial



Mr. Shiraz Shaukat
MPA Sindh



Ms. Arooba Rabbani
MPA Sindh



Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Shah
Member/ Activist



Mr. Ayub Khoso
Member/ Activist



Mr. Sukhdev A. Hemnani
Member/ Minorities



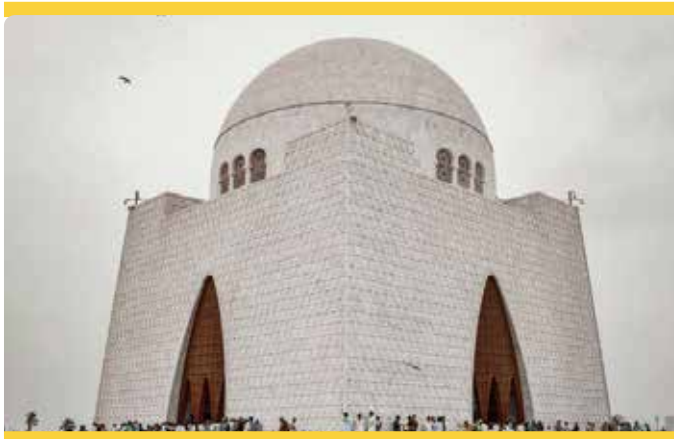
Barrister Rida Tahir
Member (Business & Human Rights)

SHRC Strategic Plan 2023-2027



SINDH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, GOVERNMENT OF SINDH

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2027



Following the significant changes introduced by the 2023 amendment to the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act (SPHRA) 2011, which redefined the composition and mandate of the Commission, the SHRC recognized the need to reassess its approach and strategies. In response to these new challenges and to ensure alignment with the updated legal framework, the SHRC reviewed its

previous Strategic Plan and adopted a new Strategic Plan (2023-2027) on October 24, 2023 after consultation with key stakeholders.

The SHRC Strategic Plan outlines a roadmap of priority areas and targeted actions from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2027. The plan takes a holistic approach and considers the different areas of human rights (civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights), including the prevention of and response to human rights violations and abuses. The plan emphasizes the need to uphold human rights in all areas of life.

A multi-faceted, inclusive approach— was taken in developing the plan, which included desk research, workshops, key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs), and involved stakeholders from government agencies, civil society organisations, human rights defenders, marginalized communities and individuals affected by human rights violations. Their insights were crucial for the development of the strategic objectives and action plans.

Strategic Pillars

The strategic plan of SHRC comprises five strategic pillars, each with its own set of priority areas designed to align with the Commission's functions as mandated by SPHRA, 2011.

Strategic Pillar 1

Systematically monitor and address human rights violations and abuses in Sindh while establishing an accessible and responsive complaint handling mechanism, fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and human rights protection.

Strategic Pillar 2

Enhance knowledge and understanding of human rights and legal entitlements among diverse sections of society to promote a culture of equality and justice.

Strategic Pillar 3

Monitor compliance with the international human rights regime in Sindh to assess the effectiveness of measures to protect and promote human rights.

Strategic Pillar 4

Legislative review of laws, policies and practices in Sindh for their compliance with fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan and obligations set out in international human rights treaties.

Strategic Pillar 5

Strengthen the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) as an effective, efficient, and resourceful institution, enhancing its capacity to promote and protect human rights in Sindh.

PROGRESS



**To deny people their human rights is
to challenge their very humanity.**

Complaints Handling

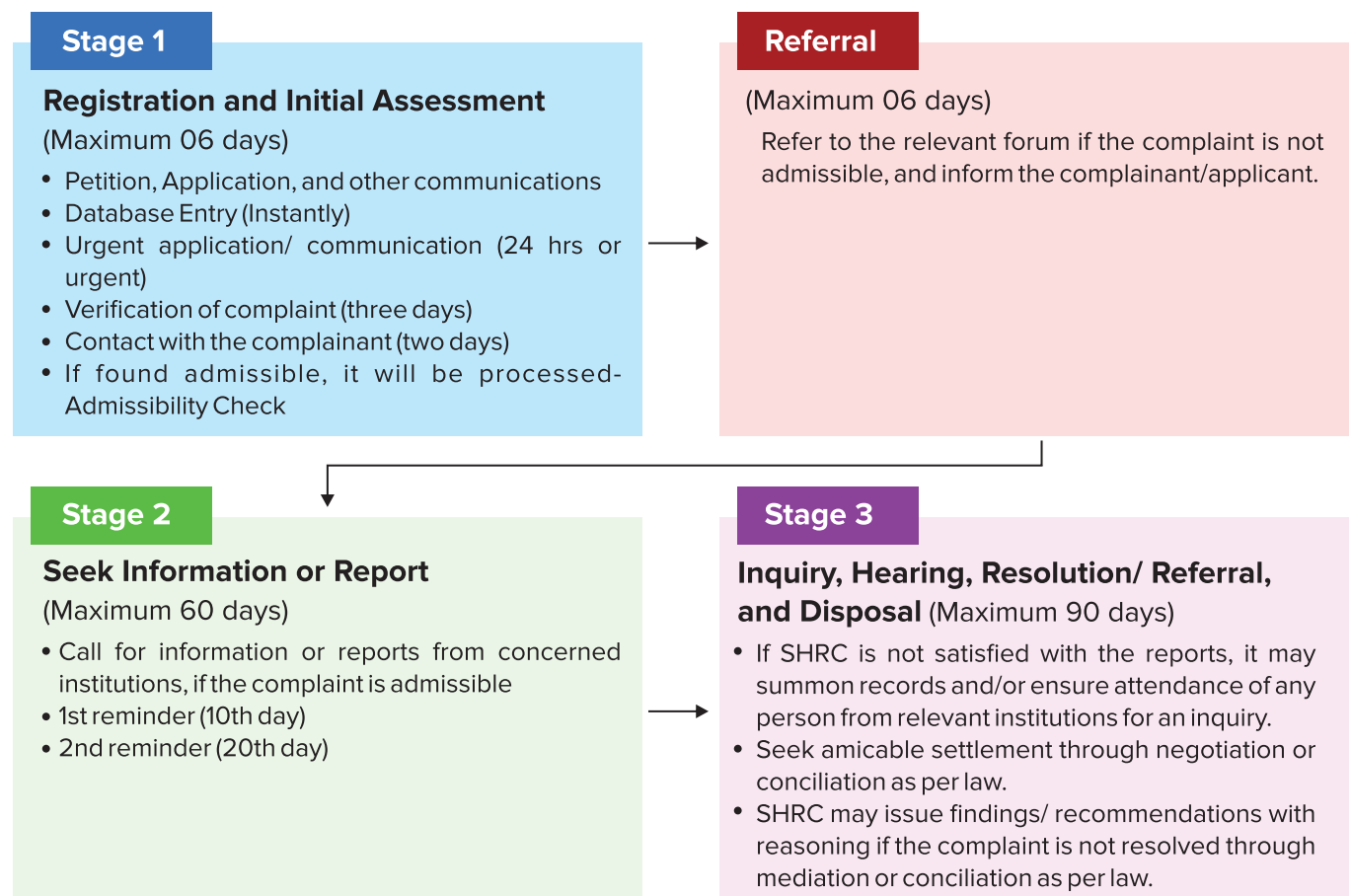
The handling of complaints plays a central role in the mandate and functions of the Commission. Under Sections 4(i-a) and 4(i-b) of the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act (SPHRA) 2011, the Commission is empowered to investigate complaints of human rights violations and abuses or abetment thereof, either Suo moto or at the request of a victim or his/her representative. The Commission can also investigate cases where public servants have been negligent in preventing such violations.

Formulating of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

The first strategic pillar of the SHRC Strategic Plan focuses on the monitoring of human rights violations and the establishment of an efficient system for handling complaints. The development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for complaints handling has been identified as a priority area to ensure fairness, transparency and consistency in the Commission's work.

To fulfil this important task, the SHRC in 2023 established clear SOPs for dealing with human rights complaints. These SOPs provide a framework for receiving, assessing, investigating and resolving complaints of human rights violations.

Complaint Handling Flowchart



SHRC Complaint Handling Process

Complainants can easily register their complaints directly with the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) via an online complaint form available on the SHRC website¹. This accessibility has contributed to growing public confidence in the Commission, resulting in an increasing number of complaints filed through its offices in Karachi and Sukkur.

Upon submission, complainants can present their cases to an SHRC officer, with all complaints logged and meticulously tracked. The Commission conducts thorough inquiries into all cases and files recommendations with the relevant Government of Sindh departments for resolution.

Two members, Judicial Members I and II, are specifically tasked with investigating human rights violations, while the Chairperson primarily manages suo moto notices and petitions. The reasons to initiate a Suo moto actions are:

- Urgency and Gravity
- Public Interest Impact
- Protection of vulnerable groups
- Systemic or Institutional Concerns

The SHRC monitors the progress and performance of the concerned departments and, if unsatisfied with the proceedings or provided details, may summon the relevant authority for an explanation. The Commission can also conduct on-the-spot inquiries. Once investigations are completed, the SHRC files recommendations with the Government of Sindh and provides copies to the concerned departments for follow-up.

Total Complaints Handled (1 July 2023- 30 June 2024)

The SHRC processed a total of 304 complaints of human rights violations and abuses from all districts of Sindh from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. Of these, 27 were suo moto cases and 277 were written complaints from individuals. Of these, 176 cases were disposed of, while 128 cases are pending with various law enforcement and judicial authorities. The SHRC is pursuing all cases with utmost commitment.

Gender-wise Distribution of Cases

Of the 304 complaints handled, 105 were related to females, 182 concerned males, and 1 involved a transgender individual, whereas 16 cases were related to public.

Types of Cases (Overall)

- The types of cases of human rights violations and abuses received by the Commission cover a wide range of issues.
- The majority of cases (30) involved complaints against the police, indicating a significant problem with the accountability of law enforcement agencies. Another major concern with 30 cases, highlighting the prevalence of violence within homes.
- 27 Cases related to property disputes show a serious problem with property rights.

¹SHRC Complaint Form: <https://www.shrc.org.pk/complaint-form.php>

- Issues of life threats and mental harassment also were reported frequently, with 21 and 18 cases respectively, underscoring serious risks to personal safety and mental well-being.

Nature of Cases	
Administrative Negligence	10
Health Care	8
Child Marriage	1
Child Maintenance	1
Clearance of Dues	8
CNIC	2
Complaint against Police	30
Corporal Punishment	1
Domestic Violence	30
Provision of Education	10
Financial Assistance	2
Forced Conversion	1
Forced Marriage	1
Illegal Interest	1
Job on Deceased Quota	4
Kidnapping	3
Life Threats	21
Mental Harassment	18
Minimum Wages	8
Minority Worship place	5
Missing Person	6
Municipal Negligence	6
Murder	9
Overseas Issue	2
Pension Issue	5
Police Protection	14
Property Issue	27
Rape	4
Robbery	5
Service Matter	20
Sexually Harassment	2
Termination from Job	5
Utilities Issue	7
Others	27

Types of Cases (female complainants)

The types of cases involving female complainants includes a variety of issues:

- Domestic violence is the most prevalent issue for females with 26 cases, indicating a critical area needing focused intervention.
- Police protection (20) cases show a substantial demand for protection services from the police.
- Property disputes cases (8) suggest significant disputes involving female property rights.
- Mental harassment and life threats remain prominent issues, with 6 cases of mental harassment and 3 of life threats.
- Sexual violence cases (3 cases of rape and 2 of sexual harassment) indicating ongoing concerns about sexual violence against women.

Nature of Cases (Female)	
Child Maintenance	1
Clearance of Dues	5
Complaint against Police	5
Corporal Punishment	1
Domestic Violence	26
Financial Assistance	1
Forced Marriage	1
Illegal Interest	1
Kidnapping	2
Mental Harassment	6
Minimum Wages	1
Missing	3
Municipal Negligence	1
Murder	3
other	8
Overseas Issue	1
Pension Issue	5
Police Protection	20
Property Issue	8
Provision of Education	4
Rape	3
Service Matter	7
Sexually Harassment	2

Department-wise nominations in complaints

This distribution shows that the SHRC received the most complaints against the police department with 193 cases, reflecting a large area of concern. Complaints against other departments such as Administration, Health and Education were also in notable numbers, indicating various areas where human rights issues need to be addressed.

Complaint Against Departments	
Administration	26
Education Department	16
Food Department	1
Health Department	15
HESCO	1
Irrigation Department	2
K Electric	1
KW & SB	1
Labour Department	2
Local Government	3
NADRA	5
Overseas	1
Police department	193
Private organisations	5
Private School	4
SGA&CD	3
Sindh Text Book Board	1
SSGC	2
Dow University	1
Zakat & Usher Department	2
Others	19

District Data of Complaints and Suo moto Notices

The distribution of complaints received by the SHRC across various districts reveals regional variations in human rights issues. Karachi by far, the district with the highest number of complaints, totaling 153. Hyderabad was the second highest with 25 complaints, and Khairpur is third with 20 complaints received from the district.

District Wise Complaints	
Dadu	5
Ghotki	9
Matari	1
Hyderabad	25

District Wise Complaints	
Jacobabad	2
Jamshoro	6
Karachi	153
Kashmore	3
Khairpur	20
Larkana	12
Mirpurkhas	10
Naushehro Feroze	6
Qambar Shahdadkot	4
Sanghar	6
Shaheed Benazir Abad	2
Shikarpur	7
Sujawal	3
Sukkur	10
Tando Allahyar	3
Tando Muhammad Khan	1
Tharparkar	4
Thatta	5
Umerkot	7

Number of Complaints in the Year 2022-23 (1 July 2022- 30 June 2023)

In the year 2022-23, SHRC had handled a total of 507 complaints in 2022-23, including 447 individual complaints and 60 sou moto cases.

Sou Moto Notices

Viral Video Investigation

SHRC took suo moto notice on March 24, 2023 of a viral video depicting a police officer obstructing a shopkeeper from displaying religious figures in his shop. It has been considered a violation of Article 20 of Pakistan's Constitution, which grants every citizen of Pakistan the right to profess, practice, and propagate his/her religious views. SHRC called upon the relevant authorities to investigate the matter and take appropriate measures against the delinquent officer. Furthermore, the officer in question has also been removed from his position and suspended pending official enquiry following SHRC's intervention.

Sindh Textbook Board's Failure

In April 2024, the SHRC took suo moto notice of the Sindh Textbook Board's (STB) failure to supply free textbooks to schools across the province. SHRC considers this a big failure which also violated Article 25(A) of the Constitution and the Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013.



In a communication to the Chief Secretary of Sindh, SHRC highlighted documentary evidence indicating that the STB had not provided a reasonable explanation for its shortcomings, and ejected the board secretary's excuses, which cited inflation, the rise in the dollar, and increased costs of production, printing, and transportation as reasons for the textbook shortfall.

Deaths of Sanitation Workers

On April 8, 2024, the SHRC has asked Secretary- Labour and Human Resource Department for an investigation into the incident, where two sanitation workers died while clearing a manhole outside a factory in the SITE area of Hyderabad. The SHRC also stressed on the implementation of the Sindh Occupational Safety and Health Act-2017 and the rules laid down in 2019.



Spotlight on Redressal of Complaints



Reported case of domestic violence

In August 2023, SHRC addressed a severe domestic abuse complaint from Ms. S., Karachi. She reported continuous verbal and physical abuse from her husband's family, affecting her and her children. SHRC promptly involved relevant police authorities for an impartial investigation. A detailed report and a High Court order were obtained, leading to the resolution of the case. On February 20, 2024, Ms. S. confirmed the resolution and expressed her gratitude to SHRC. This case was resolved in five months.

Non-payment of Pension Payment

In October 2023, the SHRC addressed a complaint from Ms. L. regarding the non-payment of the remaining pension due to her late father, a retired employee of Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (HMC). Despite receiving partial payment, 200,000/- of the total 507,590/- was still pending. Citing a Supreme Court order and constitutional rights, the SHRC took the matter to relevant HMC officials. Their prompt action led to the preparation and confirmation of the remaining pension cheque. On December 20, 2023, Ms. L. verified receipt of the payment, expressing gratitude to the SHRC for their effective resolution within two months, thereby closing the case on December 22, 2023.

Discrepancies in Medical Reports

SHRC received a complaint from Mr. S. and Mr. H residents of Christian colony, Karachi in November 2023 regarding discrepancies in their HCV medical reports. Despite initial positive HCV results at the Regional Police Hospital, subsequent tests at Agha Khan University Hospital Lab showed negative results. Facing obstacles in retesting, the SHRC intervened, issuing notices to relevant authorities. Through diligent efforts, the SHRC ensured a thorough investigation, culminating in the appointment of both complainants as sanitary workers by May 2024.

Child marriage case of 16 years Old Girl

SHRC successfully prevented the early marriage of a 16-year-old girl scheduled for January 18, 2024 in violation of the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2013. The prompt intervention of SHRC and proactive involvement of SSP Larkana led to a thorough investigation by the SHO Police Station Women, Larkana, which revealed that the father was unaware of the law. After learning about the provisions of the law, the father assured the authorities that the marriage would be postponed until his daughter turned 18 to respect her autonomy. This success

emphasizes the effectiveness of timely law enforcement actions and the importance of raising awareness of legal rights.

Harassment of Tharparkar boys

In response to reports of harassment of boys from Tharparkar through fake Facebook identities, SHRC Chairman Iqbal Ahmed Detho and MPA Surendar Valasai initiated an inquiry. They have instructed the authorities to investigate thoroughly and submit a report. The Tharparkar police acted swiftly on the instructions of their superior and arrested a suspect and further investigations are underway.

Fact-finding Mission and Inquiries

Priority Area 3 - Pillar 1 of the SHRC Strategic Plan focuses on holding public hearings and conducting fact-finding missions to monitor human rights violations and abuses in Sindh. In line with this objective, the Commission investigates these violations by collecting information and analyzing evidence. This process enables effective monitoring, documentation and action, with the findings being communicated to the relevant authorities for redressal.

Fact-Finding Report on the Attack on Baba Sanwal Shah Temple and the Situation of Minorities in Kashmore-Kandhkot District

The Baba Sanwal Shah Temple in Ghouspur was attacked with rocket launchers and heavy gunfire on July 16th, 2023. The SHRC conducted a fact-finding mission to investigate this incident. Although no casualties occurred, the attack raised concerns about the effectiveness of protection measures by law enforcement agencies in the region.



The investigation revealed conflicting reports about the motive, with some suggesting tribal enmity and others a targeted attack on an individual. The Hindu community, feeling vulnerable, refrained from participating in the police investigation due to fear of retaliation. The SHRC team inspected the Temple and found evidence indicating that the attack was specifically directed at it, possibly from the backside facing the riverine area.

The SHRC also met with community representatives and Hindu Panchayat members from Ghouspur and Kandhkot. The Hindu community expressed concerns about police personnel from marginalised Hindu castes being targeted and a lack of confidence in the local police's ability to handle crime. This has led to influential tribal individuals intervening in criminal matters. There were also reports of ongoing hostage situations, highlighting the community's vulnerability to criminal activities.

The SHRC emphasised the need for a comprehensive intervention by the Sindh government to combat the culture of bandits and dacoit in the Katcha riverine areas, including possible army operations and resolution of tribal conflicts. The Commission recommended direct state involvement in violence against minorities, the creation of a special police/task force for the

protection of minority worship places, and regular engagement between district administrations and non-Muslim community representatives. These measures aim to improve security and address the specific challenges faced by minorities in the Kandhkot-Kashmore district and throughout Sindh Province.

SHRC Follow-up on Missing Child Case: Priya Kumari

The Commission made efforts to follow-up on the case of Priya Kumari, a 7-year-old girl missing from Sukkur. On October 7, 2023, SHRC Board member Mr. Sukhdev Assardas Hemnani, along with other team members, met with SSP Sukkur to address the urgency of the situation. SHRC stressed the need for prompt action and requested the formation of a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) through a letter to the Home Department. In response, the SSP committed to oversee the investigation diligently, engaging with the relevant authorities to ensure thoroughness and urgency.



On December 21, 2023, SHRC issued a letter to the SSP Sukkur, urging an update on the investigation. The SSP responded with a comprehensive report detailing the police efforts to locate Priya Kumari, assuring SHRC that all resources were being utilised in the search. SHRC reminded the importance of ensuring the safe return of the missing child.

Non-Recovery of Kidnapped Hindu Victims in Kashmore-Kandhkot

The SHRC wrote to the Secretary, Sindh Home Department and the Inspector General of Sindh on 31 August 2023 expressing concern that three abducted persons from the Hindu community in Kashmore-Kandhkot have not been recovered. The incident has caused considerable distress and insecurity within the community. Despite protests, the police have not been able to recover the victims Mukhi Jagdesh, Jaideep Kumar (minor) and Sagar Kumar.

The SHRC recommended immediate, targeted efforts for the safe recovery of victims. It suggested that the state should become a direct party in cases when victims' families are reluctant to press charges. The commission also urged formal engagement between the district police and the Hindu community to address and resolve security concerns. The SHRC demanded regular updates on police actions and progress made by the police.



SHRC Follow-up of the Fatima Furiro murder case

Fatima Furiro, 10 years old, was tortured and killed by her employer. The horrific incident came to light after a video of the victim Fatima Furiro with severe signs of torture appeared on social media.

The SHRC analyzed the case of Fatima Furiro's death and followed it up. It found that the complaint filed by her parents had significant gaps in legal protection. On September 30, 2023, the Sindh Women Lawyers Alliance (SWLA) organized a one-day provincial dialogue with key stakeholders on the progress, challenges, obstacles and threats faced by the complaining party and human rights activists in the Fatima Furiro murder case.



SHRC Member Judicial-II, Mr M. Aslam Shaikh, highlighted the prompt actions taken by the Commission, including a suo-motu notice, reporting requirements and ensuring the safety of the complainant. On 13 November 2023, the SHRC Chairperson met with SSP Samiullah Soomro to address the delays in forensic evidence and emphasised the need to investigate violations of forced labour and child protection laws.

Public Hearings (Khuli Kachehri)

Public hearings (Khuli Kachehri) is an initiative by the Commission designed to receive direct complaints from people at the location of their convenience, and to bridge the gap between government functionaries and the public, especially regarding public policy matters impacting their rights. These meetings involve formal hearings or forums where individuals, communities, and stakeholders can share their experiences of human rights violations on various issues affecting the community.

Open Kachehri with Civil Society at Local Hotel, Umerkot (May 23, 2023)

The Chairperson SHRC Iqbal Ahmed Detho hosted an Open Kachehri with civil society representatives, media, and lawyers on May 23, 2023 in Umerkot. The meeting aimed to discuss critical issues affecting Umerkot and its surrounding areas.



Key concerns included the increase in cybercrime, lack of awareness about early marriage and forced religious conversions, and the need for awareness campaigns on relevant laws. Other topics

included challenges in implementing minority laws, general ignorance about human rights, cases of forced Labour, and the lack of basic facilities in the new Civil Hospital Umerkot. The discussion also touched on rising drug abuse and the role of women in social work. SHRC Chairperson acknowledged the reported human rights violations and stressed the importance of addressing these issues by conducting visits to jails and hospitals across Sindh. He recognized the need to review facilities and address problems within the civil hospital administration, as well as in the health, education, and other relevant sectors.

Public hearing with the Victims of the Karachi Demolition Drives (Jan 2, 2024)

SHRC attended a public hearing organized by the Sindh Bachao Tehreek with the victims of the Karachi demolition drives, including those affected by the Orangi and Gujjar Nala operations. The Chairperson assured them that the SHRC would fulfil its mandate by raising their voices before provincial and national authorities, ensuring that their grievances are heard and addressed effectively. The resettlement plan was previously offered by the Honorable Supreme Court of Pakistan, but many affected individuals expressed a preference for cash compensation to rebuild their lives.

Public Hearing on Human and Labour Rights Due Diligence and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Contributions for Socio-Economic Development of the District Ghotki (March 06, 2024)



On March 6, 2024, the SHRC and Friedrich-Ebert-Shifting (FES) Pakistan hosted a public hearing at the DC office in District Ghotki. The event focused on human and labour rights due diligence and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions, bringing together government officials, labour unions, CSR entities, social activists, and environmental experts.

Key issues discussed included inadequate minimum wages, environmental degradation, factory-induced water contamination, and the lack of female representation in labour unions.

SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho stressed the importance of adhering to labour laws such as the Sindh Industrial Relations Act, 2013, the Sindh Employees Old-Age Benefits Act, 2014, the Sindh Workers Compensation Act, 2015, and the Sindh Minimum Wages Act, 2015, to protect workers' rights. Mr. Abdullah from FES-Pakistan highlighted rights violations by multinational companies in the district, while Deputy Commissioner Agha Sher Zaman acknowledged CSR implementation challenges and the role of private contractors in violating labour laws. Barrister Rida Tahir addressed the absence of female representation in labour unions, underlining women's labour issues.

Participants expressed concerns about industrial emissions, deforestation, and improper waste disposal contributing to environmental degradation. They also discussed inadequate health and education facilities in Ghotki, the need for stringent environmental regulations, and the importance

of reviewing minimum wage standards. Recommendations included strengthening CSR initiatives and forming a multi-stakeholder task force. Commissioner Fayaz Hussain Abbasi commended the collaborative efforts, highlighting the district administration's role in addressing public concerns.

Periodic Inspections/Visits of Detention Facilities, State Institutions

The SHRC Strategic Plan, Pillar 1 - Priority Area 2, states that the Commission will conduct inspections in a wide range of centres, facilities and institutions, including business enterprises, to identify human rights violations and abuses and make recommendations for improvement to the relevant authorities.

Police, Prisons and Detention Centres

The SHRC team conducted periodic visits to various prisons and correctional facilities across Sindh in 2023-2024 to assess conditions, amplify inmates' voices, and advocate for their human rights. The purpose of these visits was to evaluate confinement conditions, treatment of inmates, access to legal aid and medical care, sanitation, and adherence to human rights standards. These selections were based on population density, geographical location, and the urgent need for facility improvements.



SHRC visited eighteen detention centers and correctional facilities in regions including Sukkur, Hyderabad, Ghotki, Jacobabad, Larkana, Khairpur, Mirpurkhas, Shikarpur, Umerkot, Dadu, Shikarpur and Karachi. The Commission documented reports for each visit, made recommendations for improvement, and maintained follow-ups with focal persons and local NGOs on progress at the district level.

Key findings highlighted by the SHRC

- The prison facilities in Sindh were often plagued by overcrowding and limited resources, creating harsh living conditions for inmates.
- The overcrowding of jails is exacerbated by arbitrary police arrest practices, a high number of under-trial prisoners (UTPs), and reluctance to explore alternatives to detention for minor offences such as release on probation and parole.
- Inmates lacked access to legal aid and representation in various jails. For example, at Sukkur Central Prison, 17 such needy prisoners were identified, prompting referrals to the Commission and legal aid organisations.
- Several jails exhibited poor infrastructure and living conditions, raising concerns about the

well-being of inmates. At Nara Jail in Hyderabad, the structure and barracks were in a dilapidated condition, requiring immediate attention.

- Inadequate security measures were noted in some facilities, posing risks to the safety of both inmates and staff.
- Health facilities for prisoners were found to be inadequate, such as at Women Jail Hyderabad, where only one female doctor was serving in the prison, indicating a shortage of medical staff.
- While some jails offered educational and vocational programmes for inmates, there were concerns about their effectiveness and accessibility. However, the Women Jail in Hyderabad was commended for its early learning centre and sewing facilities, providing educational and vocational opportunities for women prisoners.
- In several instances, there were indications of a lack of awareness among prison staff about human rights standards and inmates' rights. At Central Jail Hyderabad, the activation of the District Legal Empowerment Committee was stressed, highlighting the need for better coordination and training among prison officials.

Key recommendations by SHRC

The SHRC provided recommendations to key stakeholders to address critical issues identified during jail visits and to promote the rights and well-being of inmates within the prison system, including but not limited to:

- Allocate sufficient financial resources to address identified needs in the prison system, including infrastructure improvement, staff recruitment and training, healthcare provisions, rehabilitation programmes, vocational training, and legal aid services.
- Strengthen the legal aid system by allocating additional resources and staff to ensure that all inmates have access to legal representation and support.
- Take immediate measures to improve living conditions in prisons, addressing concerns such as overcrowding, dilapidated infrastructure, and insufficient facilities for hygiene, healthcare, and recreational activities.
- Develop mechanisms to assist needy prisoners who cannot pay Diyat, Arsh, and Daman amounts to the legal heirs of victims.
- Provide comprehensive human rights training to prison officials, covering fair treatment, non-discrimination, prevention of torture, and respect for prisoners' dignity.
- Ensure no juveniles are detained in prisons or police lockups, establish separate juvenile detention centres, and provide appropriate care and rehabilitation services.
- Improve Access to Medical Services Collaborate with organisations to enhance healthcare for inmates, ensuring compliance with healthcare standards and addressing shortages in medical supplies and equipment.
- Strengthen security systems within jails to ensure the safety of both inmates and staff, including enhancing surveillance systems and conducting regular security audits.
- Compliance with the Provisions of Sindh Prisons and Correctional Service Rules, 2019 and

recommends the activation of prison policy board, prison management board, and prison oversight committees.

Success Story: Repatriation of Afghan Nationals

During a visit to Central Prison, Khairpur, two Afghan nationals were found to be in need of medical assistance and repatriation since last year. As the matter was delayed, SHRC approached the relevant authorities and successfully assisted the former detainees in their deportation from Khairpur to the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Chaman.

Inspection Visits to Women Police Stations in Larkana and Hyderabad

In March 2024, the SHRC conducted inspection visits to the Women Police Stations in Larkana and Hyderabad, accompanied by respective senior police officials. In Larkana, the visit included an inspection of Shaheed Abdul Malik Bhutto Police Station, where the Chairperson SHRC addressed concerns about inadequate infrastructure. In Hyderabad, the focus was on capacity building for women police officers in investigative roles. The SHRC Chairperson emphasised the need for training on family laws, including issues such as child custody, maintenance, divorce, domestic violence, and child marriage.

Educational Institutions



The SHRC emphasizes the importance of quality education and remains dedicated to ensuring every child in Sindh has access to it, fostering a brighter and more equitable future. Throughout the year, SHRC's visited and inspected numerous educational institutions across Sindh. The Commission evaluated the availability of qualified teachers, scrutinized school infrastructure to ensure safe and conducive learning environments, and assessed accessibility for all students. SHRC has also emphasised the importance of inclusive education by examining the availability of appropriate books and syllabi for minority students, and addressing their educational needs are adequately addressed.

Government Boys Primary School, Village Sarkarda Momin Khan Lolai, Taluka Ratudero District Larkana (March 08, 2023)

On March 8, 2023, SHRC Member Judicial-II, Aslam Shaikh visited Government Boys Primary School in Village Sarkarda Momin Khan Lolai, Taluka Ratudero, District Larkana to assess the availability of basic facilities. The findings during the visit included a damaged school building with visible cracks, a

need for additional solar panels and fans, poor condition of the water tank and washrooms, and a lack of electricity. SHRC strongly recommended urgent repairs to the school to prevent any unfortunate incidents.

Government Boys High School-I Shahdadt (March 09, 2023)

On March 9, 2023, SHRC Member Judicial-II, Aslam Shaikh of SHRC visited Government Boys High School-I in Shahdadt. The findings highlighted during the visit included an inadequate number of teachers, incomplete rooms, major repairs needed for the school building, compound wall, and roof, pending civil matters concerning the compound wall, and demands for a separate electricity transformer, desks, a water supply line, science lab improvements, and the establishment of a library with good books.

Indus School Larkana (April 06, 2023)

SHRC Chairperson, Iqbal Ahmed Detho, and Member, Mr. Ayub Khosa, visited Indus School Larkana to engage with students and raise awareness on human rights, inclusion, and civic responsibility.

The Commission members highlighted the significance of integrating human rights education in primary, secondary, and higher secondary curricula to ensure the younger generation are well-versed in human rights and the values of inclusion. The visit was met with a positive response and garnered media attention as a commendable step in creating awareness of human rights among the youth.



Schools and Colleges in Larkana (Jan 05, 2024)



SHRC Chairperson, Iqbal Ahmed Detho accompanied by SHRC Superintendent Complaint Sarfraz Ahmed and Director of Education (Colleges), DEO Primary and Secondary Larkana, undertook visits to various schools and colleges across District Larkana. Their primary focus was on formulating effective flood response strategies, particularly rehabilitating flood-damaged Primary and Secondary Schools, with a special emphasis on those catering to girls. It was found that Boys Primary School, Chawan, District Larkana was closed during school hours. Expressing serious concern, the Commission took immediate action and suspended Mr. Muhammad Waris, S/o Saindad Khan Channo, citing his negligence as the reason the official suspension notice is under letter No.

DEO(P)/023/2024, dated 05-01-2024. This incident reinforced the critical need for accountability in the education system.

SHRC's Call for Emergency Action in Flood-Hit Districts



26th August 2022

PRESS RELEASE

The Commission expresses grave concern on the Humanitarian catastrophe in the aftermath of unprecedented rains in the Province of Sindh which has effected millions of lives and livelihoods, infrastructure destroyed, crops inundated and service of Fundamental Rights severely hampered which has subjected majority of our population to live in open without any shelter and food at the mercy of inclement weather. The Government of Sindh has already declared 23 districts of the province as calamity hit areas.

In these unprecedented times, the Government of Sindh is however utilizing all its resources for rescue and relief of the victims but keeping in view the gravity and intensity of the crises, the Commission supports the appeal to all International Relief Agencies, INGOs and representative missions to support and provide humanitarian and rescue efforts in flood affected areas in the province of Sindh, as thousands of people are displaced, millions of acre of crops are destroyed and submerged in water, livestock and stocks of food supplies are destroyed / insufficient and people are without shelter, food and water and in dire need of medical emergency service. Their urgent need is canned food, bottled water and safe shelters. In the meanwhile, the Commission is of the view that the Government and civil society actors must mobilize all the stakeholders to initiate consultations at grass root level to strategize relief and rehabilitation plan in par with the volume of disaster in each district of the Province.

Furthermore, SHRC firmly believes in the will and actions of the people of Pakistan as they had combated with such calamities in 2005 earthquakes, 2010 and 2011 floods. We strongly urge the Relief organization of political parties, Medical services organizations, and the CSOs to establish their emergency relief camps along with the local administration. Also, the media outlets and organization must undertake extensive reporting of flood situation in order to identify issues of the affected areas and mobilize relief efforts at unreached populace. Keeping in view the gravity of the situation, the broadcast media should start campaigns through live telethons to aware the public and the international community about the situation as the Government is in short of requisite resources to rescue, relief and rehabilitate the victims.

Further adding, keeping in view the volume and extent of the catastrophe, the Government must declare **Climate Emergency** and utilize all possible resources to legislate, design and materialize a combat strategy in order to avert such calamities in future.

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Regional Office Sukkur: District Women Development Complex Near SR50 Complex, Main Shikarpur Road, National Highway Opposite Government College of Physical Education. Tel: 071-5824055, Fax: 071-5824053, Email: shrcsukkur.gos@gmail.com

SHRC took notice of schools devastation due to the 2022 floods and heavy rains in district Larkana, Sukkur and Kambar-Shahdabkot. Member Judicial-II, Mr. Aslam Sheikh arranged periodic meetings with Director Education, DEOs and TEOs of Primary and Secondary schools to resolve the educational issues at the earliest. Despite time having lapsed, the restoration of schools remains inadequate, with numerous schools still in a state of disrepair. The SHRC Member Judicial-II, Mr. Aslam Shaikh, and Superintendent Complaints, Mr. Sarfraz Jamali, called to the Government and Donors for an immediate emergency response.

Healthcare Facilities

The SHRC conducted inspections of numerous hospitals and healthcare centres across Sindh to evaluate the quality of health services provided to residents. The inspections focused on hygiene standards and the importance of maintaining clean and sanitary environments conducive to healing. The SHRC also advocated for patients' rights and worked to enhance accessibility for vulnerable populations, including marginalised communities and individuals with disabilities, promoting equitable and inclusive healthcare services.

Summary of Hospital Visits Conducted by SHRC (Key Findings & Recommendations)

Sindh Government Hospital (PPHI) in Ibrahim Hyderi, Karachi (Nov 14, 2023)

On November 14, 2023, SHRC Member Judicial-I, Arshad Noor Khan conducted an inspection of the Sindh Government Hospital (PPHI) in Ibrahim Hyderi, Karachi. Key findings included shortages of doctors, particularly in the ultrasound section, absence of cleaning and sanitary staff, non-functional lifts affecting people with disabilities, and behavioural concerns among hospital staff. SHRC strongly recommended improving sanitation, addressing doctor shortages, repairing lifts, and providing behavioural training for the staff.



50-bed Hospital Corridor Landhi, Karachi (Nov 14, 2023)

SHRC Member Judicial-I, Arshad Noor Khan inspected the 50-bed Hospital Corridor in Landhi, Karachi on November 14, 2023. Key findings included shortages of doctors in the gynaecology ward, unpaid salaries for vaccine staff, and violations of minimum wage standards. The SHRC recommended addressing the doctor shortages, ensuring wage compliance, and engaging with



authorities to improve administrative measures.

36-bed RHC (PPHI) Hospital Rehri Goth and 226-Bed Social Security (SESSI) Landhi Hospital, Karachi (Nov 15, 2023)

SHRC inspected the RHC (PPHI) Hospital in Rehri Goth and the Social Security (SESSI) Hospital in Landhi, Karachi. Key findings included the absence of paramedical staff and doctors, security challenges, operational inefficiencies, poor sanitation, and patient complaints regarding staff behaviour. Additionally, the hospitals faced overcrowded conditions for children and had insufficient incubators. SHRC recommended improving sanitation, resolving staff shortages, and enhancing security measures.

Rural Health centres in Karachi (Dec 2023)

SHRC Member Judicial-I, Arshad Noor Khan conducted visits to various Rural Health centres (RHCs) in Karachi from December 20-21, 2023, to assess medical facilities and address existing grievances. Critical deficiencies were observed across all centres, including malfunctioning equipment, poor sanitation, staff shortages, and unresponsive higher authorities. At the Rural Health Centre in Keamari, issues such as malfunctioning X-ray machines, the absence of an ambulance, and inadequate sanitation arrangements were noted. The lack of funds for purchasing or repairing medical instruments compounded the challenges faced by the medical staff. Similarly, RHCs in Shershah, Baldia Town, and Mowach Goth exhibited significant deficiencies in sanitation, infrastructure, and staff shortages. Problems identified included poor sanitation arrangements, heaps of trash, dilapidated laboratories, and non-functional machinery. Additionally, uniform non-compliance and unresponsiveness from higher authorities further exacerbated the situation.



The SHRC recommendations emphasised the immediate rectification of issues, including the allocation of funds for necessary appliances, repair of defective equipment, and recruitment of additional staff. Urgent measures were urged to address sanitation concerns, repair machinery, enforce uniform compliance, and improve responsiveness from higher authorities. It was further highlighted that regular monitoring and collaboration between the Commission, hospital administrations, and health authorities are essential for sustainable improvements.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir Institute of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Hyderabad (March, 2024)

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir Institute of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences in Hyderabad faces a critical shortage of doctors, staff, and essential infrastructure. The SHRC sent proposals for immediate action to the provincial health department after uncovering multiple issues during a recent visit to immediately hire medical personnel and staff, increase budget allocation and upgrade institute infrastructure and collaborate for skill-based education.



Civil Hospital Hyderabad (May 14, 2024)

On May 14, 2024, SHRC Member Judicial-I, Arshad Noor Khan visited Civil Hospital Hyderabad and identified several critical issues affecting patient care. The hospital faced a severe shortage of medical staff, with 60% of positions vacant, impacting the care provided to over 12,000 daily outpatients. Additionally, the facility had non-functional MRI machines and an inoperative trauma centre, compromising essential medical services. The hospital also suffered from substandard sanitation and inadequate security measures, despite a High Court order addressing these concerns.



The SHRC recommended to the Health Department for urgent recruitment of staff to fill 3,100 vacant positions, allocation of funds for repairing equipment, and improvement of sanitation and security measures. Additionally, they emphasised the need for continuous professional development for the staff to enhance service quality and healthcare outcomes.

Sindh Government Hospitals (April 24, 2024)

On April 24, 2024, SHRC Member Judicial-I, Arshad Noor Khan inspected three Sindh Government Hospitals in Karachi: Shah Faisal Town, Korangi No. 5, and the 25-bed Korangi hospital. The inspections revealed several key issues, including dilapidated buildings, non-operational lifts, critical staff shortages, significant electricity load-shedding, allegations of corruption, sanitation and cleanliness problems, and non-functional medical equipment.



The SHRC recommended urgent renovations, immediate hiring of staff, repairs to essential equipment, and enhanced security measures. Additionally, thorough investigations into allegations of corruption were advised to ensure better healthcare delivery and maintain public trust in these facilities.

Women's Shelters and Social Welfare Residential Institutions

The Commission remains committed to promoting the rights of all individuals, particularly vulnerable populations. SHRC conducted inspections of women's shelters and social welfare residential institutions across Sindh. These inspections aimed to protect the well-being of residents, especially in institutional care settings. The Commission evaluated the quality of services, the availability of counselling and rehabilitation programmes, safety and privacy measures, and overall compliance with human rights standards. SHRC paid special attention to facilities serving women victims of abuse, abandonment, or homelessness, including women's crisis centres, Darul Aman shelters, and safe houses.



Autism Centre Sukkur (April 08, 2023)



Chairperson SHRC Iqbal Ahmed Detho visited the Autism Centre Sukkur on April 08, 2023, as chief guest at the inauguration ceremony of Autism Awareness and Support Services (AAS). He acknowledged the valuable services provided by AAS and expressed his gratitude to the Sindh government for their support towards the cause of autism awareness and pledged the continuous support of the Commission in the inclusion of marginalised factions of the society.

Dar-ul-Aman Sukkur (August 31, 2023)

On August 31, 2023, Mohsin Sajjad, the Law Consultant at the Regional office Sukkur of the SHRC, along with the dedicated team from the Pakistan Legal United Society (PLUS) visited Dar-ul-Aman Sukkur. The delegation interacted with survivors, attentively addressing their concerns. Additionally, the delegation inquired about the necessity of providing free legal aid and identified one inmate requiring legal assistance.



Al-Banat Social Welfare Department and Edhi Village (September 27, 2023)



Judicial Member-I (F) Mr. Arshad Noor Khan led a team from the Sindh Human Rights Commission on visits to the Al-Banat Social Welfare Department and Edhi Village on September 27, 2023. At Al-Banat, the team received briefings on the care provided to orphaned girls and found the conditions generally satisfactory, though challenges such as overcrowding and accessibility issues were noted.

Similar concerns were observed at Edhi Village, with specific focus on administrative challenges related to electricity supply and disease prevention. The Commission promptly recommended improvements in medical assistance and labour conditions for special children, underscoring their commitment to protecting vulnerable populations.

Dar-ul-Aman Larkana (Jan 4, 2024)

SHRC Chairperson, Iqbal Ahmed Detho visited Dar-ul-Aman in Larkana on Jan 04, 2024. He stressed the importance of regular meetings for the Dar-ul-Aman Advisory Committee. In response, the Deputy Commissioner of Larkana scheduled a meeting to address the institution's issues.



Dar-ul-Atfal Sukkur (Jan 22, 2024)

On January 22, 2024, the Chairperson of SHRC visited Dar-ul-Atfal in Sukkur, interacting with the children and inspecting the facilities. He focused on addressing the challenges faced by the institution, especially the shortage of staff. While acknowledging the good services provided, the Chairperson emphasised the need for ongoing improvements to ensure the children's welfare and ensuring they receive the

best possible care and support.

Dar-ul-Sukoon and Ghosha Khatun-e-Jannat (April 25, 2024)



Justice (F) Arshad Noor Khan, Judicial Member-I of SHRC, inspected Dar-ul-Sukoon and Ghosha Khatun-e-Jannat on April 25, 2024, to assess their care standards. At Dar-ul-Sukoon, which cares for 450 disabled children and women, the facilities were found to be clean and well-maintained. The inspection noted the personalised care and comprehensive educational and medical support provided, reflecting the administration's dedication to high-quality care. At Ghosha Khatun-e-Jannat, a senior citizens' home for women managed by Al Mustafa Welfare Society, the visit highlighted efforts to support elderly women despite challenges like legal formalities and coordination with local authorities. Both institutions were commended for their commitment and quality of service.

Social Welfare Health centre Hyderabad (May 15, 2024)

SHRC Judicial Member-I Justice (F) Arshad Noor Khan, inspected the Social Welfare Department's Sub-Office Health Centre in Hyderabad on May 15, 2024, which caters to the welfare of the transgender (Khawaja Sarra) community. The inspection revealed that the centre's remote location poses significant accessibility challenges, deterring attendance due to high transportation costs. The centre offers vocational training programmes in sewing, beauty parlour skills, and computer training, with a noted emphasis on quality. However, participation remains limited because of these accessibility issues.



SHRC recommended relocating the centre to a more central location in Hyderabad and providing transportation subsidies or shuttle services. Additionally, the Commission suggested expanding the range of vocational courses, including culinary arts and tailoring, while ensuring continuous feedback from participants to enhance the effectiveness of the programmes.

Awareness and Education on Human Rights



**Human rights are not a privilege
conferred by government. They are
every human being's entitlement by
virtue of his humanity.**

Awareness and Education on Human Rights

Pillar 2 of the Commission's Strategic Plan focuses on disseminating knowledge about human rights, promoting awareness of constitutional rights and legal entitlements. By raising awareness, the Commission gives people the knowledge to recognise their rights and seek redress when these rights are violated. It also helps to build a better informed and engaged civil society that can hold the authorities to account and advocate for policy changes to ensure human rights are respected.

Public Education and Awareness

The priority 1- Pillar 2 under the SHRC Strategic Plan aims to enhance public awareness and education on human rights through effective media engagement. Throughout the year, the Commission has proudly dedicated itself to raising awareness of human rights through a multi-faceted approach. This has included print, electronic and social media, educational campaigns, outreach, workshops, trainings and collaboration with civil society organisations, all aimed at promoting a deeper understanding of human rights and creating a culture of respect and protection throughout the province.

SHRC on social media: amplify voices, expand reach

SHRC uses the dynamic world of social media to amplify its mission and connect with a diverse audience. Through platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram, SHRC not only shares updates, but fosters a vibrant community of advocates, supporters and informed citizens. The social networks serve as a vibrant centre where the Commission's daily activities, campaigns and success stories are showcased. With a growing community of followers, it provides real-time insights and promotes dialogue on pressing human rights issues.

The SHRC also uses social media to disseminate important communications addressed to government agencies to ensure that its actions are both public and transparent. This not only holds authorities accountable, but also builds public trust by informing citizens of the Commission's efforts and the responses of the relevant agencies.

The SHRC's official website, <https://shrc.org.pk>, complements these efforts and serves as a comprehensive resource for updates, reports and key human rights developments. Through its multi-platform strategy, the SHRC not only reaches a broader audience, but also creates an interactive and accessible channel for advocacy, education and community building.

Extensive media presence of SHRC

SHRC has received extensive coverage in both the electronic and print media, effectively amplifying its mission and activities. The SHRC regularly appears on television channels and has featured its work on human rights issues in over 50 programmes. This television presence enables the SHRC to reach a wide audience and to raise awareness and advocate for human rights issues. In the print media, the SHRC has been featured more than 600 times in various national and regional newspapers and magazines in English, Urdu and Sindhi.

SHRC staff and consultants also regularly contribute and write opinion pieces for daily newspapers, which are a powerful tool to influence policy makers and engage the public in critical conversations about human rights.

Informative and Accessible IEC Materials by SHRC

SHRC has developed a range of informative and reader-friendly Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to promote awareness and understanding of various human rights issues. These materials include fact sheets, info-graphics, and educational content on topics such as fundamental human rights, marriage rights, legal rights, etc

Newsletters



The SHRC has also published newsletters highlighting key activities, events and achievements of the Commission. One such newsletter titled 'Jail Visits' gives a detailed overview of the Commission's activities focusing on the inspection of correctional facilities in Sindh. The purpose was to highlight the conditions in various prisons, present the findings of these visits and offer recommendations to policymakers for improving the situation.

Special Days

SHRC actively participated in various events on special days and ran media campaigns to educate the masses and raise awareness on critical and emerging human rights issues. These events provided platforms for collaboration with national and international organisations and facilitated knowledge sharing and advocacy for human rights.

International Day of Transgender Visibility (April 1, 2023)



The SHRC, in collaboration with Sub Rang Society and the Human Rights Department of Sindh, celebrated the International Day of Transgender Visibility. SHRC Chairperson highlighted the historical and religious significance of the transgender community, condemned the discriminatory colonial-era law of 1871, and emphasised the need for policy reforms. Speakers expressed solidarity with the transgender community and reinforced their commitment to inclusivity.

Global Day against Trafficking in Persons (July 30, 2023)

The Global Day Against Trafficking in Persons was marked by a Recognition of Services Ceremony. The event, attended by SHRC and notable figures celebrated efforts in combating human trafficking and fostered collaboration among key organisations and individuals in the fight against trafficking.

National Minorities Day (August 11, 2023)

The National Minorities Day was marked with a significant seminar "Inclusion of Minorities in the Local Governance System through Effective Participation and Representation" held in Khairpur. The Chairperson SHRC participated as the Chief Guest, where he highlighted the importance of inclusivity and the need to amplify minority voices in local governance, emphasising that effective participation and representation are vital for a just and equitable society.

International Youth Day (August 12, 2023)

The SHRC celebrated International Youth Day. The Chairperson SHRC highlighted key aspects of the Sindh Youth Policy 2018, stressing the critical role of youth in shaping effective local governance.

Independence Day of Pakistan (August 14, 2023)



The 76th Independence Day of Pakistan was commemorated at the District Council Shikarpur, with SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho, Former District Nazim Arif Khan Mahar, and Chairman District Council Zulfiqar Khan Kumario leading the flag-raising ceremony and cake-cutting. The event featured patriotic songs and speeches from students, celebrating Pakistan's creation and honouring the sacrifices made. Leaders emphasised solidarity with Kashmiris and Palestinians and reiterated their commitment to Pakistan's progress.

SHRC Support for Moorat March (Nov 19, 2023)



The Moorat March, an initiative led by transgender individuals, served as a powerful platform for advocating their rightful place in society and highlighting their aspirations and needs. Demonstrating resilience and unity, transgender individuals showcased their demands for recognition and equality. In a show of solidarity, Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Mr. M. Aslam Shaikh, Board Member of SHRC, alongside their team, actively participated in the Moorat March. SHRC Chairperson emphasised the fundamental right of transgender individuals to a legal identity, advocating for their recognition as the third gender. He pledged SHRC's unwavering commitment to addressing issues concerning transgender individuals.

World Children's Day (November 20, 2023)

On World Children's Day, SHRC held an event in collaboration with the Society for the Protection of the Rights of Children (SPARC). The event addressed the pressing challenges faced by children, particularly those related to climate change and environmental issues. The SHRC also organised an event with 500 child scouts and participated in an 'Awareness Walk for Child Rights,' co-organised with the Social Welfare Department, Government of Sindh.



16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

The SHRC actively participated in the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign, which ran from November 25th, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to December 10th, Human Rights Day. This annual campaign aims to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls. As part of this activism, SHRC participated in awareness events, and also requested the Inspector General of Sindh Police, advocating for the establishment of Women and Children Police Stations (WCPSs) in all districts across Sindh.

International Human Rights Day (December 10, 2023)



The International Human Rights Day was observed on December 10, 2023, marking the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To honour this important day, Mr. M. Aslam Shaikh, Member Judicial-II of SHRC, participated in a seminar titled "Empowering Older People." The seminar focused on fostering a society free from discrimination and injustice,

emphasising the importance of inclusivity and addressing ageism. SHRC also actively participated in the Human Rights Awareness Walk organised by the Human Rights Department, Government of Sindh.

International Women's Day (March 8, 2024)

The SHRC in collaboration with the Institute of Gender Studies, Bhitai Social Watch & Advocacy (BSWA), and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Pakistan, jointly organised a seminar on Gender Inclusion and Women's Economic Empowerment in Sindh in connection with International Women's Day under the theme "Inspire Inclusion, 2024." Held on March 7, 2024, at Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, the seminar focused on exploring opportunities and challenges, particularly highlighting the latest amendments and enactments in women and Human Rights Laws.

Chairperson Message on International Women Day- March 8, 2024

"This International Women's Day, let's come together to turn challenges into opportunities and carve out a brighter future for everyone! Ensuring gender equality and promoting women's well-being across all spheres of life is paramount, particularly in our pursuit of thriving economies and a sustainable planet."

Iqbal Ahmed Detho

World Day Against Child Labour 2024 (June 12, 2024)



On World Day Against Child Labour 2024, the SHRC in collaboration with SPARC and Terre des hommes, organised an event under the theme "Let's act on our commitments: End Child Labour!" A powerful tableau by girl students from Begum Hajra Public School showcased the theme of girl child rights, highlighting the importance of education, safety, and equality for girls. SHRC demanded better allocation of the education budget to effectively combat child labour in Sindh.

Online Portal for Human Rights Education



SHRC, in collaboration with Obun2, has launched the online portal, SOHRIS (State of Human Rights in Sindh) dedicated to human rights in Sindh, accessible at <https://www.sohris.com>. This important initiative is in line with Priority 2 - Pillar 2 of the SHRC Strategic Plan. SOHRIS provides a central resource for accessing detailed information on human rights in Sindh, making it a valuable tool for the general public, researchers, policy makers and legal practitioners.

Structure and Key Features

Human Rights Information: Covers various human rights topics, including civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, with a focus on localised issues in Sindh.

Institutions: Profiles various institutions involved in human rights within Sindh, detailing their roles, achievements, and contributions to enforcing human rights.

Legal Frameworks: The section is useful for understanding legal obligations and advocacy efforts in line with both international standards and provincial regulations.

Obligations and Compliance: Information is provided on how these international treaties are implemented within Sindh, including any monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

Educational Resources: The portal includes educational videos, articles and a wide range of perspectives making it a useful tool for awareness and learning.

Research/Publications: A repository of reports, studies, and publications related to human rights, offering data-driven insights and analyses.

User Interaction: Visitors can submit feedback, contact the SHRC, and access various multimedia resources to better understand human rights issues in the region.

SOHRIS is uniquely tailored to the needs of Sindh, offering a localised, detailed, and integrated approach to human rights information. The portal promotes transparency and accountability by making information accessible, supports monitoring of human rights situations, and facilitates an exchange of perspectives among experts, civil society organisations, and the public.

Human Rights Training programmes for Duty Bearers and Stakeholders

Under Pillar 2, Priority Area 4 of the SHRC Strategic Plan, the focus is on building the capacity of duty bearers and stakeholders. In the reporting year, the SHRC conducted trainings to promote human rights education covering international standards, legal frameworks and best practices and were tailored to the specific needs of the participants. The aim was to equip duty bearers and stakeholders with the knowledge and skills they need to more effectively uphold and advocate for human rights in their respective roles.

Prison Staff Training at Central Jail, Hyderabad (May 5, 2023)



SHRC conducted a training session on May 5, 2023 for prison staff at the Sindh Prison Staff Training Institute, Central Jail, Hyderabad. The session focused on enhancing the staff's understanding of key legal frameworks including the Juvenile Justice System Act (JJSA) 2018, the Sindh Children Act 1955, and aspects of the Criminal Justice System and Human Rights. The training included interactive discussions addressing practical issues faced by the staff.

Empowering In-Training Law Inspectors (May 16, 2023)

A three-day training session was held on May 16, 2023, at the Shahid Hayat Police Training Centre, Saeedabad, Karachi. This programme was aimed at in-training law inspectors, providing them with a comprehensive understanding of essential human rights laws. Led by SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Barrister Rida Tahir, the sessions included interactive discussions and case studies, emphasising the importance of human rights knowledge in law enforcement.



Civil Judges and Judicial Magistrates Training at Sindh Judicial Academy (July 17-22, 2023)

SHRC organised a six-day training programme from July 17 to 22, 2023 for 45 civil judges and judicial magistrates at the Sindh Judicial Academy. This training covered critical human rights topics, including constitutional rights, child protection laws, and gender rights. Key speakers included Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Barrister Rida Tahir, with additional insights from experts on various legal issues.



Session on “Human Rights Issues in Pakistan and Policy Responses” for MCMC at SGOC (October 7, 2023)

On October 7, 2023, Chairperson SHRC delivered a lecture on "Human Rights Issues in Pakistan and Policy Responses" at the Sindh Government Officers Club (SGOC) Karachi. This lecture was part of the mandatory 2nd Mid-Career Management Course (MCMC) for BPS-18 officers of the Government of Sindh, organised by the General Administration and Coordination Department (SGA&CD) through its Training Management and Research (TMR) Wing Services, the course aims to enhance the capabilities of mid-career officers. SHRC Chairperson presentation provided an in-depth analysis of human rights challenges in Pakistan and explored effective policy responses, contributing to the officers' understanding and approach to human rights issues in their professional roles.

Training on "Protecting Human Rights Laws during Investigation and Trials" (October 16-17, 2023)

On October 16-17, 2023, SHRC, in collaboration with the Sindh Judicial Academy, conducted a two-day training for newly appointed civil judges and judicial magistrates. The programme, led by Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho, Barrister Rida Tahir, and Mr. Muhammad Shahid Shafiq, focused on recent legal amendments and critical human rights laws, including those related to child marriage and workplace harassment. The closing ceremony featured Mr. Muhammad Omer Soomro, Minister for Law, Religious Affairs, and Human Rights.

Sessions on Human Rights for Senior Management Course at NIM Karachi (October 18, 2023)

SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho delivered lectures on Human Rights at the 34th and 35th Senior Management Course (SMC) who are on the path to promotion to BPS 20. Hosted by the National Institute of Management (NIM) Karachi in October 2023 and April 2024, the SMC is a pivotal programme for equipping senior public servants with advanced skills in decision-making, policy formulation, research analysis, and leadership. SHRC Chairperson provided valuable insights on human rights in Pakistan, covering a wide range of topics on Human Rights, including concepts, origin, historic development, and International Human Rights conventions and their compliance.



Probationary Inspectors Education on Human Rights (January 2024)

In January 2024, SHRC, in collaboration with the Sindh Police Training Wing, conducted a two-day training for probationary inspectors. The programme addressed recent amendments in human rights laws, particularly those affecting women and children, including the Juvenile Justice System Act 2018 and the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act 2022. The training was attended by Inspector General Riffat Mukhtar and DIG Training Faizullah Korejo.



Pakistan Labour Academy's Transformative Training programme (February 19-26, 2024)



From February 19 to 26, 2024, SHRC, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), and the Labour Department in a collaborative effort organised a residential training programme at the National Institute of Labour Administration and Training (NILAT). The programme brought together over 35 participants from across Pakistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit Baltistan. The training covered various labour rights and human rights issues, with sessions led by expert facilitators. The event was inaugurated by Muhammad Omer Soomro and concluded with key announcements, including scholarships and upcoming training for labour inspectors. Chairperson SHRC, Iqbal Ahmed Detho conducted an insightful training session at NILAT Karachi on the Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) and its covenants mandated by Pakistan. Special emphasis was placed on the covenants concerning labour, minorities, and women.

Specialised Course on Human Rights Laws (March 5, 2024)

On March 5, 2024, SHRC conducted a specialised course for newly appointed Probationary Inspectors at the School of Finance and IT, Central Police Office, Karachi. Led by Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and supported by Barristers Rida Tahir, Ali Tahir, and Aashir Masood Mahar, the programme focused on fundamental and recent legislative amendments in human rights laws. The training also included a Training of Trainers (TOT) programme to equip police instructors with updated knowledge and tools for addressing human rights issues.

Training of Police Inspectors Law and Investigation

The SHRC in collaboration with the Training Branch Sindh Police, organised a two-day training programme for Police Inspectors Law and Inspectors Investigation to elevate awareness of human

rights laws. The training covered topics of human rights laws, laws addressing violence against women and children including Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act.



Training Session on Sindh Hindu Marriage Act, 2018 (May 17, 2024)

The SHRC held the training session with local government officials in Mithi, Tharparkar, on May 17th, 2024, on the Sindh Hindu Marriage Act, 2018. The objective of the training was to enhance the implementation of the Sindh Hindu Marriage Act and protect the civil rights of the Hindu community in Sindh through improved knowledge and collaborative efforts.



Training on the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2018

The SHRC in collaboration with SSDO Pakistan conducted a two-day specialised course on the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2018 in May 2024. The goal was to enhance the legal system's fairness and justice in Sindh. Some of the best practices for compiling case files were shared with participants. Around 400 investigation officers, station house officers and legal officers of the Sindh Police attended the training.



Promotion of Human Rights in Sindh in Collaboration with CSOs

SHRC's Pillar 2- Priority Area 5 identifies the need to enhance collaboration with civil society organisations to collectively promote human rights in Sindh. Recognising the importance, SHRC remained engaged with CSOs throughout the year for addressing a wide range of human rights issues.

Dialogue on Human Rights Issues in Northern Sindh Sukkur (May 03, 2023)

On May 3, 2023, SHRC hosted a consultative meeting in partnership with Marvi Rural Development organisation (MRDO) at their office in Sukkur. Chaired by Mr. Muhammad Aslam Shaikh, Member Judicial-II, the meeting focused on human rights issues in Northern Sindh. Attendees included human rights activists, civil society organisations, UN representatives, women's rights advocates, and media personnel. Discussions addressed critical issues such as violence against women, media freedom, gender equality, child labour, child marriage, and minority protection. The event highlighted deficiencies in the Criminal Justice System and the implementation of the Juvenile Justice System Act of 2018. The meeting concluded with recommendations for the government to strengthen penalties for rape, kidnapping, and child abuse, and to enhance public awareness and police training in Sukkur and Larkana.



Lead Convention- SZABIST, Karachi (Nov 27, 2023)

SHRC Chairperson conducted a session on Human rights at Lead Convention by SZABIST, highlighting the importance of human rights in global progress and shared the journey from MDGs to SDGs. He explained the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, SHRC Legal Consultant also highlighted the urgent need for gender equality and justice reforms in Pakistan.

Provincial Stakeholders Alliance on the empowerment of Women Agricultural Workers

The inaugural meeting of the Provincial Stakeholders Alliance (PSA) was held to focus on the empowerment of women agricultural workers (WAWs) in Feb 2024. Chaired by SHRC Chairperson, the meeting emphasised the importance of effectively implementing the Sindh Women Agriculture Workers Act, 2019. Key discussions included the need for training



government personnel, establishing District Vigilance Committees, and allocating budgets to support WAWs. The meeting highlighted the importance of gender sensitization programmes, research initiatives, and fostering partnerships among stakeholders to ensure the protection and empowerment of WAWs. The event marked a significant step towards creating inclusive environments where women in agriculture can thrive and contribute to Sindh's progress.

3rd National Labour Conference 2024



The 3rd National Labour Conference 2024, organised by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Pakistan, Iqbal Ahmed Detho, Chairperson of SHRC, shared the podium with Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan. They came together to delve into critical discussions on Pakistan's GSP+ Obligations, with a special focus on Sindh. The discussions revolved around navigating the complexities of Labour Rights Compliance in Pakistan, shedding light on the challenges faced and exploring the way forward. This conference served as a vital platform to address pertinent issues and foster collaboration towards ensuring the protection and promotion of labour rights in Pakistan.

Meeting with Sindh Women Lawyers Alliance (SWLA)

SHRC held a meeting with the Sindh Women Lawyers Alliance and hosted Ms. Shazia Nizamani, President of SWLA, and Ms. Humaira Rahman, Member Advisory Board, to discuss enhancing women's rights and empowerment. Topics included legal education for women, sensitising men to women's issues, and implementing laws at the grassroots level.

Meeting with Aurat Foundation and War Against Rape

Representatives from the Aurat Foundation and War Against Rape met with SHRC to discuss establishing 10 Legal Aid Desks in Sindh and Punjab. The initiative aims to provide HIV-related legal services to marginalised communities, with a focus on improving the response rate for medico-legal services.



Meeting with Roshni Helpline



SHRC and Roshni Helpline, led by Mr. Mohammad Ali, President, discussed collaboration with the Sindh Child Protection Authority (SCPA). The meeting focused on missing children and reviewed legislative aspects of the ZARRA Act 2020 and SCPA Act 2011, highlighting a commitment to child protection.

Meeting with Stakeholders on Peace and Justice (Nov 10, 2023)



SHRC organised a coordination meeting with the stakeholders on peace and justice in collaboration with the Civil Society Support programme (CSSP) to shed light on the crucial initiatives in Sindh. The discussion delved into establishing peace and justice committees, illustrating their vital role in fostering community harmony. Chairperson SHRC highlighted the importance of collaboration and engagement to create a society where every voice is heard and every right is protected. CSSP CEO Noor Mohammad Bajeer highlighted the need for active participation from district-level stakeholders to sustain peace.



Legislative Review, Policy and Practice on Human Rights

**The rights of every man are
diminished when the rights of one
man are threatened.**

Legislative Review, Policy and Practice on Human Rights

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) is mandated to review laws, policies, and practices in Sindh to ensure their alignment with the human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan and the international human rights treaties to which Pakistan is a party. Strategic Pillar 4 entails the legislative review of laws, policies, and practices in Sindh to ensure their compliance with the Human Rights and fundamental freedoms Pillar 3 - Priority Area 2 of the SHRC Strategic Plan recommends systematic monitoring of human rights violations and abuses in Sindh and providing evidence-based recommendations in accordance with international human rights law.



Over the past year, the Commission has actively engaged with key stakeholders, including government agencies and civil society, to review legislation and policies that impact vulnerable populations. Where necessary, the Commission has undertaken research to deepen its understanding of critical human rights issues. This collaborative approach has helped to identify areas for policy and legal reform. Based on these findings, the Commission made recommendations to address implementation and enforcement gaps and advocated for the adoption of these reforms. These efforts have significantly contributed to the knowledge base of stakeholders and promoted informed decision-making to advance human rights protection in Sindh.

Advancing Human Rights in Sindh

Sindh, Pakistan's second largest province with a diverse population of over 55 million people, faces major human rights challenges despite legislative progress. While the province has enacted various laws to protect women, children, labourers and minorities, problems such as discrimination, socio-economic inequality and poor access to education, healthcare and basic services remain widespread. Marginalised groups, including religious minorities, women and transgender persons, are often discriminated against, with forced conversions, gender-based violence and limited

employment opportunities a constant problem. Although Sindh leads the way with its progressive legislation, its implementation faces challenges due to inadequate funding, poor coordination between stakeholders and weak enforcement mechanisms. To address these human rights issues, sustained efforts are needed to bridge the gap between law and practise.

Key engagements of the SHRC were:

Technical Review of Sindh Human Rights Policy 2023-2027

The Government of Sindh adopted the Sindh Human Rights Policy 2023-2027 in August 2023, making a significant contribution to the protection and promotion of the rights of various marginalised groups such as women, children, workers, minorities, persons with disabilities and transgender persons. The SHRC played an important role in the technical review and drafting of the policy and advocated for its adoption.

The policy aims to create a society in which the social status and contributions of all people are recognised and their right to essential services such as education, health, nutrition and employment opportunities are guaranteed. It is in line with the constitutional rights of citizens and Pakistan's international commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SHRC will continue to support the Human Rights Department through annual reviews and recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the policy.

Seminar on Human Rights Challenges and Political Parties (June 16, 2023)



Recognising the important role that political parties play in shaping human rights policy, SHRC organised this seminar to promote meaningful engagement with political leaders. The aim of the seminar was to address pressing human rights issues while encouraging political parties to prioritise these issues in their agendas. SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho emphasised the commitment of the PPP leadership and the Sindh government to the promotion of social justice and human rights and particularly acknowledged the support of Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. The speakers highlighted critical areas where action is needed, including labour laws, minority rights, child marriage, climate justice and the protection of marginalised communities.

Recommendations for Establishment of Medico legal Bodies under the Sindh Medico legal Act 2023 (April 17, 2024)

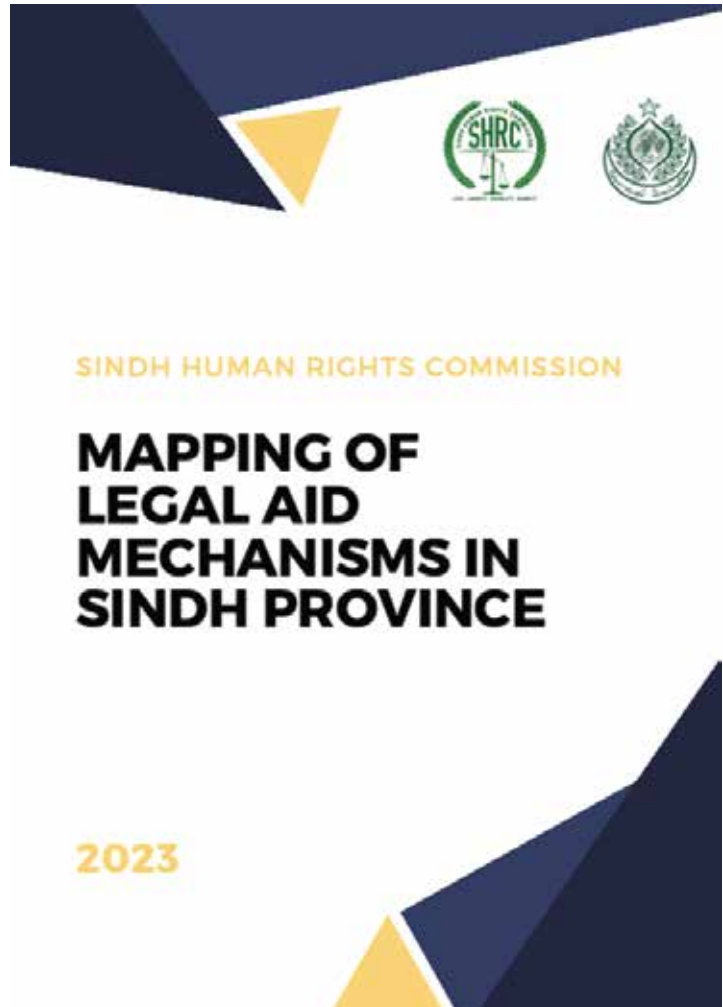
The SHRC has written a letter to the Secretary, Department of Health, Rehan Iqbal Baloch on April 17, 2024 recommending urgent establishment and notification of important bodies as provided in the Sindh Medico legal Act 2023. These include the Sindh Medico legal Advisory Board, the Sindh

Medico legal Directorate and the Sindh Institute of Forensic Medicine

The SHRC pointed out the importance of these institutions in ensuring justice, especially in cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), where the conviction rate remains low. The establishment of these bodies is critical to improving policies, procedures, quality and accountability in medico legal examinations and post-mortems. The SHRC also emphasised the need for formulation of rules under Section 20 of the Act to ensure effective implementation. The Commission urged the Health Department to expedite these measures to improve justice and equity in Sindh.

Policy Brief on Legal Aid Mechanisms in Sindh Province

The SHRC issued a policy brief titled "Mapping of Legal Aid Mechanisms in Sindh Province". The policy brief provides a detailed analysis of the legal aid landscape in Sindh and examines the constitutional provisions and international obligations that enshrine the right to legal aid as a fundamental human right. It also examines Articles 4, 9, 10-A, 25 and 37(d) of the Constitution of Pakistan, which together emphasise the state's responsibility to ensure accessible justice for all citizens regardless of their economic status. It also considers international standards, including those set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other major human rights treaties ratified by Pakistan. The policy brief provides actionable recommendations for policy makers and justice officials aimed at strengthening and improving the legal aid system in Sindh and providing a clear pathway to improve access to justice across the province.



Defending Children's Rights in Sindh

In Sindh, children's rights face major challenges. Many children do not go to school, are affected by child labour and are at risk of child marriage, which endangers their well-being. Widespread child malnutrition, inadequate health care and unreported cases of physical, sexual and emotional abuse contribute to poor health and trauma. Weak child protection systems and limited awareness further exacerbate these problems.

Key engagements of the SHRC focused on addressing issues related to children's rights:

Advocacy for Equal Access to Quality Education

In response to a Daily Dawn report on August 11, 2023 highlighting that more than 1.2 million students do not have access to free textbooks, the SHRC Chairperson raised the issue of textbook shortages in a meeting with Mr Agha Sohail Ahmed, Chairman of the Sindh Textbook Board. The shortages were attributed to financial constraints and currency fluctuations. The SHRC Chairperson emphasised the importance of education as a fundamental right and the need to provide all children with the necessary resources required for learning. The SHRC formally requested the Chief Secretary to ensure the provision of free textbooks as per the Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013. The recommendations were forwarded to the Education Department for implementation. Additionally, the SHRC conducted inspections of schools in the flood-affected regions and submitted recommendations to the Education Department Government of Sindh. This advocacy work led to the reconstruction of schools in Shikarpur, Larkana, Khairpur, Dadu and Mirpurkhas and supported the restoration of educational facilities in the affected areas.

Protecting Child health

Sindh Infant & Young Child Feeding (IYCF) 2018-19 data shows that only 23% of newborns in Sindh receive breast milk within the first hour of birth and only 47% of children under six months are exclusively breastfed. Furthermore, feeding practices vary significantly across divisions, with only 6% of children aged 6-23 months in the Shaheed Benazir Abad division receiving a minimum of a varied diet, compared to 23% in Larkana division.

The SHRC proposed several recommendations to strengthen child nutrition in Sindh, including the establishment of the 'Infant and Young Child Nutrition Board, the appointment of 'Inspectors,' the creation of the 'Infant and Young Children Nutrition Board Fund, and the development of implementation rules for the Sindh Protection and Promotion of Breast-Feeding and Young Child Nutrition Act, 2023.

Review and validation of Sindh's Child Protection Policy

The Stakeholder Review and Validation Workshop on Sindh Child Protection Policy was convened by the Sindh Child Protection Authority on May 30, 2023. Chairperson SHRC delivered the keynote address highlighting the importance of the Child Protection Policy and the key provisions and features of the proposed Child Protection Policy. The Minister of Social Welfare and SCPA Chairperson, Mr Muhammad Sajid Jokhio, emphasised the need for a child protection policy in Sindh and called for



concerted efforts for the safety and well-being of children. The event ended with a presentation by UNICEF and SCPA representatives on future steps, outlining the timeline and responsibilities of stakeholders for the implementation of the policy. The SHRC thanked all participants for their inputs, which will be incorporated into the final child protection policy for Sindh.

Urgent Call for Establishing Remand Homes

The SHRC has raised critical concerns about the lack of remand homes for minors facing charges, highlighting a significant gap in child protection. These facilities are intended to replace conventional detention with environments focused on care and rehabilitation.

THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE AUGUST 10, 2023

SHRC seeks updates on Remand Homes for juveniles

Sindh's jails house 385 juvenile offenders, 106 of them are under the age of 16

OUR CORRESPONDENT
KARACHI

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has cast a glaring spotlight on the troubling neglect of laws intended to protect the most vulnerable section of the society - children.

The commission has raised concerns, directing its inquiry towards the establishment of Remand Homes. These sanctuaries are sanctified spaces, providing shelter to minors who find themselves facing charges. It is a shift towards compassion, replacing the cold bars of confinement with an atmosphere of custody, care, protection,

observation, and treatment.

The SHRC's inquiries, dispatched to the Sindh Home Department, serve as a clarion call, underscoring the significance of upholding the Sindh Child Act of 1955. This law defines a child as someone under the age of 16, triggering a mandate to erect Remand Homes that stand as bastions of safety and guardianship.

In a formal letter to the home secretary, Iqbal Detho, Chairperson of the SHRC, invoked his commission's mantle as a guardian of laws and policies, entrusted with the task of safeguarding the sanctity of human rights across the province.

The letter seeks updates on the count of operational Remand Homes within Sindh. Behind-the-scenes whispers reveal a stark truth: since the enact-

ment of the legislation, a solitary Remand Home has taken root within Karachi's urban sprawl. This leaves a void in the system, with minor children, burdened by charges, relegated to jails instead of compassionate shelters.

The letter voiced concerns, weaving a narrative where 385 juvenile offenders occupy the fringes of justice. Among them, 106 are tender souls under the age of 16, while another 100 are under 18. They remain confined in Sindh's prisons. The clarion call resonates with an appeal for a recalibration of perspective, driven by the acute awareness of their tender age.

The letter champions a restorative approach, rallying for an environment that facilitates their reintegration into society.

In correspondence with the Sindh Home Department, SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho emphasised the need to comply with the Sindh Child Act of 1955, which mandates the creation of Remand Homes. Despite this, only one Remand Home exists in Karachi, leaving many juvenile offenders, including 106 children under 16 and 100 under 18, in prisons rather than in appropriate care settings. This objective is to uphold dignity, rehabilitation, and reforms in the child protection system for children in conflict with the law.

Establishment of Free Legal Aid Mechanism for Children in Conflict with the Law

The SHRC wrote a letter to the Honourable Registrar of the Sindh High Court on October 4, 2023, requesting the establishment of a free legal aid mechanism for children in conflict with the law under Section 3 of the Juvenile Justice System Act (JJSA) 2018. The SHRC highlighted the need for legal aid at state expense for any juvenile who is a victim of an offence.

The letter emphasised the importance of informing juveniles of their legal rights within twenty-four hours of being taken into custody, and ensuring that the lawyers appointed to provide this assistance have at least seven years of standing at the Bar. The SHRC also highlighted the current situation in which 385 juvenile offenders are held in Sindh prisons, stressing the need for rehabilitative treatment and quality legal aid to facilitate their reintegration into society. This initiative seeks to uphold the rights of juveniles under the JJSA 2018 and ensure fair treatment within the legal system.

Implementation of the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2013

The SHRC in collaboration with the Legal Aid Society (LAS) organised a consultative meeting on December 21, 2023 that focused on improving the implementation of the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2013. The objective was to develop department-specific roadmaps to ensure effective enforcement of the Act. Discussions centred on formulating comprehensive strategies to combat child marriages, with a focus on outlining short-term, immediate and long-term measures required for robust enforcement of the Act. The meeting recognised the critical importance of protecting the rights of children and highlighted the need for coordinated efforts between different departments to safeguard the welfare of the youngest citizens. Key government departments actively participated in the discussions.



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The Commission also wrote to the Secretary, Department of Local Government Department, Government of Sindh, highlighting gaps in the Rules of the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2013.

Provincial Stakeholders Dialogue on Child Trafficking and Bonded labour (October 3, 2023)

The SHRC in collaboration with the Sustainable Social Development Organisation (SSDO) organised a Provincial Stakeholders Dialogue on child trafficking and Bonded labour on October 3, 2023. The event brought together key stakeholders to address the critical issues of child trafficking and bonded labour in the province. The objective was to raise public awareness and develop a comprehensive strategy that focuses on prevention, intervention and rehabilitation by adhering to international protocols and effectively implementing laws to protect children. SHRC advocated for a harmonised legal framework for the protection of vulnerable children in Sindh.



Contributions to Strengthening the Policy and Legislative Framework for Children's Rights in Sindh

Under the powers of Section 4(v) of the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011, the SHRC has reviewed policies and legislation related to children's rights. The laws and policies examined include:

- The Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2013
- The Sindh Child Protection Authority Act, 2011
- The Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018
- The Sindh Child Protection Policy (Draft)

These reviews were part of the SHRC's efforts to ensure that the frameworks in Sindh effectively protect children's rights and reflect both national standards and international human rights obligations.

Research on Domestic Child Labour in Pakistan

The SHRC, in collaboration with the FES, has published a comprehensive study on domestic child labour in Pakistan. The study examines critical issues and identifies key factors contributing to the increase in domestic child labour, particularly poverty and lack of basic services. The study also highlights inconsistencies in provincial and national laws which create confusion among

stakeholders about their role in combating child domestic settings. The study points to a significant lack of public awareness about the impact of domestic child labour on children's health and development. This includes gaps in knowledge among parents, communities and authorities about the legal framework and social impact of child labour. The study concludes with comprehensive recommendations aimed at addressing the complexity of domestic child labour and improving legal and social measures to protect vulnerable children.

Improving Labour Rights in Sindh

Workers in Sindh, especially in the informal sector, face exploitative conditions, low wages and lack of social protection. Child and bonded labour, unsafe working environments and non-payment of minimum wages are widespread. In order to retain GSP+ status and improve labour rights, the Sindh government needs to implement key labour laws, including the Home-Based Workers Act 2019, the Sindh Women Agriculture Workers Act 2019 and the Sindh Prohibition of Child Labour Employment Act 2017.

The SHRC focused on the following key issues related to labour rights during the reporting year: Addressing Minimum Wage Inequities in Sindh

SHRC organised a provincial level consultation in Karachi on May 26, 2023 to address the inequality of minimum wages in Sindh. Against the backdrop of Pakistan's low ranking in global minimum wage standards, the event brought together policy makers, experts and trade union representatives to discuss fair and equitable wage policies that protect workers' rights and ensure a decent standard of living. The Commission demanded the implementation of minimum wage laws in Sindh and calls for fair remuneration for all workers.



The SHRC emphasised the need to bring the wage policy in line with international human rights standards, particularly Article 25(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The participants proposed recommendations for the Government of Sindh, Minimum Wage Board, Labour Department, and Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) to improve the wage governance and its enforcement. The SHRC also advocated for a stronger complaints management system to address violations and encouraged collaboration between civil society organisations, and government agencies to address labour rights violations.

On 24 November 2023, the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) sent a letter to the Additional Chief Secretary of the Local Government Department and the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) regarding the implementation of the increased minimum wages. The SHRC pointed out the persistent problem of sanitation workers and other employees not receiving fair wages despite existing regulations. In response, the SSWMB instructed contractors to comply with minimum wage laws and address concerns related to child labour as well.

Enforcement of the Sindh Home-Based Workers Act 2018



SHRC, in collaboration with UNDP Pakistan, organised a two-day consultation on August 9-10, 2023 to explore the opportunities and challenges associated with the Sindh Home-Based Workers Act 2018. The event brought together representatives from the government and non-government sectors to address the pressing issues faced by home-based workers.

During the sessions, participants highlighted key gaps in the implementation of the Sindh Home-Based Workers Act 2018 and urged for stronger enforcement mechanisms and greater awareness of the Act's provisions. The discussions also focused on the challenges faced by these workers, including the lack of legal protection, social security and fair wages. The dialogue highlighted the complexity of applying the law and identified areas where implementation falls short. It was recommended that targeted awareness campaigns be conducted to ensure that home-based workers are fully informed about their rights and the protection the law offers them.

On Nov 20 2023, the SHRC wrote a letter to the Secretary Labour Department for the Implementation of the Sindh Women Agriculture Workers Act 2019 and formulation of the Rules of Business.

Seminar on 'Adherence to International Labour Standards in Sindh' (9 May, 2024)

SHRC in collaboration with Sindh Labour Department and SZABIST, Karachi, organised an important panel discussion titled 'Adherence to International Labour Standards in Sindh' on May 9, 2024 at SZABIST University Auditorium, Karachi. This event served as a platform for stakeholders from different sectors to discuss important issues related to labour rights and international standards in Sindh province. From policy makers to representatives of labour unions, civil society and human rights institutions, the discourse was enriched by different perspectives.



Navigating Human and Labour Rights Compliance in Sindh

The SHRC has published an informative briefing paper titled “Pakistan's GSP+ Obligations”. This report provides an in-depth analysis of labour and human rights policies in the context of Pakistan's GSP+ obligations, with a focus on Sindh. The paper outlines the challenges and offers recommendations for the fulfilment of GSP+ requirements and assesses the Sindh government's compliance with these commitments. The findings aim to improve the recognition and protection of rights in Sindh and contribute to the broader GSP+ trade agreement. The briefing paper is intended to help policy makers and stakeholders close gaps and improving adherence to human and labour rights standards.

Need to Enforce the Sindh Occupational Safety and Health Act 2017 and Its 2019 Rules

In light of the tragic incident in which two sanitation workers died while cleaning a manhole outside a factory in Hyderabad's SITE area of Hyderabad, SHRC has urged the Secretary, of Labour and Human Resource Department to investigate the matter and stressed the urgent need to enforce the Sindh Occupational Safety and Health Act 2017 and its 2019 rules, which are designed to protect the safety and rights of workers. In a letter dated January 23, 2024, the SHRC had asked the Additional Chief Secretary of Local Government and the Managing Directors of Karachi Water and Sewerage Board and Water and Sanitation Agency to implement these laws and rules to prevent such incidents.

Strengthens Labour Rights Compliance in Sindh

The SHRC has played a key role in ensuring international compliance with labour, human rights and business standards in Pakistan. Working with the Federal and Provincial Treaty Implementation Cells, the SDGs Secretariat of the Provincial Assembly, and the Sindh Human Rights Taskforce, the SHRC has promoted alignment with global human rights treaties, including the International Labour organisation (ILO) conventions and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The Commission has provided technical inputs to Pakistan's periodic reports to UN treaty bodies, including on labour rights, gender equality and business practises, and supports the implementation of international frameworks such as the Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) in Sindh. Through these efforts, the SHRC has helped to protect labour rights, promote social justice and advance responsible business practises across the province.

Promoting gender equality and preventing violence against women in Sindh

Gender inequality in Sindh is characterised by discrimination against women, limited access to education, healthcare and employment, and widespread harmful practises such as child marriages and domestic violence. Despite legal reforms by the Sindh government to promote gender equality, there are still implementation issues that require stronger enforcement and action. Traditional social norms and cultural factors continue to drive these inequalities.

SHRC major engagements during the reporting year to overcome gender inequalities and improving women's rights in Sindh:

Establishment of Women and Children Police Stations (WPCSs) across Sindh

In response to the increasing incidents of sexual and gender-based violence, the SHRC advocated for the establishment of Women and Children Police Stations (WPCS) across Sindh. On November 21, 2023, the SHRC formally requested the Inspector General of Police of Sindh, Mr. Riffat Mukhtar, to



establish these specialised police stations in every district to improve access to justice and remove the barriers faced by victims when seeking help due to social stigma and discrimination.

In a letter dated March 26, 2024, the Additional Inspector General of Police for Gender Crime and Human Rights provided an update on implementation. The report confirmed the establishment of 40 WPCS units across Sindh. Additionally, the Home Department officially notified the establishment of seven WPCS in key districts, namely 3 in Karachi, 1 each in Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas, Shaheed Benazirabad and Larkana. The update also included plans for the construction of One Stop Protection Centres (OSPCs) in 24 districts, with a phased approach for the development and upgradation of seven existing WSPCs to further improve support services for victims of gender-based violence.

Awareness-raising seminar on “Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace” by SZABIST Karachi (Feb 21, 2024)

A seminar on “Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace” was held on February 21, 2024. At the event, SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho highlighted legal protections including Section 509 of the Pakistan Penal Code and the Sindh Domestic Violence Act 2013. He also spoke about working with the Women Development Department and other stakeholders to establish protection committees and appoint Women Protection Officers.



Awareness-raising Seminar on Gender-based Violence (June 2024)

SHRC in partnership with the Legal Aid Society organised a HeForShe awareness seminar at an ABD Law College in Sukkur. SHRC highlighted the various facets of gender-based violence and shed light on its different forms such as physical, verbal, psychological, sexual and socio-economic violence. It recommended engaging men and boys as HeForShe advocates to be active agents of change to transform social norms, behaviours and gender stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination and inequality.



Seminar on Gender Inclusion and Women's Economic Empowerment in Sindh (March 7, 2024)



SHRC in partnership with the Institute of Gender Studies, Bhitai Social Watch & Advocacy (BSWA) and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Pakistan, organised a seminar on gender inclusion and women's economic empowerment. The seminar addressed critical issues such as female education, women's socio-economic contributions, and prevention of sexual abuse and harassment and promoted dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Raising Awareness on Women Marital Rights



In May and June 2024, SHRC in collaboration with Musawi and local organisations conducted a series of awareness seminars in Lyari, Larkana, Khairpur and Sukkur. These seminars focused on educating women about their marital rights, including the importance of understanding and

correctly filling out the Nikahnama (marriage contract) and the legal procedures for marriage and its dissolution. Key speakers, including SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Barrister Khadija Bokhari, emphasised the grave consequences of child marriages and the important role of the nikahnama in protecting women's rights.

Furthermore, on May 29, 2024, SHRC in partnership with Musawi and Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University organised a seminar on women's marriage rights under Muslim law and combating gender-based violence (GBV) and discrimination.

As part of this initiative, SHRC launched a social media campaign to further raise awareness about the Nikahnama provisions and women's rights in marriage, and recommended legal reforms to improve protection against polygamy and illegal second marriages.

Policy Paper on Legislative Gap Analysis and Reforms for Muslim Family Laws in Sindh

SHRC, in collaboration with Musawi, has released a policy paper analysing the legal loopholes in Muslim family laws in Sindh. Developed over two years through extensive consultations with parliamentarians, government officials, members of the judiciary and experts, the paper addresses the existing gaps in legal provisions and practises related to women's rights in marriage.

The paper combines practical insights from communities, plaintiffs and local government officials with a thorough legal examination of Pakistan's constitutional framework and legislative advances in other provinces. It provides an evidence-based analysis and actionable recommendations aimed at reforming Muslim family laws in Sindh. The recommendations aim to improve protection for marginalised groups, particularly women and children, and to improve the implementation and enforcement of marriage laws in the province.

Promoting and Protecting Transgender Rights in Sindh

Transgender people in Sindh face major challenges despite positive steps such as legal recognition and anti-discrimination measures. Widespread social stigmatisation leads to marginalisation, limiting access to education, employment, housing and legal identity. Transgender people are often exposed to violence, harassment and inadequate healthcare.

SHRC key engagements for enhancing legal and social safeguards for transgender rights:

Protection of Transgender Persons Rights

SHRC received a complaint from Shahzadi Rai on March 31, 2023, regarding the alleged illegal detention and mistreatment of Khwaja Sira community members by Sindh Police, alongside a broader operation targeting professional beggars in Karachi, which included children and transgender persons. Chairperson SHRC Iqbal Ahmed Detho took immediate action by writing a letter to the Inspector General of Sindh Police, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Memon. In the letter, SHRC highlighted the intersectional vulnerabilities faced by the Khwaja Sira community and emphasised that these vulnerabilities are exacerbated in detention.

The Commission advocated for a restorative justice approach, urging the cessation of punitive measures against marginalised groups and calling for the protection of their rights. SHRC requested an update on the case, called for policies to prevent arbitrary arrests, and recommended reviewing and reinforcing legal safeguards to protect human rights. In response, the IGP Sindh Office issued directives to all Senior Superintendents of Police (SSPs) to ensure that no transgender individuals are detained or arrested solely on the grounds of begging, reinforcing the commitment to protect the rights of marginalised communities in Sindh.

Technical Review on the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) (Amendment) Bill 2023

In response to the request for comments on the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) (Amendment) Bill 2023, the SHRC has provided its technical input. The proposed amendment aims to replace the term "Transgender Persons" with "Intersex Persons," remove the definition of transgender persons, and replace the concept of self-perceived identity with a Medical Board.

UNODC Report on Transgenders's Access to Justice

UNODC released a comprehensive report on the Transgenders's Access to Justice (Technical Assistance Needs Assessment). The report made a reference to SHRC strategic plan in the document, and highlighted Strategic Pillar 3 which is applicable for transgender rights. The report states that SHRC explicitly focuses on conducting research on legislative possibilities for transgender rights.

Advocacy for the Issuance of CNICs to Transgender Persons

Transgender individuals in Sindh have faced significant barriers in obtaining Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs), which are important for accessing essential services and exercising their rights. In response to these challenges, the Commission addressed a letter to the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) in October. The letter raised concerns about discriminatory notifications and delays in updating the system for issuing CNICs to transgender persons, particularly in Hyderabad and Karachi.

SHRC's intervention prompted NADRA to take corrective measures. The headquarters issued a directive to their sub-offices, rescinding the problematic notification and reiterating the need to facilitate the issuance of CNICs to every transgender individual in accordance with the law. This action marked a positive step towards ensuring that transgender persons can access their rights and services without discrimination.

Empowering Sindh's Transgender Community: Let Identity Be Their Right, Not a Struggle

SHRC convened a special meeting to address the challenges faced by the transgender community in Sindh. Chaired by SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho, the session aimed to identify systemic issues and advocate for equitable access to rights and opportunities for transgender persons. The session highlighted the need for continued efforts to empower the transgender community, ensuring their rights are respected and upheld in all aspects of life.

SHRC pointed out the importance of recognising the rights of the transgender community, advocating for their equality under the law. International frameworks such as the Yogyakarta Principles and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights were highlighted as tools to advance these rights, along with the principles of non-discrimination and equality enshrined in the Transgender Person's Protection of Rights Act 2018 and its subsequent 2020 Rules.

Ehtasham Shahid, Director General of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) affirmed the fundamental right to legal identity for all individuals, including transgender persons. He reiterated NADRA's commitment to ensuring that transgender individuals can obtain identification documents without discrimination.

Participants from the Social Welfare Department in Sukkur and Hyderabad, respectively, shared updates on initiatives supporting the transgender community. These initiatives include stipend disbursements and enrollment figures, reflecting a broader effort to integrate transgender persons into social welfare programmes.

Addressing Transgender Community Issues in Sukkur and Larkana

In May 2024, Muhammad Aslam Shaikh, Member Judicial-II of the Sindh Human Rights Commission, visited Larkana and Sukkur to meet with representatives of the transgender community and government officials. During these meetings, critical challenges faced by transgender individuals were discussed, including hardships in obtaining CNICs due to NADRA's stringent requirements, exclusion from government employment despite job quotas, discrimination in education, and barriers to democratic participation. Additionally, issues like financial exclusion, lack of dedicated services and shelters, and the absence of comprehensive data on the transgender community were highlighted. The SHRC is actively working to bring these concerns to the attention of relevant authorities for resolution.

Justice and Equality for Sindh's Religious Minorities

Sindh is home to diverse religious and ethnic minorities such as Hindus, Christians and Sikhs, who often face discrimination, forced conversion and violence. The Sindh government has introduced laws such as the Sindh Protection of Communal Properties of Minorities Act, 2013, and the Sindh Hindu Marriage (Amendment) Act, 2018, to protect the rights of minorities. However, further reforms of personal laws and stronger enforcement of anti-hate and anti-extremism laws are needed.

Key engagements of SHRC were to address minorities rights during the reporting year:

Provincial Dialogue on “The Future of District Peace Committees (DPCs) in Sindh” (Oct 05, 2023)



On October 5, 2023, SHRC, in collaboration with the Legal Aid Society (LAS) and the Auqaf, Religious Affairs, Zakat & Ushr Department, organised a provincial dialogue on the future of District Peace Committees (DPCs) in Sindh. The event aimed to address challenges faced by religiously marginalised communities and promote a sustainable legal framework at the grassroots level. Keynote speakers, including Barrister Muhammad Omer Soomro and SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho, stressed the need for legislative support, improved coordination, and increased representation within DPCs. The dialogue, informed by LAS's research, advocated for formal institutionalisation and a legal foundation for DPCs. Notable participants, including Justice (R) Arif Hussain Khilji, emphasised interfaith harmony and the role of DPCs in preventing religious violence. The event concluded with a call for legislative amendments, capacity-building, and public awareness to enhance the effectiveness of DPCs and promote community peace.

Awareness Seminars on Sindh Hindu Marriage Act (August, 2023)



SHRC in collaboration with the local authorities and minority community representatives, organised seminars in Sanghar and Tando Allahyar in August 2023 to address issues faced by the Hindu and Christian communities. These seminars, led by Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ishaq, focused on improving marriage registration processes for Hindus and addressing concerns related to Christian graveyards. Recommendations included establishing registration procedures for Pandits and creating a District Minority Liaison Committee.

Addressing Implementation Gaps in Sindh Hindus Marriage Act 2018

The Commission wrote to the Secretary of the Local Government Department, Government of Sindh, pointing out implementation gaps in the Sindh Hindus Marriage Registration (Amendment) Act, 2018. Subsequently, the Chairperson of SHRC met with Mr Akhlaque Khan, the Director of the Local Government Department and focal point on the matter. In response to the SHRC's advocacy for the lack of implementation of the Sindh Hindu Marriage Act 2018, the Sindh Local Government Department has taken steps to instruct its teams to ensure the implementation of the Act both in letter and spirit.

Provincial Conference on Minority Rights (January 23, 2024)



The SHRC on January 23, 2024 in collaboration with the Department of Minorities Affairs Sindh and the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, organised a Provincial Conference on Minority Rights. The conference was attended by Chief Minister Sindh, Justice (R) Maqbool Baqar, and other key stakeholders. SHRC Chairperson, Iqbal Ahmed Detho, highlighted the progress in registering

Pandits and Mahrajs and emphasised the importance of implementing constitutional and legal frameworks for the protection of minority rights. He also discussed SHRC's ongoing efforts to address forced conversions and the development of new legislative bills aimed at safeguarding minority communities.

Chief Minister Sindh, Justice Maqbool Baqar, reinforced the importance of unity and equal treatment for all Pakistanis, emphasising the need to enforce the 5% employment quota for minorities to ensure equal opportunities. The conference stressed that achieving true equality requires not only legislative efforts but also a change in societal mindsets.

From Exclusion to Inclusion – Advancing Minority Rights in Sindh

The SHRC has published a report on advancing the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of minorities in Sindh. This report represents the culmination of a year-long project in collaboration with Community World Service Asia. The report identifies the challenges faced by minorities and proposes solutions to bridge the gap between policy and practice.

Key findings include the need for effective implementation of the Sindh Hindus Marriage (Amendment) Act, 2018. The report also highlights the importance of enforcing a 5% job quota for minority communities, and compliance with the Supreme Court judgement dated June 14, 2014. The findings and recommendations call for strategic frameworks, awareness initiatives, and policy interventions, urging all stakeholders to actively support and protect minority rights in Sindh.

Building Climate Resilience to Protect Sindh's Population

Sindh is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, with rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and extreme weather events causing significant socio-economic challenges. These include water scarcity, agricultural losses, community displacement, and health risks. The 2022 floods affected 12 million people, destroying over 20,600 schools and 4.4 million acres of farmland. By the end of 2022, 4 million children were still exposed to contaminated floodwaters, leading to ongoing health issues. Coastal areas also face threats from rising sea levels and erosion.

Key SHRC efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change and strengthen post-flood recovery efforts:

People's Assembly on Climate Change and Human Rights in Sindh



On May 4, 2023, a People's Assembly titled "The Impact of Climate Change on Human Rights in Sindh" was held in District Khairpur. The assembly was presided over by Muhammad Aslam Shaikh, Member Judicial-II of the SHRC. The event saw active participation from social activists, business leaders, media personnel, teachers, and numerous flood-affected individuals. Discussions centred

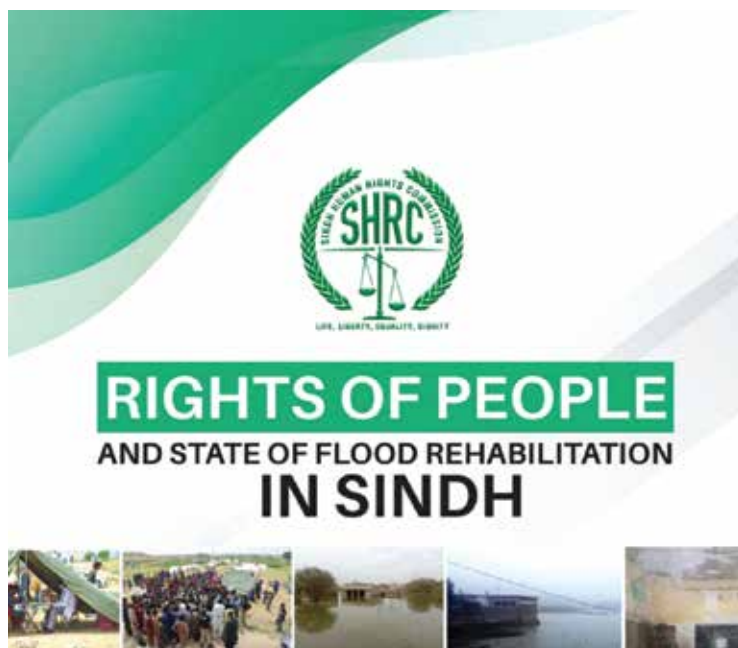
on the significant human rights implications of climate change, particularly focusing on how recent floods have intensified the hardships faced by local communities. Key topics included the adverse effects of climate-induced flooding on human rights, the necessity for enhanced local responses to climate emergencies, and strategies for protecting vulnerable populations. The assembly emphasised the urgent need for both immediate action and long-term strategies to address the intersection of climate change and human rights, highlighting a collective commitment to supporting affected communities and advocating for sustainable solutions.

Rights of People and State of Flood Rehabilitation in Sindh

The SHRC published a report titled *"Rights of People and State of Flood Rehabilitation in Sindh."* This comprehensive analysis delves into the aftermath of the catastrophic 2022 floods that ravaged Sindh, leaving a profound impact on public infrastructure and socio-economic systems, particularly in rural and agro-pastoral communities.

The report takes a close look at the response and rehabilitation efforts by government bodies, NGOs, and philanthropic organisations. It reveals significant delays and violations of fundamental rights, exposing the deep challenges faced by flood-affected communities. Through stories from survivors in Khairpur, Dadu, and Mirpurkhas,

the report identifies critical issues like politically driven relief distribution, lack of adequate support for women, and continued pollution of drinking water. The report makes important recommendations, calling for better flood prevention and management plans that focus on local-level planning and independent reviews of relief efforts.



SHRC's Advocacy for Flood Rehabilitation Spurs Government Initiatives

In response to the 2022 floods report released by the Commission, the findings were widely published in leading newspapers such as Dawn, The News, Tribune, etc., which prompted the Government of Sindh's cabinet to instruct key departments involved in flood response—including Irrigation, Education, Health, Women Development, Social Welfare, and Public Health Engineering Departments, as well as Deputy Commissioners/ Chairman of DDMA's in all districts, PPHI, and the Sindh Flood Emergency Housing Reconstruction Project—to develop a comprehensive contingency plan for the 2024 monsoon season. Consequently, the Irrigation Department began collaborating with Chief Engineers and the Project Director of the Sindh Flood Emergency Rehabilitation Project to assess and integrate the report's insights, ensuring that communities are better prepared and protected.

Enhancing Accessibility and Equity for Persons with Disabilities

In Sindh, persons with disabilities (PWDs) face numerous obstacles despite the Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018. Key challenges include inadequate physical infrastructure, limited educational opportunities, insufficient job access, and inadequate healthcare and rehabilitation services. Stigma and discrimination further hinder social inclusion, and the 5% quota for PWDs in various entities is poorly enforced.

SHRC undertook following initiatives during the reporting year:

Issuance of Driving Licence to a Person with One Functional Eye: A Case Study

SHRC received a petition from Mr. Anjum Ahmed regarding his son, Umair Anjum, who had lost vision in his left eye due to a car accident in 2004. Despite his impairment, Umair, aged 38, held a valid driving licence issued by the Driving Licensing Branch, Karachi, before the accident. After spending nearly a decade in London for medical treatment and education, where he also obtained a British driving licence, Umair returned to Pakistan and applied for the renewal of his local driving licence. However, his application was denied under the existing rules of the Motor Vehicle Ordinance (MVO) 1965, which prohibit issuing a driving licence to individuals with vision in only one eye.

In response to this denial, SHRC issued a notice to the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police, Traffic and Licensing, Karachi, requesting para-wise comments on the case. The response received on October 26, 2023, cited the Motor Vehicle Ordinance (MVO) 1965, specifically clause 4 of the second schedule, which restricts the issuance of a driving licence to persons who cannot distinguish a series of letters and figures from a specified distance, effectively barring individuals with vision in only one eye.

On November 28, 2023, Mr. Anjum Ahmed provided a sworn statement arguing that his son was fit to drive, supported by a medical examination conducted by Dr. Mehreen Suhail, an eye specialist. Dr. Suhail had previously sent a letter to the DIG Traffic Police Karachi in 2007, questioning the rule that disqualifies individuals with 6/6 vision in one eye from obtaining a driving licence. According to Mr. Anjum, Umair was denied the renewal of his licence without any proper medical assessment or referral to an eye specialist, which he argued was a violation of fundamental human rights.

Upon reviewing the case, the SHRC determined that the current rule under the MVO 1965 does indeed restrict the issuance of a driving licence to individuals who cannot meet certain visual acuity standards. However, Dr. Suhail's medical opinion confirmed that Umair Anjum, who has 6/6 vision in his functional eye, should be considered fit to drive. The SHRC concluded that the refusal to renew Umair's driving licence without a proper medical assessment violated his fundamental rights.

The SHRC recommended that before refusing or renewing a driving licence for a person with a disability but with good vision in one eye, the individual should be referred to a medical officer or eye specialist for a comprehensive fitness assessment. This recommendation aligns with Section 7 of the West Pakistan Motor Vehicle Ordinance, 1965, and the rules of 1969, which require medical verification.

Following the SHRC's intervention, Umair Anjum was granted a driving licence, reaffirming his right to fair and equal treatment under the law.

Advocacy for Inclusive Elections

The SHRC advocated for accessible and inclusive elections in Sindh with the Election Commission of Pakistan, focusing on the participation of persons with disabilities (PWDs), senior citizens, pregnant women, and other marginalised groups. The SHRC called upon the Election Commission of Pakistan to address these accessibility challenges and ensure a fair voting experience for all. Recommendations included installing ramps at polling stations, providing necessary amenities, and raising awareness about the voting process.

Engagement with National Disability Support programme

On January 10, 2024, SHRC Chairman Iqbal Ahmed Detho met with Ali Anser Sindhu, Chairman of the National Disability Support programme (NDSP), in Khairpur. During the meeting, Mr. Detho underscored the Commission's commitment to ending human rights violations against persons with disabilities (PWDs) and promised to support their needs fully. He discussed the importance of providing necessary facilities, eliminating injustices, and ensuring that the rights of PWDs are protected across Sindh. Mr. Sindhu highlighted several pressing issues faced by the disabled community, including the need for greater advocacy and support to improve their quality of life. The meeting reinforced a collaborative approach between SHRC and NDSP to address these challenges effectively.



Awareness-raising and Advocacy Initiatives

On April 8, 2023, SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho inaugurated the Autism Awareness and Support Services (AAS) programme, emphasising the need for greater autism awareness and reaffirming the Commission's commitment to supporting marginalised communities. Later, on October 9, 2023, SHRC in collaboration with Pakistan Down Syndrome Association (PDSA) and CBM Islamabad organised a Down Syndrome Awareness event. During this event, the Chairperson highlighted the potential and capabilities of individuals with Down syndrome and advocated for their inclusion in society. Also, SHRC and MUSAWI conducted an awareness event on June 3, 2024 at APHA School for Persons with Disabilities in Karachi.



This event educated women, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds, about their legal rights and the negative consequences of child marriage and ensured that people with disabilities were included and informed.

Promoting Youth Rights for a Better Future

The youth in Sindh, aged 15-29, face challenges, including high unemployment, insecure working conditions and social problems that affect their health, education and safety. Issues such as early marriage and violence against women have a particular impact on youth, while the rights of minorities, persons with disabilities and vulnerable youth are often overlooked. To promote resilience and positive development, the Sindh Youth Policy 2018 emphasises the importance of activism, volunteering, sports and cultural engagement and must be enforced

Major engagements of SHRC during the reporting year:

Promoting Human Rights Awareness Among the Youth

SHRC Chairperson and Member SHRC Mr. Ayoub Khoso visited Indus School Larkana to engage with students on the importance of human rights, inclusion, and civic responsibility. During their interaction, Chairperson emphasised the need to integrate human rights education into mainstream primary, secondary, and higher secondary curricula. He stressed that understanding human rights and the values of inclusion is essential for fostering a more just and equitable society. The discussion underscored the importance of educating the younger generation on these critical topics to cultivate a more informed and conscientious citizenry.

Visit to Virtual University of Pakistan, Mithi campus

On May 20, 2023, Chairperson SHRC Iqbal Ahmad Detho and the team visited the Virtual University of Pakistan, Mithi Campus, to address challenges faced by students during online classes. They identified key issues, such as a shortage of computers and slow internet speed, which hindered the quality of education. SHRC committed to reaching out to relevant institutions to resolve these problems, including improving internet speed. This proactive engagement highlights SHRC's dedication to promoting equal access to education and enhancing the learning environment for all students.



Collaborations with Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur



SHRC has actively engaged with Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, in multiple initiatives to promote youth rights and gender empowerment. On August 16, 2023, SHRC Chairperson, Iqbal

Ahmed Detho, participated as a distinguished guest in a seminar on the "Inclusion of Youth in Local Governance System through Effective Participation and Representation." organised by Bhattai Social Watch & Advocacy (BSWA) in collaboration with the university, the seminar highlighted the importance of youth involvement in local governance, with the Chairperson sharing insights from the Sindh Youth Policy 2018. The event gathered experts and local leaders to discuss ways to enhance youth participation and representation in governance for better service delivery.

On March 7, 2024, SHRC collaborated with the Institute of Gender Studies, BSWA, and FES, Pakistan, to host a seminar at Shah Abdul Latif University on "Gender Inclusion and Women's Economic Empowerment." Held in connection with International Women's Day, the seminar addressed challenges related to gender equality, focusing on women's economic participation, education, and the prevention of abuse and harassment.

In another initiative at the same university, SHRC, together with Musawi and BSWA, organised an awareness session to educate young women about their marriage rights, particularly the importance of properly understanding and filling out the Nikkahnama (marriage contract). The event, aimed at empowering women through legal education, included a keynote presentation by Barrister Khadija Bokhari, Director of Musawi, and translation services to ensure inclusivity.

Support the implementation of the Sindh Youth Policy 2018

SHRC also collaborated with the Sindh Sports and Youth Affairs Department and CSSP to advance the implementation of the Sindh Youth Policy 2018. On April 17, 2023, Chairperson SHRC met with the Secretary of the Sports and Youth Department and other partners to discuss initiatives for youth development, including human rights education and linking youth with vocational and technical training programmes. On January 19, 2024, a meeting at the SHRC focused on assessing the policy's progress, identifying challenges, and strategizing for more effective implementation.

Importance of Human Rights and Gender Equality



At the LEAD Convention 2023 organised by SZABIST, attended by university students and faculty, SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho delivered a keynote address emphasising the global shift from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He highlighted the importance of human rights, peace, and development in achieving a better world, calling for collective action to uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Barrister Rida Tahir, an SHRC legal consultant, spoke on the challenges women, youth, children, and transgender persons face in accessing justice in Pakistan. She underscored the need for continued reform and advocacy for gender equality, emphasising the importance of ongoing efforts to address these critical issues.

Provincial Youth Consultation



On December 5, 2023, Chairperson SHRC attended a Provincial Youth Consultation hosted by CSSP. The consultation aimed to integrate low-income youth into policy dialogues and action plans at the provincial level. SHRC's contributions were vital in shaping inclusive and impactful policies that amplify the voices of marginalised youth.

SHRC participation in university seminars and events

The SHRC promoted human rights education and awareness through seminars and events at universities such as SZABIST Karachi, IBA Sukkur, Aga Khan University, Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University, Iqra University etc. These initiatives facilitated vital discussions on topics like labour rights, women's rights, youth rights, human rights, international legal frameworks, and cultural diversity, while also offering students opportunities to engage in research and participate in these important dialogues.



Compliance of International Treaties on Human Rights in Sindh

**We will never have true civilization
until we have learned to recognize
the rights of others.**

Compliance of International Treaties on Human Rights in Sindh

Strategic Pillar 3 of the SHRC Strategic Plan 2023-27 focuses on studying and monitoring treaties and international instruments related to human rights, reviewing their compliance and conducting research in the field of human rights. SHRC's work is deeply rooted in the principles of international human rights, using these global standards as a guiding framework to ensure that the province aligns with and upholds international human rights treaties and standards.

Promoting Compliance with International Treaties through Coordination

The SHRC collaborates closely with Federal and Provincial Treaty Implementation Cells, the SDGs Secretariat of the Provincial Assembly, and the Sindh Human Rights Task force to ensure coherence and compliance with international human rights obligations. This collaboration involves reviewing and preparing periodic reports for UN core treaties and ILO Conventions, monitoring progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and overseeing the implementation of the Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) in Sindh.



In Sindh, the TIC is hosted by the provincial Human Rights Department, with SHRC member Zulfiqar Shah, an expert on GSP+ mechanisms, providing essential technical support. This collaboration also extends to reviewing the progress of the international human rights regime, including advancements in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within Sindh.

The Commission also coordinates with the Federal Ministry of Human Rights to ensure the effective implementation of the National Action Plan on Human Rights and the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. These efforts are facilitated through the Provincial TIC and the National Reporting and Follow-Up Mechanism (NMRF) for international treaties.

Technical Input for Pakistan's 6th Periodic Report on CEDAW

The SHRC contributed to Pakistan's 6th periodic report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The SHRC provided detailed input, sharing the

province's progress in enacting laws that promote women's rights, including legislation addressing domestic violence, child marriage, and workplace harassment. Highlighting Pakistan's constitutional commitment to equality and non-discrimination, the SHRC shared data on gender-based violence and discrimination cases it has handled since 2018. The commission also outlined its initiatives in training police and judicial officers, raising public awareness about CEDAW, and ensuring access to legal aid for women. The SHRC noted its work in implementing anti-trafficking measures and protecting minority women and girls, reflecting its dedication to advancing women's rights and promoting compliance with CEDAW throughout Sindh.

Technical Input to Pakistan's Second Periodic Report on ICCPR on the Legal Framework on the Abortion Laws in Sindh Province and Pakistan

The SHRC provided technical input for Pakistan's second periodic report on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The SHRC shared the legal framework governing abortion laws in Pakistan, focusing on the conditions under which abortion is permitted, particularly when necessary to save a woman's life or provide essential treatment.

The Commission highlighted key legislative provisions in the Pakistan Penal Code and the Sindh Reproductive Healthcare Rights Act, 2019, along with its 2022 amendment. The commission recommended a broader interpretation and application of these laws to better protect women's health and rights, referencing relevant constitutional articles and court rulings, and the need for regular capacity-building training for healthcare providers to ensure better awareness and implementation of these legal provisions.

SHRC's Contributions to National and Sindh Gender Data Portals

SHRC provided data on gender-based violence and discrimination for the National Gender Data Portal (NGDP) and Sindh Gender Data Portal (SGDP). This includes statistics on cases of violence against women, the number of pending cases, and the outcomes of prosecutions from 2019 to 2022. SHRC investigated and prosecuted cases of violence and gender discrimination against women, with 136 cases in 2019-20, 146 cases in 2020-21, and 224 cases in 2021-22. District-wise data reveal concentrated efforts in areas such as Karachi, Dadu, and Ghotki. The Commission designated a focal person from SHRC to coordinate these efforts, ensuring data collection and reporting to support gender-related policy formulation and implementation.

Consultation Session with the Provincial Task Force Sindh on the Implementation of Human Rights Strategies (Aug 22, 2023)

SHRC participated in a "Consultation Session with the Provincial Task force Sindh on the Implementation of Human Rights Strategies," on August 22, 2023, organised by the Ministry of Human Rights. During the session, the Chairperson highlighted the strategic pillars guiding the SHRC's mission, emphasising the importance of collaboration between federal and provincial human rights institutions. The SHRC emphasised the importance of collective efforts to secure a brighter and safer future for human rights in the region.



Business and Human Rights (B+HR) - Phase 2 Project Launch (July 20, 2023)



SHRC Member SHRC, Mr. Zulfiqar Shah, attended the UNDP-led conference, where he highlighted the Commission's mandate under the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Amendment Act of 2023, which now includes Business and Human Rights. He expressed SHRC's support for UNDP's project on this important issue, and further engagement on the matter.

Consultative Workshop on Human Rights Due Diligence (Sep 13-14, 2023)

SHRC participated in a workshop organised by UNDP and the Ministry of Human Rights, attended by Zulfiqar Shah and Adnan Ali, focusing on Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) in Pakistan. The workshop involved discussions with public entities, civil society, and business sectors on HRDD regulation and its challenges.



Participation in the Provincial Steering Committee on Business and Human Rights



SHRC actively attended and co-chair meetings of the Provincial Steering Committee on Business and Human Rights. The Committee was notified on December 18, 2023, by the Chief Secretary's office, and is tasked with monitoring the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) in Sindh. In the first meeting held on Jan 18, 2024, the SHRC Chairperson highlighted the pertinent issues of Sindh, including the need for establishing mechanisms to address human rights violations in business practices and the importance of ensuring that the NAP's objectives are effectively met to promote human rights and social justice in the province. IN the Second meeting held on June 7, 2024

SHARC shared the Commission's briefing paper on Pakistan's GSP+ obligations. Also, SHRC recommended to focus its efforts to retain GSP+ status beyond 2027, withdrawing reservations, ensuring compliance reporting and implementation of treaty bodies' recommendations, strengthening EU compliance monitoring with the involvement of NHRIs and civil society, and debates at the assembly regarding ratification, reservations, and compliance of international conventions.

Participation in a Consultative Session on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) +30 Report

SHRC attended the Consultative Session on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) +30 Report in April 2024. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), adopted in 1995, remains an important roadmap for achieving gender equality worldwide. It addresses 12 critical areas, including women's education, health, economic empowerment, and freedom from violence. The session focused on critically evaluating progress made towards achieving gender equality in Pakistan, guided by the landmark BPFA. SHRC urged government departments to report comprehensively on their efforts to achieve gender equality.



Participation in a Session on Dissemination of Pakistan's 4th Cycle Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Decision and Recommendations (May 2, 2024)



SHRC attended a Consultative Session on Dissemination of Pakistan's 4th Cycle Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Decision and Recommendations on May 2, 2024. The meeting discussed an introduction to UPR, the UPR reporting cycle, an overview of Pakistan's 4th UPR submitted in 2022, the importance of reporting for Pakistan, group discussions, and receiving feedback on international best practices and reporting formats for UPR.

Participation in 9th and 10th Meetings of Treaty Implementation Cell

SHRC participated in the nine and tenth Treaty Implementation Cell meetings held in Jan and June 2024 respectively. The ninth meeting focused on Pakistan's EU GSP+ status and tenth meeting

focused on the List of Issues, adopted by the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights regarding Pakistan's Second Periodic Report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) SHRC shared briefing paper titled "Pakistan's GSP+ Obligations: Navigating Human & Labour Rights Compliance in Sindh," and presented the SHRC report on ICESCR, offering invaluable perspectives for advancing socio-economic rights in Pakistan.

Inter-Provincial Consultation on Pakistan's Second Periodic Report on ICESCR



SHRC participated in the Inter-Provincial Consultation on Pakistan's Second Periodic Report on ICESCR, hosted by the Ministry of Human Rights and UNDP Pakistan in June 2023. Chairperson SHRC, highlighted the progress SHRC has made in advancing social, cultural, and economic rights. SHRC stressed the importance of strengthening the capacity and competence of human capital and called for greater collaboration among various departments, and pointed out the critical need for accurate qualitative and quantitative data to report our work.



Institutional Strengthening of the Sindh Human Rights Commission

**It is not a choice between violence and
nonviolence, it is a choice between
nonviolence and nonexistence.**

Institutional Strengthening of the SHRC

The fifth pillar of the SHRC Strategic Plan 2023-27 aims to strengthen the Commission itself by improving governance structures, resources and expertise. This includes building internal systems, developing professional capacity and fostering strategic partnerships to ensure autonomy, transparency and accountability.

Over the past year, SHRC has significantly bolstered its institutional capacity, enhancing its role as an effective, autonomous, and credible human rights organisation in Sindh. This progress reflects the Commission's commitment to improving its impact and efficiency in addressing human rights issues across the region.

Partnerships and Collaborations for Advancing Human Rights in Sindh

An important aspect of the SHRC's institutional strengthening has been the development of robust partnerships and collaborative efforts with a diverse range of stakeholders, including government agencies, the UN, NGOs/INGOs, NHRIs, and academic institutions. These collaborations are vital because human rights protection and promotion cannot be the responsibility of a single organisation alone. Addressing complex human rights challenges requires a collective approach, leveraging the strengths and expertise of multiple entities.

Through these strategic partnerships, the SHRC has enhanced its outreach, facilitated knowledge sharing, and increased the effectiveness of its initiatives. By working with various partners, the SHRC is able to pool resources, share best practices, and coordinate efforts to create a more comprehensive and impactful human rights framework in Sindh. This collaborative approach ensures that human rights issues are addressed more holistically and effectively, benefiting from the combined expertise and resources of all involved.

Key work undertaken by the Commission were:

MoUs/Agreements

Advocating for Mental Health: MOU with Sindh Mental Health Authority





On May 24, 2023, the SHRC signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA) to enhance cooperation and coordination in supporting mentally ill individuals. This strategic alliance aims to ensure their rights and inclusion in all aspects of society. The agreement includes plans to address existing gaps by establishing psychological wards in government hospitals, particularly in rural areas. Additionally, the partnership seeks to raise awareness and advocate for mental health through impactful campaigns and initiatives.

MoU Signed with LAS to Empower the Marginalised

The SHRC and the Legal Aid Society (LAS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on July 31, 2023, to promote legal awareness and provide free legal aid to vulnerable communities in Sindh. This partnership, officiated by SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Justice (R) Arif H. Khilji, Chief Legal Advisor of LAS, marks a significant step forward in supporting marginalised groups and ensuring their access to justice.



Labour Rights Advocacy: Collaboration for Pakistan Labour Academy 2024

The SHRC in partnership with the Labour and Human Resources Department of Sindh and FES Pakistan, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to launch the Pakistan Labour Academy (PLA) 2024. This initiative aims to enhance industrial relations, workers' rights, and social justice in Sindh. The partnership focuses on strengthening government infrastructure for labour training programmes promoting decent work environments and upholding international labour standards.



MoU Signed with Musawi to strengthen Rule of Law and Human Rights

The SHRC signed a MoU with the Musawi in Feb 2024 to collaborate on strengthening rule of law and human rights in Sindh, focusing on promotion and protection of women's marriage rights in Sindh.

MoU signed with Sustainable Social Development organisation (SSDO)



The SHRC signed MoU with the SSDO in May 2024 to jointly work on the combating trafficking in persons, bonded labour & other human rights issues in the province of Sindh through capacity building, advocacy, research & policy making.

Agreement with Obun2 addressing bonded Labour and Child Domestic labour in Sindh



The Agreement signed with Obun2 in June 2024 establishes a collaborative partnership focused on enhancing advocacy efforts around bonded labour and child labour in Sindh through policy, legislative reforms, and improved implementation.

Networking with Government Agencies

Meeting with Sindh Police: Training of Trainers of Police Academy Instructors (Oct 06, 2023)



The SHRC Chairperson met with Faizullah Korejo, DIG (Training) of the Sindh Police, and his team at the Central Police Office in Karachi. They discussed organising Training of Trainers (ToTs) for law instructors at Police Academies and Training centres. The training will focus on special and general laws related to vulnerable groups, including women, children, religious minorities, and transgender communities. It will also cover recent amendments to the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016 in 2023 and the Trafficking in Persons Act 2018, which grant the police new investigative powers.

Meeting with Directorate of Probation Officials (Oct 13, 2023)

On October 13, 2023, the SHRC hosted representatives from the Directorate of Reclamation and Probation at its office. The delegation included Manzoor Hussain, Director of Probation, and Suhail Khan, Deputy Director. The meeting provided SHRC staff with valuable insights into the Directorate's mandate, roles, and responsibilities, enhancing collaboration in promoting justice and human rights in Sindh.



Meeting with Regional Election Commissioner Sukkur (Dec 19, 2023)

The SHRC convened a meeting with the Regional Election Commissioner Sukkur to ensure the democratic rights and safeguard human rights during the upcoming General Elections in 2024. The Chairperson of SHRC, emphasised the importance of fair and transparent elections in 2024, and called for equitable representation, especially for women and minorities. M. Aslam Shaikh, Member Judicial-II (SHRC) focused on ensuring inclusive arrangements at polling stations. Syed Waseem Ahmed Jafferri, Regional Election Commissioner, assured the SHRC of proactive steps by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to address concerns, reinforcing the commitment to a democratic and inclusive electoral process.



Meeting with Sindh Prisons & Correction Service

The SHRC hosted a meeting with Syed Munawwar Ali Shah, Inspector General of Sindh Prisons and Correction Service, and his team to discuss prison reforms and human rights advocacy. The session highlighted SHRC's initiatives in correctional facilities, with a focus on promoting human rights and rehabilitation.



Meeting with Director/ Additional Secretary- Women Development Department (March 28, 2024)

SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho Chairperson on March 28, 2024 held a meeting with Hafeez-ur-Rahman, Director / Additional Secretary Women Development Department Sindh regarding the situation of Darul Amans (DUAs) in Sindh and particularly the taking over of newly constructed buildings in Mirpurkhas and Jacobabad. Furthermore it was also agreed to work on reconstitution of Dural-Aman Advisory Committees in existing DUAs in Sindh.



Provincial Steering Committee Meeting for Legal Aid and Assistance

The Provincial Steering Committee for Legal Aid and Assistance convened at SHRC on March 29, 2023. The meeting, co-chaired by Secretary Human Rights Department, Jawed Sibghatullah Mahar and SHRC, discussed efficient disbursement and utilisation of funds for legal aid to the needy.



Global Engagement

Meeting with Accord International (Oct 20, 2023)

Ms. Kristine Drew, Head of Workplace programmes at Accord International, visited SHRC to strengthen the partnership in human rights advocacy. The meeting, attended by SHRC members, focused on SHRC's functions and mandate, fostering mutual understanding and reinforcing the commitment to advancing human rights in the region.



Meeting with Norwegian Church Aid (Dec 01, 2023)

SHRC welcomed Ms. Anne Masterson, Country Director of Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), to discuss potential collaborations. The meeting emphasised empowering youth and addressing issues related to Christian personal laws, gender-based violence, and interfaith harmony, aiming for transformative change.

Meeting with United States Institute of Peace (Jan 6, 2024)

SHRC hosted a delegation from the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) in Pakistan, led by Ms. Saadia Sabir, programme Manager, and Mr. Moiz Naeem, programme Assistant. The primary objective of this meeting was to pave the way for peace in Sindh, through coordination and collaborative efforts recognizing the pivotal roles both organisations play in this process.



Meeting with UN Human Rights Officers

Human Rights Officers Ms. Christine Chung and Ms. Emily K. Walker from the UN Human Rights Office in Asia engaged with SHRC to discuss UN Human Rights mechanisms and Pakistan's international commitments. The meeting discussed SHRC's role in upholding human rights principles.



Meeting with UN Special Rapporteur



SHRC hosted Dr. Ian Fry, UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Context of Climate Change, and Ahsan Qazi from Denning Law School. The meeting focused on the SHRC's response to the 2023 floods, covering flood-related human rights issues and the impact of climate change.

Meeting with Terre des Hommes

SHRC met with representatives from Terre des Hommes, Germany, including Ms. Ann Christin and Mr. Salam Dharejo, to discuss advancing child rights. The meeting included an overview of SHRC's updated Child Rights Policy and a demonstration of the new online information portal, <https://sohris.com/>, and areas of mutual collaboration.



Meeting with UNFPA



The SHRC held a meeting with Ms. Renuka from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to address key issues pertaining to women's health and rights. Topics such as Family Planning 2030 (FP2030), child marriage, and the prevalence of violence against women, particularly domestic and sexual violence, were thoroughly discussed. It was emphasised that these issues remain of utmost priority for both parties, highlighting the need for concerted efforts and collaborative initiatives to address them effectively.

Meeting with Global Rights Compliance (March 27, 2024)

The SHRC hosted Lara Strangways, Head of Business and Human Rights at Global Rights Compliance (GRC) Foundation and Mr. Karamat Ali, Executive Director at The Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER), at SHRC Karachi office. SHRC Chairperson highlighted SHRC's initiatives to promote and safeguard Labour Rights within the existing institutional and legal framework. Ms. Lara, during the session, emphasised the critical need for comprehensive employer training on Labour Laws, highlighting the essential role of education in protecting workers' rights.



Meeting with UNDP (April 2, 2024)



SHRC held a meeting with UNDP Senior National Technical Advisor, Malik Zulifqar Ahmed and his team at SHRC discussing the overall functioning of SHRC particularly focussing on Business and Human Rights. Zulifqar Ahmed shared UNDP's ongoing collaboration with the Sindh government across various sectors and expressed keen interest in partnering with SHRC.

Meeting with Islamic Relief Pakistan (May 23, 2024)

SHRC hosted Islamic Relief Pakistan representatives to discuss key issues like child rights, child marriage, and community awareness on May 23, 2024. They emphasised the need to involve religious leaders, empower parents and adolescents, and support local government initiatives.



Networking with NHRIs/ SNHRIs

Meetings with National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC)





The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) held important meetings with the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) to strengthen efforts in promoting human rights. On May 30, 2023, SHRC hosted a delegation from NCRC, including Chairperson Ayesha Raza and Mr. Pirbhu Lal Satyani. The meeting highlighted SHRC's progress and future activities. Ms. Raza commended SHRC's dedication and discussed potential collaborative efforts to further advance human rights. Later, on April 19, 2024, another meeting was held between SHRC and NCRC representatives, including NCRC Member Sindh Pirbhu Lal and Member Punjab Mehak. The meeting discussed Sindh's 'Human Rights Policy,' particularly its comprehensive section on child rights, and delved into establishing a formal referral mechanism to protect children's best interests. The meeting also addressed concerns about violence against children in Tharparker.

SHRC's Strategic Contribution towards Strengthening Human Rights Institutions in Pakistan

Pakistan is home to several National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), such as the National Commission on Human Rights (NCHR) and the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC), which operate at both federal and provincial levels. These independent institutions serve as watchdogs, investigating human rights violations, advocating for victims, and recommending changes to laws, policies, and practices. Despite their establishment, these commissions face challenges related to independence, resource constraints, and coordination among various bodies, which can undermine their effectiveness.



Recognizing these challenges, SHRC took a proactive approach to address these issues through a National Conference on November 16, 2023, titled "National Conference on National & Sub-National Human Rights Institutions and Their Efficacy," supported by the Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA). The National Conference brought together current and former leadership from rights-based commissions, ex-parliamentarians,

government representatives, and human rights activists from civil society, the legal community, and academia. The conference focused on the challenges faced by human rights institutions in Pakistan, particularly the need for legal reforms, autonomy, and better coordination between federal and provincial bodies.

Key outcomes of the conference included the identification of legal measures necessary to ensure the continuity and sustainability of these institutions. Participants agreed on the importance of making all commissions functional, independent, and effective, in line with the Paris Principles, 1993, and Pakistan's Constitution. They also called for curbing executive interference in the selection of commission leadership and proposed the establishment of an inter-commission coordination mechanism to enhance collaboration and efficiency.

Following the success of this conference, SHRC continued the dialogue by organising a follow-up meeting on December 29, 2023, in Islamabad. This dialogue, attended by representatives from various national commissions and civil society, further emphasised the need for administrative and financial autonomy for NHRIs to ensure impartial human rights protection.

In February 2024, SHRC convened another consultative meeting in Karachi, bringing together stakeholders from various commissions and statutory authorities. The focus was on integrating health components into fundamental rights and addressing resource deficiencies across commissions. The meeting concluded with plans to present key issues to the Chief Minister, aiming to strengthen the functionality and impact of these institutions.

Cooperation with Universities and Law Colleges

The Commission has established strategic partnerships with universities and law colleges to enhance their capacity for engaging in human rights research, including critical areas like business and human rights, which provide valuable opportunities to students to conduct research as part of their degree programmes. Through such collaborations, SHRC fosters a culture of human rights within academic institutions, nurturing the next generation of advocates and scholars.

Key engagements were:

Meeting with Vice Chancellor and Faculty of Institute of Business Administration Sukkur (May 11, 2023)



SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho, met with IBA Sukkur officials to discuss integrating 'Business and Human Rights' into the business school curriculum. They agreed to form a joint sub-committee to review and enhance the curriculum and foster collaboration between the institutions.

Meeting with Shahnaz Wazir Ali, President SZABIST Karachi (Feb 14, 2024)

The meeting aimed to explore collaboration opportunities between SHRC and SZABIST for conducting awareness sessions for SZABIST students. The meeting concluded with an agreement to organise regular orientation sessions for students on human rights.



Meeting with Fateh Marri, Chancellor Agriculture University (22 May 2023)

The SHRC meeting with the Chancellor of Agriculture University was also attended by Tahir Mehmood Chaudhry, Executive Director of Hazza Institute of Technology, and Dr. Umair Korai, Professor at Mehran University. It provided a forum to address various challenges confronting Agriculture University and to discuss solutions for improving educational and healthcare facilities in the Tharparkar region.



Review and Reform the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011

The SHRC has initiated a review of the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011, to address existing gaps and limitations in its mandate. Recognizing the broader challenges that affect both National and Sub-National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs and SNHRIs) across Pakistan, the SHRC engaged in dialogues with key stakeholders at both the Sindh and federal levels. These discussions have focused on identifying legal and operational constraints and exploring ways to enhance the effectiveness and independence of human rights institutions in the country.

Development of Guidelines for Complaints Handling

In a major step towards improving operational efficiency, the SHRC has developed and published Standard Operating Procedures (guidelines) for complaint handling, very useful for the staff dealing with complaints and inquiries. These SOPs provide a clear framework and a systematic approach to receiving, assessing, and resolving complaints related to human rights violations in Sindh plus it establishes a criteria for taking suo moto actions.

SHRC Digital Action Plan Launched



SHRC has stepped into the digital era with the launch of the SHRC Digital Action Plan. The Plan aims to enhance accessibility, transparency, and engagement, and will leveraging technology for a stronger impact on human rights advocacy in Sindh. Key components of this plan include: robust online reporting, educational webinars, interactive social media campaigns, rapid response mechanisms, etc.

Strengthening of Provincial Headquarter and Regional Offices

To enhance its outreach and operational capacity, the SHRC has established a regional office in Sukkur, Larkana and strengthened its headquarter in Karachi. These efforts have improved the Commission's ability to monitor and address human rights issues in the province. The Sukkur and Larkana office extends the SHRC's presence in northern Sindh, enabling it to respond more promptly to local concerns, while the enhancements in Karachi have bolstered the overall functioning of the Commission.

Resource Mobilisation and Financial Sustainability

In its pursuit of financial sustainability, the SHRC has successfully advocated with the government of Sindh led to an increase in its annual budget of 2023-24 by 30%. The SHRC has initiated to establish a Human Rights Commission Fund provided under the SPHRA, 2011. Additionally, the SHRC has actively collaborated and partnered with the UN agencies, international NGOs, and local NGOs, leveraging various platforms to secure resources and technical assistance. These collaborations and partnerships have helped SHRC to carry out its mandate effectively without relying solely on government funding.

Financial Statement



**Peace can only last where human rights
are respected, where the people are fed,
and where individuals and nations are free.**

Financial Statement

Way Forward

The Commission has made significant progress in advocating for and protecting human rights across the province over the past year. Through consistent monitoring, reporting, and advocacy, the SHRC has highlighted numerous human rights violations and worked to ensure they are addressed by the appropriate authorities. Our collaboration with civil society organisations, governmental bodies, and international partners has been crucial in amplifying our impact and fostering a culture of respect for human rights.

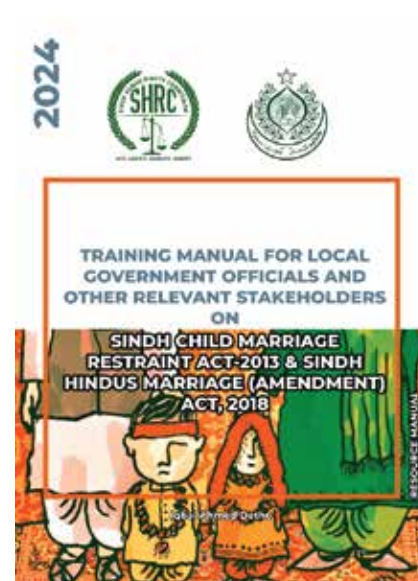
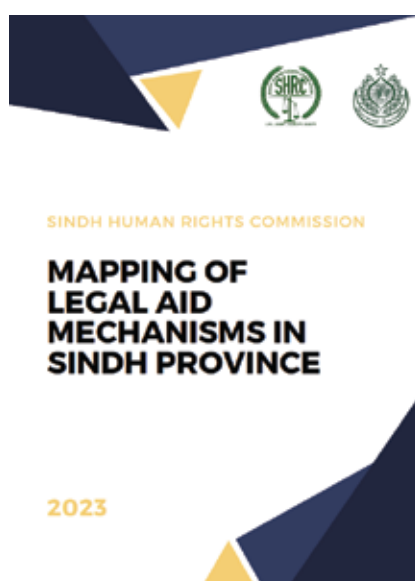
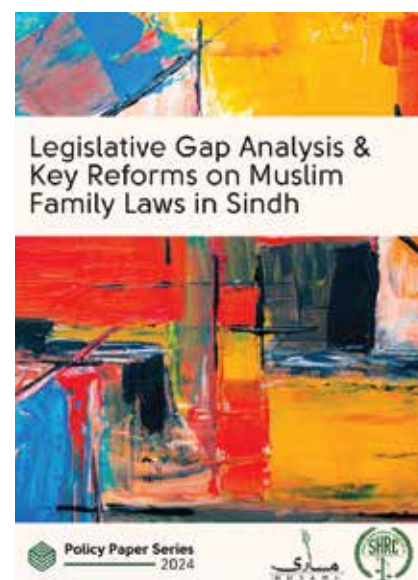
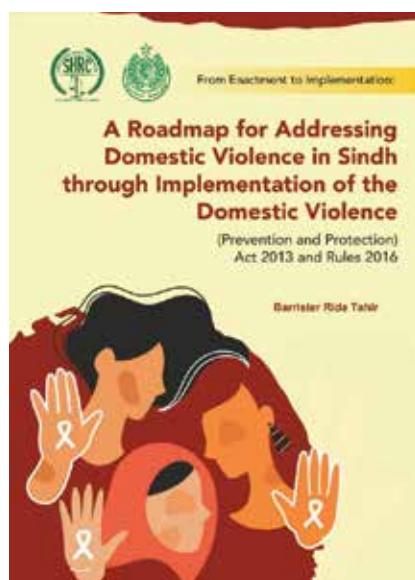
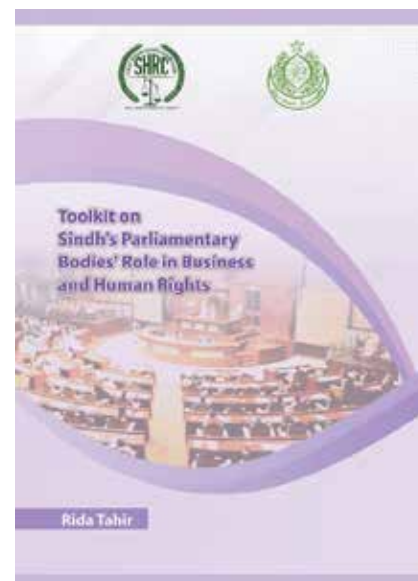
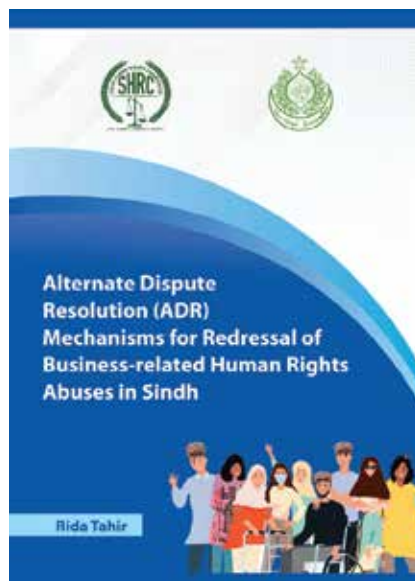
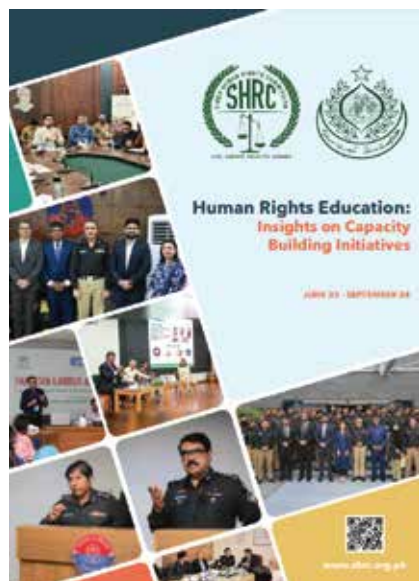
Despite progress and achievements, challenges remain. Discrimination, violence, and human rights violations and abuses persist, and systemic barriers continue to hinder access to justice for many. A lack of awareness and education about human rights among the general population further slows progress. Resource limitations and capacity constraints present significant obstacles. Addressing these issues requires interventions at different levels.

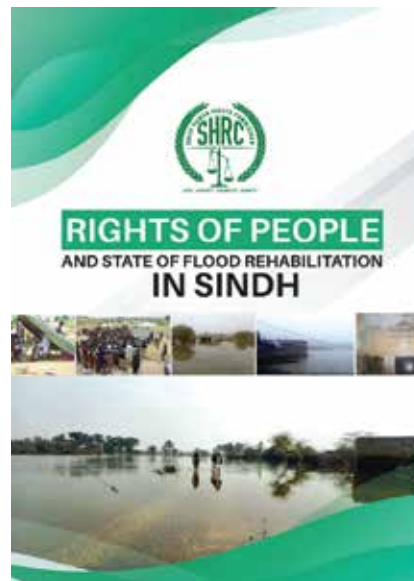
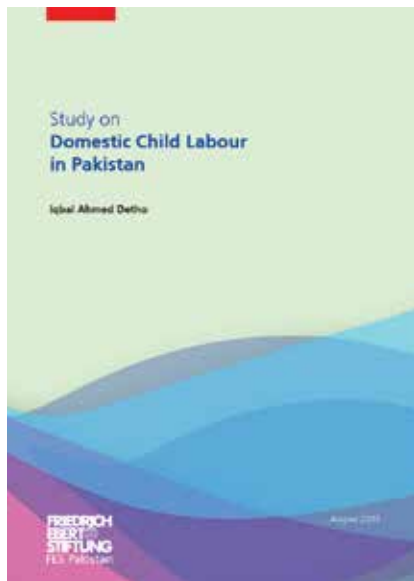
Looking ahead, the SHRC is committed to broadening the outreach. We plan to intensify our advocacy efforts particularly in pushing for legislative and institutional reforms that protect the rights of vulnerable groups. Education and awareness campaigns will be a priority as we seek to deepen understanding of human rights within communities. Engaging with local leaders, educators, and the media will be key to changing attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate human rights abuses.

We also aim to build stronger partnerships with national and international human rights organisations. These alliances will allow us to leverage additional resources, share best practices, and coordinate more effectively on common goals. We recognise the importance of involving the community in our work. By encouraging public participation and feedback, we can ensure our initiatives are more responsive to the needs of those we serve.

The road ahead is challenging, but with commitment and collaborative efforts, we are confident that we will play our role in creating a just and equitable society. The SHRC is committed to protecting the dignity and rights of every individual, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Publications





Press Coverage

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Pakistan's Sindh Province Backs Transgender Rights

Authorities Nationwide Need to Do More to Protect Trans People from Violence



The authors thank to and praise the Sindh province for its commitment to transgender rights and its role in protecting transgender people from violence. (Source: Human Rights Watch, 2023)

The Sindh Human Rights Commission has advised police to stop harassing and arresting transgender people, an important step toward changing discriminatory laws, policies, and public attitudes in Pakistan's Sindh province.

The commission, an independent statutory body, issued the guidance on April 3, relying on constitutional protections and international legal principles. It said that offenses based on poverty and homelessness should be reserved for transgender women living with street children, do not face

THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE

Call to raise awareness on Hindu marriage law

Presentation on the evolution of Hindu personal laws in Sindh given during the workshop



THE NATION

SHRC conducts HR training for newly appointed civil judges, judicial magistrates

KARACHI-The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) successfully conducted a one-week Human Rights Education training session for recently appointed Civil Judges and Judicial Magistrates to enhance their knowledge and skills at the Sindh Judicial Academy. The training, held from July 17 to July 22 aimed at ensuring a fair and just legal system for the people of the Sindh province. A total of 45 trainees participated including 7 females and 38 males in the training session.

During the sessions, Chairperson of SHRC Iqbal Ahmed Detho discussed the Human Rights, and Fundamental rights under Pakistan's constitution, and acts protecting child rights, abolishing bonded labour, and preventing trafficking. Barrister Rida Tahir enlightened participants about gender rights, including the National Gender Policy Framework and the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010. District & Sessions Judge/Senior Faculty Member M. Shahid Shafiq shared insights on the roles of Justice Sector Stakeholders and the Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018.

Other esteemed presenters included Jameel Junejo from the Human Rights

Taking strong exception to the lack of implementation of Sindh Marriage Act-2018, the civil society, rights activists, and law experts hands on Friday and stressed the need for raising massive awareness different stakeholders for the legal rights and protections of the Hindu community living in Sindh.

DAWN

World is moving to living wages from minimum wages, moot told

KARACHI: The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) will soon launch a campaign to redress complaints about the non-implementation of minimum wages.

Speaking at a provincial consultation session on the implementation of the Sindh Minimum Wage Act organised jointly by the SHRC and the Knowledge Forum, SHRC chairman Iqbal Detho said on Friday that the provincial government was evolving a mechanism to receive workers' complaints.

Mr Detho said the commission, which receives complaints about the non-implementation of minimum wages on a daily basis, will provide an online complaint form with the assistance of the Labour Department's Sindh Wage Board.

The SHRC is a legally established entity with the authority to take suo motu actions against violations. The objective of the consultation was to reach a consensus over a proposal for the government to determine the minimum wage rate for both unskilled and skilled workers.

INTERNATIONAL THE NEWS

SHRC holds week-long training for civil judges, judicial magistrates

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) successfully conducted a one-week human rights education training session for the recently appointed civil judges and judicial magistrates, enhancing their knowledge and skills, at the Sindh Judicial Academy.

The training held from July 17 to July 22 aimed at ensuring a fair and just legal system for the people of Sindh. A total of 45 trainees participated, including seven females and 38 males.

SHRC to launch campaign against non-implementation of minimum wages

The Minimum Wage Act 2015, a Minimum Wage Board determines the wages for both unskilled and skilled workers.

The Sindh government established Rs25,000 as the minimum monthly wage for unskilled workers in all provincial industrial and commercial sectors. According to the Asia Floor Wage's recent calculations, however, the real minimum wage should be Rs67,200 a month.

TRIBUNE

Govt to implement minimum wages

SHRC announces campaign to address workers' complaints



PHOTO: FILE

KARACHI: The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) will soon launch an aggressive campaign to strictly implement minimum wages of labourers.

"Provincial government is evolving a mechanism to receive and address workers' complaints," said SHRC Chairman Iqbal Detho.

Detho was speaking at a provincial consultation on the "Implementation of Minimum Act" jointly organised by SHRC and The Knowledge Forum at a local hotel here on Friday.

The consultation was largely attended by trade unions/labour leaders, human rights defenders, representatives of concerned government departments and the media people.

Detho said that the commission daily receives complaints regarding the non-implementation of minimum wages.

Consultative meeting of human rights held in Sukkur

SUKKUR - Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) and a local non-government organization jointly organized a consultative meeting on Thursday with human rights activists, civil society organizations, UN organizations working in Northern Sindh, women rights activists and media representatives. The aim of this meeting was to discuss human rights issues including violence against women, media freedom, gender equality, child labor, child marriage and protection of minorities and formulate a concrete strategy to resolve these issues.

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DAWN

SHRC team visits damaged Hindu temple near Sindh's Kandhkot



SHRC team visits damaged Hindu temple near Sindh's Kandhkot. The temple was heavily damaged by dacoits a week ago. — Twitter

JOHN DICKERSON/DAWN.COM

SUKKUR: A delegation of Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) visited Sanwal Shah Mandir in Silyano Ogahi village near Kandhkot town on Wednesday and inquired representatives of the minority community about the place carried out by dacoits a week ago.

A minority member Sukh Dev Hemnani, community officer.



Sindh HRC demands recovery of missing

KARACHI-Sindh Human Rights Commission has raised alarm over recovery of remaining abductees from District Kashmore-Kandhkot. It has written a letter to Inspector General of Sindh Police Riffat Mukhtar, Department Sindh for urgent intervention to ensure recovery of abductees and maintenance of law and order in the district. Sindh Human Rights Commission sent a fact-finding mission to district Kashmore-Kandhkot to observe and assess rights violations in the district. The fact-finding mission was led by Board Sukhdev Assardas Hemnani and comprised SHRC team for assessment, the mission found growing mistrust of the public and police with respect to transparency of police operations, lack of cases, discrepancies in the number of abductees and overall police control.

DAWN

Moot urges govt to make human rights part of syllabus

LARKANA: Social activists have urged the government to incorporate human rights as a subject in school, college and university curriculum so as to sensitise youth to their basic rights guaranteed under the constitution and law.

They were speaking at a seminar on "Basic human rights and our responsibilities" held at Indus School under the aegis of Knowledge Centre here on Thursday.

Iqbal Detho, chairman of Sindh Human Rights Commission, said that the constitution guaranteed equal rights for all sections of population without any discrimination based on creed, colour or caste.

"We have to formulate new policies or change the existing ones to ensure provision of rights to life, liberty, dignity, health, expression, water, food, pure air and shelter, which are fundamental rights and all people should get equally and easily," he said.

He said that Islam is a religion of peace and it demanded justice for all. Other religions of the world also urged their believers to adopt the path of peace, he said.

He said that bullying at schools, streets and at any other place was illegal. The schools' syllabus should include teaching of human rights so as to sensitise youth to the importance of their rights and empower them, he said.

He said the human rights emanated from religion, political struggles, philosophers and constitutional developments. Education in human rights was key component of the

TRIBUNE THE EXPRESS

Free legal aid offered to vulnerable communities

260U signed to ensure access to justice becomes a right, not a privilege

Our Correspondent | August 15, 2023



KARACHI: The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) and the Legal Aid Society (LAS) have taken a step forward in promoting legal awareness and providing free legal aid to vulnerable communities in Sindh. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed, forging a strong partnership to ensure access to justice becomes a right, not a privilege for all members of society.

The MoU signing ceremony was witnessed by Sindh Human Rights Commission

TRIBUNE THE EXPRESS

Workers not considered major stakeholders at policy level, laments Ahmed Shah

Sindh Caretaker Minister for Information, Social Protection and Minority Affairs Ahmed Shah, has emphasised the need for ensuring that every citizen enjoyed equal dignity, especially those from the working class who were the most oppressed in our society.



PAKISTAN LABOUR ACADEMY 2024
A highly esteemed institution for the education of every worker and employee in Pakistan

Sindh Caretaker Minister for Information, Social Protection and Minority Affairs Ahmed Shah speaks to the closing ceremony of a course at the Pakistan Labour Academy on February 25, 2024. — Facebook/Mohammad Ahmed Shah

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TRIBUNE THE EXPRESS

Compliance with UN protocol a must for GSP-Plus status: speakers

Ex ministers, MPs, rights activists, govt officials call for effective enforcement of relevant laws

Our Correspondent | October 04, 2023




PHOTO: FILE

KARACHI: Speakers at a dialogue on Tuesday underscored the critical need to raise awareness among the public about the grave consequences of child trafficking and bonded labour. They also called for effective enforcement of laws to combat these issues.

The daylong event, titled "Provincial Stakeholders Dialogue on Child Trafficking and Bonded Labour in Sindh," was jointly organised by the Sustainable Social Development Organisation (SSDO) and the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) at a hotel. It focused on adherence to the UN protocol to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children.

In a joint statement issued at the end of the dialogue, participants stressed that complian

DAWN

SHRC seeks effective implementation of Hindu marriage law

SUKKUR: The Sindh Human Rights Commission has expressed its resolve to protect fundamental and other constitutional rights of all citizens regardless of their caste, creed and religion.

SHRC chairman Iqbal Detho reiterated the commission's commitment while speaking at an awareness workshop, held in a local hotel on Saturday, on the 'Sindh Hindus Marriage (Amendment) Act 2018'.

The workshop was aimed at raising awareness of minority communities' constitutional rights and the protection laws available to the Hindu community in Sindh.

Mr Detho said that under Article 25 of the Constitution, all citizens of Pakistan have equal status and rights.

Regarding the Sindh Hindus Marriage (Amendment) Act 2018, he said there were three aspects of a marriage contract: determination of legal age of bride/groom; minimum age of 18 years and mental capacity and consent of the contracting party; and registration of the contract by local government under Section 4 of the Act.

THE NATION

SHRC hosts awareness session on Sindh Hindu Marriage Act implementation

HYDERABAD - The Sindh Human Rights Commission, in collaboration with the Local Government department, organised an awareness session for local government officials in Mithi, Tharparkar. The session aimed to promote the implementation of the Sindh Hindu Marriage (Amendment) Act, 2018, and empower community leaders. The Board Member of SHRC Sukhdev Hemnani gave a comprehensive briefing on the powers and functions of the Sindh Human Rights Commission and elaborated in detail on the provisions of the Sindh Hindu Marriage Act 2018. He stressed that the legislation should reach all segments of the community to benefit them. The Vice Chairperson of District Tharparkar Kamla Bai, District Officer of District Council Tharparkar Musharaf Ali Shah, Additional Deputy Commissioner-I Asif Ali Khaskheli, DSP City Waqas Durrani, Local Government officials and members of the local Hindu community participated in the program. Important issues were highlighted during the session while lack of awareness among the general public about the process of marriage registration and inadequate infrastructure of union councils were also identified.



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