



International
Labour
Organization



INTERNATIONAL YEAR
FOR THE ELIMINATION
OF CHILD LABOUR



▶ Pakistan's journey towards the elimination of child labour

A timeline



Copyright © International Labour Organization 2021
First published 2021

ISBN: 9789220350829 (print)
ISBN: 9789220350836 (web PDF)

Compiled by: Munawar Sultana, National Project Coordinator, Asia Regional Child Labour (ARC) Project, ILO Country Office for Pakistan

Editing and design: Ruya Leghari

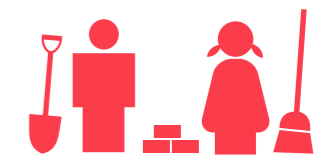
Selected icons: Freepik

Photos: © ILO

This knowledge product was developed by the ILO's Asia Regional Child Labour Project, funded by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom (FCDO).

Thanks are due to Ingrid Christensen, Country Director, ILO Country Office for Pakistan, Belinda Chanda, Programme Analyst, Saghir Bukhair, Senior Programme Officer, and Muhammad Benyameen, Abid Niaz Khan, Faisal Iqbal and Ijaz Ahmed for their support and inputs on the compilation of this product.

► What is child labour?



'Child labour' is work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and mental development. The term refers to work that:

- is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and/or
- interferes with their schooling by: depriving children of the opportunity to attend school, obliging them to leave school prematurely, or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.¹

While child labour takes many different forms, a priority is to eliminate – without delay – the worst forms of child labour, as defined by Article 3 of ILO Convention No. 182. The **worst forms of child labour** involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age. **Hazardous child labour** is work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children. It includes work that:

- exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
- work in dangerous or confined spaces;
- work with dangerous or heavy machinery, equipment and tools;
- work in an unhealthy hazardous environment; and
- work under particularly difficult conditions, such as work for long hours or during the night.

Child labour is a **violation of fundamental human rights**. According to international standards, work must not be performed by anyone under the minimum working age (usually 15 years old or older, if stipulated by national law).²

► This timeline presents milestones along Pakistan's journey towards eliminating child labour

Child labour remains prevalent in Pakistan. It cuts across sectors, but is especially widespread in the rural economy. The Government of Pakistan is committed to eliminating child labour. It has ratified core International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions related to child labour: the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).³ It has also embraced the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG target 8.7, "End modern slavery, trafficking and child labour."

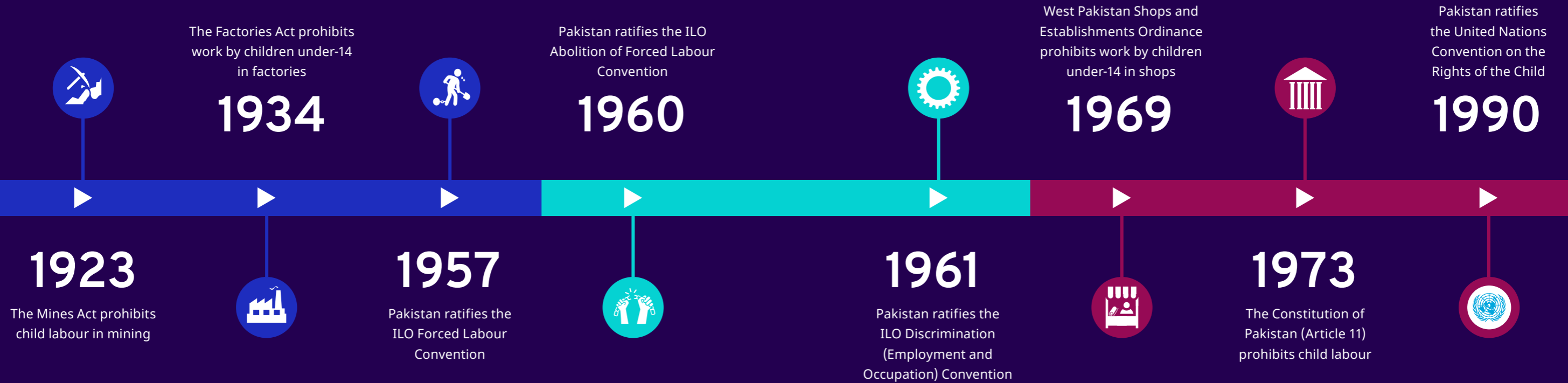


¹ ILO, "What is child labour".

² ILO, *Supplier Guidance on Preventing, Identifying and Addressing Child Labour*, 2020

³ ILO, "Child labour in Pakistan".

Legislative and other milestones



1923

► **Mines Act, 1923**

Article 26 of the Mines Act prohibits child labour in mining. It unequivocally states that *"No child shall be employed in a mine, or be allowed to be present in any part of a mine which is below ground."* The Act appears to derive from earlier legislation passed by the British colonial government in the Indian subcontinent, inspired by restrictions on child labour introduced in the United Kingdom in the 19th century.

1934

► **Factories Act, 1934**

The Act consolidates and amends the law regulating labour in factories that have employed 10 workers or more in the past 12 months. Provincial governments can extend the Act's provisions to factories with as few as five workers. [Chapter V, 'Special Provisions for Adolescents and Children', Section 50](#) prohibits the employment of children under the age of 14 in factories, unless the child has a 'certificate of fitness' and is in the custody of the factory manager. In such cases, the child must carry a token that refers to the certificate while they are at work.

The Act also specifies that women and children are not allowed *"to clean, lubricate or adjust any part of machinery while that part is in motion, or to work between moving parts or between fixed and moving parts of any machinery which is in motion."*

1957

► **Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)**

Pakistan ratified ILO Convention No. 29 in 1957, which requires ratifying states to suppress all forms of forced or compulsory labour (Article 1(1)). As the first Convention on this subject, it provides the definition of 'forced or compulsory labour' (Article 2(1)) and lists five possible exceptions. It also requires countries to ensure that the use of forced labour is a punishable penal offence and that penalties are *"really adequate and strictly enforced"* (Article 25).

1960

► **Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)**

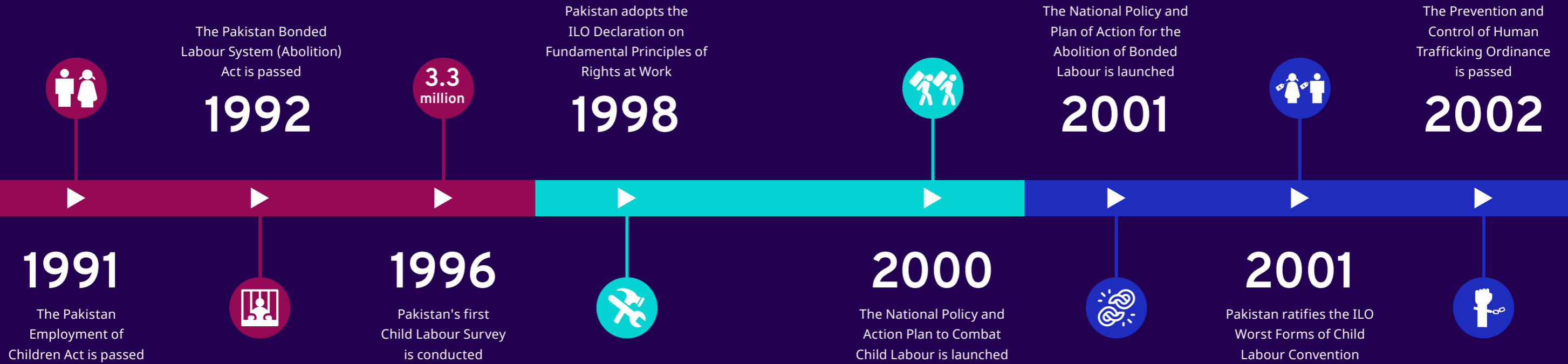
Pakistan ratified ILO Convention No. 105 in 1960, which explicitly prohibits five types of forced labour imposed by state authorities: forced labour as a punishment for the expression of political views, for the purposes of economic development, for participation in strikes, as a means of racial or other discrimination, or as form of labour-related discipline.

1961

► **Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)**

Pakistan ratified ILO Convention No. 111 in 1961, which requires states to enact legislation that prohibits all forms of discrimination and exclusion on any basis.

Legislative and other milestones



These grounds include race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national or social origin in employment. It also requires countries to repeal legislation that is not based on equal opportunities. The absence of discrimination is part of the ILO's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (adopted in 1998 and revised in 2010).

1969

► **West Pakistan Shops and Establishments Ordinance, 1969**

The Act amends and consolidates the law on hours and other conditions of work of persons employed in shops and commercial, industrial and other establishments. It prohibits the employment of children (defined as a person under the age of 14) in any establishment. Pakistan's provinces and regions have adapted the Ordinance through the following amendments:

- the Punjab Shops and Establishments Ordinance, 2014, which adapted the Federal Act and replaced all mentions of 'West Pakistan' with 'Punjab';
- the Sindh Shops and Commercial Establishment Act, 2015;
- the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shops and Establishments Act, 2015; and
- the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Shops and Establishment (Amendment) Act, 2017 (updated).

1973

► **Constitution of Pakistan, 1973**

Article 11 of Pakistan's Constitution prohibits slavery, all forms of forced labour, trafficking in human beings and child labour. Article 25-A requires the state to provide free and compulsory education for all the children between 5 and 16 years old. Article 37(e) lays out the provisions for secure and humane conditions of work, specifying that children and women must not be employed in vocations 'unsuited to their age or sex'.

1990

► **Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989**

Pakistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990. The Convention sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children, affirming that children are individual human beings with their own rights. It recognizes that childhood is separate from adulthood and lasts until the age of 18. Childhood is a special, protected time in which children must be allowed to grow, learn, play, develop and flourish with dignity.

The Convention promotes four key principles: non-discrimination, devotion to the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development.

1991

► **Pakistan Employment of Children Act, 1991**

The *Act* defines any person under the age of 14 as a child, and any person who is between 14 years old (inclusive) and under the age of 18 as an adolescent.

It specifies that children cannot be employed in any occupation, establishment or process defined as hazardous for children, except when the process is carried out by their family as a business, or in any (training) school that is set up, assisted or recognized by the Government (Section 3). Violations are punishable by imprisonment for a term of up to one year, a fine of up to PKR 20,000, or both.

1992

► **Pakistan Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1992**

The *Act* prohibits bonded labour, abolishes the system and practices of bonded labour, and ends the practice of 'advances' (money paid in advance to brick kiln workers as a form of loan, which bonds the worker to provide services until they pay back the advance). It is enforced through District Vigilance Committees (DVCs) which are mandated to: advise the district administration on the law's effective implementation and to ensure its proper implementation; support the rehabilitation of freed bonded labourers; and monitor the law's workings. Violations are punishable by imprisonment of a term of up to one year, or a fine of up to PKR 5,000. This federal law still holds in Balochistan, which has not yet promulgated its own.

1996

► **Child Labour Survey in Pakistan, 1996**

Pakistan's first Child Labour Survey in 1996 estimated that there were 3.3 million 'economically active children' between 5 and 14 years old in the country (2.4 million boys and 0.9 million girls). The province of Punjab had the largest number of children engaged in child labour followed by Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. The survey was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Statistics, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Overseas Pakistanis (Labour Wing) and the ILO as part of the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

1998

► **Declaration on Fundamental Principles of Rights at Work, 1998**

Pakistan, like all ILO Member States, adopted this Declaration in 1998. It defines the four core labour standards that all Member States must "*respect, promote and realize*", whether or not they have ratified relevant ILO Conventions. These principles are: freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, and the elimination of forced labour, child labour and discrimination.

2000

► **National Policy and Action Plan to Combat Child Labour, 2000**

This policy emphasizes the need for the gradual eradication of child labour, starting with the immediate withdrawal of children from hazardous and exploitative situations and the rehabilitation of vulnerable children.

Rehabilitation entails expanding infrastructure for vocational training, skills development and youth apprenticeship programmes. The progressive elimination of child labour requires awareness raising among social partners and communities. It also involves expanding educational opportunities, empowering poor families, expanding social safety nets, strengthening law enforcement and establishing monitoring bodies.

2001

► **National Policy and Plan of Action for the Abolition of Bonded Labour, 2001**

The policy aims to eliminate bonded and forced labour practices wherever these exist. It affirms Pakistan's commitment to uphold all international instruments, covenants, conventions and protocols – whether ratified or not – which protect fundamental human rights. It commits to concerted efforts to transform traditional socio-economic structures and reduce poverty through an integrated, coordinated approach.

2001

► **Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182)**

Pakistan ratified ILO Convention No. 182 in 2001, which calls for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour. These include all types of slavery, the sale and trafficking of children, forced labour to pay off debts, any other types of forced labour, using children in war or armed conflict, the sexual exploitation of children, the involvement of children in illicit activities, and work which is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

2002

► **Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance, 2002**

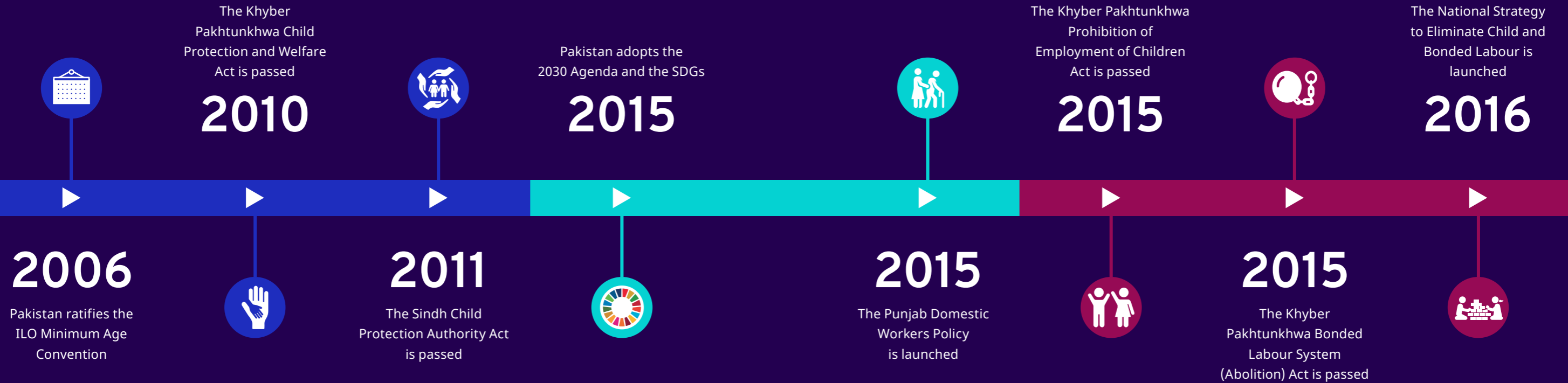
The Ordinance prohibits the purchase, sale, harbouring, transportation, provision, detention or obtaining of a child or a woman through coercion, kidnapping, abduction and trafficking into or out of Pakistan for the purpose of exploitative entertainment, slavery or forced labour. Knowingly committing these offenses and receiving 'some benefit' is punishable by a fine and imprisonment for a term of seven to 10 years.

2006

► **Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)**

Pakistan ratified ILO Convention No. 138 in 2006, which defines the minimum age for admission to employment as not less than 15, or not less than 14 in countries with inadequate educational facilities. The Convention requires each ratifying state to pursue a national policy to ensure the effective abolition of child labour. They should progressively raise the minimum age for admission to employment to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons. States must also notify the minimum age for children's entry into employment, which should not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling. The Convention permits 'light work' by children and prohibits the employment of any person under the age of 18 in occupations that pose a risk to their health and safety.

Legislative and other milestones



2010

► **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Act, 2010 and Amendments, 2018**

The Act provides for the care, protection, maintenance and welfare of children, in the 'best interests of the child'. It established Child Protection and Welfare Commission to supervise and coordinate child rights issues at the provincial and local levels. It is also responsible for developing and coordinating activities, programmes and plans for the development, protection, survival, participation and rehabilitation of children who are at risk, as well as coordinating with the National Commission on the Rights of Children (NCRC). In addition, the Commission is meant to review all provincial laws, rules and regulations that affect the status and rights of children, and to propose new laws, wherever necessary, to safeguard and promote children's interests in line with Pakistan's Constitution and international covenants and commitments.

2011

► **Sindh Child Protection Authority Act, 2011 (Act No. XIV)**

In 2010, the 18th Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan devolved responsibilities for social sectors (including child rights) to provincial governments. The Government of Sindh fulfilled its commitment by enacting the [Sindh Child Protection Authority Act](#) of 2011 to address cases of child abuse and violence against children.

2015

► **Sustainable Development Goal 8, target 8.7**

In 2015, UN Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a global plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), encompassing 169 targets. All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, are meant to implement the 2030 Agenda – including governments, businesses, the media, higher education institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). SDG target 8.7 calls on states to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking, and secure the prohibition and elimination of all forms of child labour as an essential step to achieving decent work for all, full and productive employment and inclusive and sustained economic growth by 2025.

2015

► **Punjab Domestic Workers Policy, 2015**

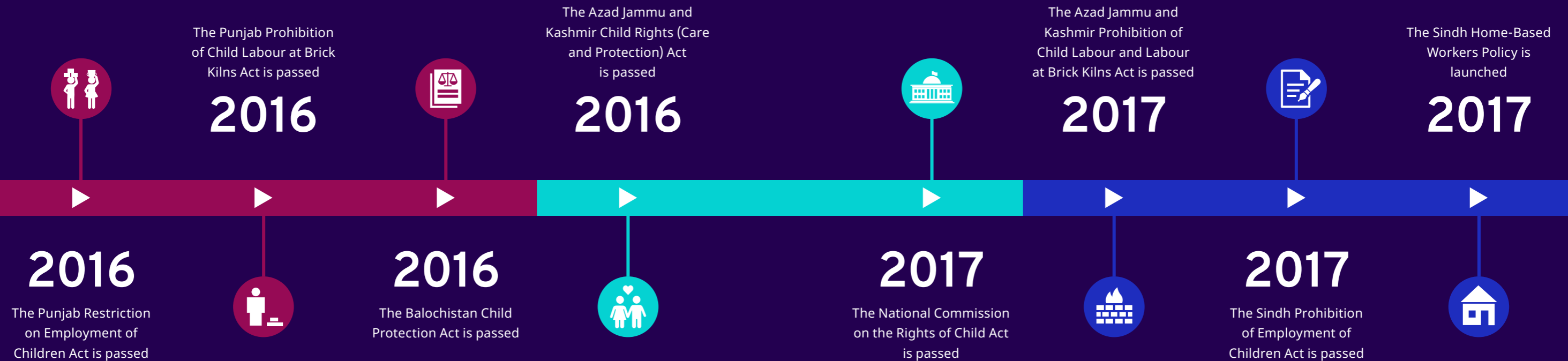
The policy calls for the establishment of a Domestic Workers Registration Authority to register domestic workers in Pakistan. To date, an authority has not been constituted.

2015

► **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2015**

The Act prohibits the employment of persons under 14 years of age (who are defined as 'children').

Legislative and other milestones



It allows the engagement of children aged 12 or older in 'light work'. However, they must be accompanied by a family member and their work is restricted to a maximum of two hours per day for the purposes of acquiring skills in a private undertaking, or in any school established, assisted or recognized by the Government. The law also prohibits the employment of adolescents (defined as anyone between 14 years old (inclusive) and under 18 years old) in any form of hazardous work. Employing a child is punishable by imprisonment for a term of up to six months, a fine of up to PKR 50,000, or both. Employing a child in a hazardous occupation or process is subject to a fine of between PKR 10,000 and 100,000, and a prison sentences of up to three years.

2015

► Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 2015

The Act outlaws the bonded labour system and 'extinguishes all monetary advances outstanding due to the bonded labour system'. The law does not cover forced labour. It allows advances up to three times the prescribed minimum wage, specifies that no second advance can be extended or taken until the first advance is fulfilled. It states that payments in instalments to return an advance cannot exceed one-fourth of a worker's wages, and requires employers to maintain a proper record of advances taken by every worker. Violations of this law are punishable by imprisonment for a term of 2-5 years, a fine ranging from PKR 50,000 to 200,000, or both.

2016

► National Strategy to Eliminate Child and Bonded Labour in Pakistan, 2016

The strategy provides a framework for the coordination of efforts to eliminate child labour and bonded labour. This is to be achieved through capacity development, policy integration, mainstreaming child and bonded labour issues, strengthening law enforcement, and enhancing the system of data collection, analysis and use on child and bonded labour. It involves partnerships, resource mobilization, and information, education and communications. The strategy was developed by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development through a consultative process.

2016

► Punjab Restriction on Employment of Children Act, 2016

The Act defines a child as a person under the age of 15 and prohibits the employment of children in any establishment. It also prohibits the employment of adolescents (persons between 14 years old (inclusive) and under 18 years old) in any form of hazardous work. The penalties for violations range from imprisonment of no less than seven days and up to six months, and a fine of no less than PKR 10,000 and up to PKR 50,000. Penalties are more severe if children are engaged in slavery, forced labour, debt bondage or trafficking. In such cases, prison sentences range from no less than three years and up to seven years, and a fine of no less than PKR 200,000 and up to PKR 1 million. Penalties are extended if an offense is repeated. Under Section 14 of the Act, a labour inspector may close an establishment that violates the Act's provisions.

2016

► **Punjab Prohibition of Child Labour at Brick Kilns Act, 2016**

The Act regulates child labour by requiring written contracts (Section 3), which must specify the amount of wages, advanced pay and the payback schedule for any monetary advance.

2016

► **Balochistan Child Protection Act (No. VII), 2016**

The Act provides for the protection of children in Balochistan from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, neglect, negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse and related matters.

2016

► **Azad Jammu and Kashmir Child Rights (Care and Protection) Act, 2016**

The Act commits to provide for the care, protection, welfare and rights of all children. It requires the creation of a Commission for Child Welfare and Development to monitor, promote and protect child rights, as well as to advocate for changes in administrative and legislative frameworks to make them more child-friendly. The Act specifies the need to provide an environment for children that is free from violence, abuse and exploitation, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2017

► **National Commission on the Rights of Child Act, 2017**

The Act aims to protect child rights, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child by establishing, a National Commission. This body is required to examine international instruments, periodically review existing policies and programmes on child rights, and propose recommendations for their effective implementation.

2017

► **Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prohibition of Child Labour and Regulation of Labour at Brick Kilns Act, 2017**

The Act prohibits child labour and regulates child labour at brick kilns, whose hazardous environment can adversely affect children's growth, health and education. If a child (under 14 years old) is employed, engaged or permitted to work at a brick kiln, the occupier is responsible for this contravention of the Act. In such cases, a labour inspector may close the brick kiln for up to seven days. Violations of the Act are punishable by imprisonment for a term of between seven days and six months, and a fine ranging from PKR 50,000 to PKR 500,000.

2017

► **Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017**

The Act defines a 'child' as a person under the age of 14 and prohibits their employment in any establishment. It also prohibits the employment of adolescents in any form of hazardous work. Violations of the Act are punishable by imprisonment for a term of six months, a fine of up to PKR 50,000, or both.

If a child is employed in any form of hazardous work, fines range from PKR 10,000–100,000 and a prison term of up to three years.

2017

► **Sindh Home-Based Workers Policy, 2017**

The policy defines home-based workers as persons who work in the informal or unorganized economy who carry out remunerated work. They work from homes or nearby premises for any industry, undertaking, commercial establishment, contractor, sub-contractor, agent or middleman. The policy recognizes the rights of home-based workers through legislative and administrative action.

2018

► **Sindh Home-Based Workers Act, 2018**

The Act commits the Government to protect the rights of home-based worker. It makes it mandatory for home-base workers to become registered in order to access the same benefits available to other workers under labour laws, including social, medical and maternity benefits, compensation, and marriage and death grants. The Act specifies that home-based workers are entitled to the same minimum wage as any other worker. It discourages child labour and urges the provincial government to allocate funds, conduct a survey of home-based workers, and establish district-based mobile health counters to provide health facilities to home-based workers at their doorsteps.

2018

► **Punjab Bonded Labour System (Abolition) (Amendment) Act, 2018**

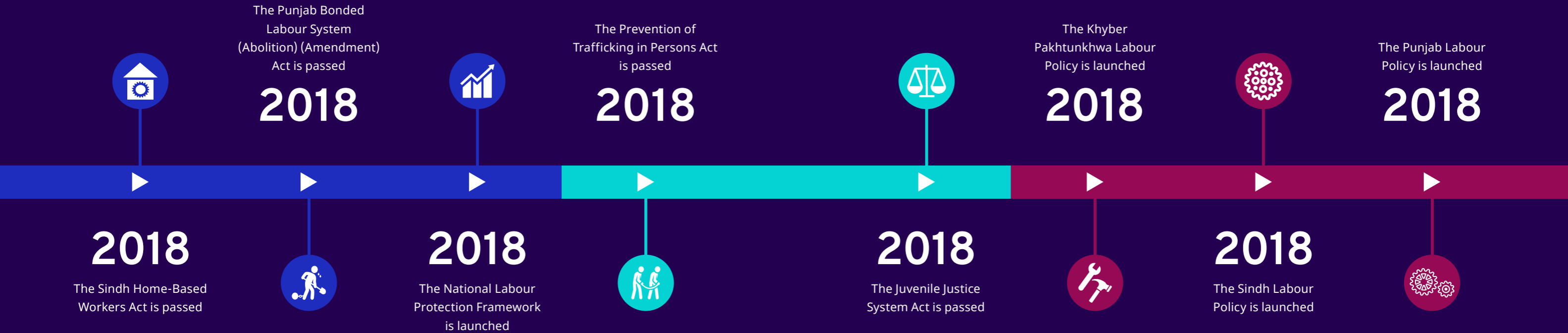
The Act prohibits bonded labour, abolishes the bonded labour system and associated practices, extinguishes the practice of monetary advances, and addresses forced labour. It contains provisions for the recovery of advances in a prescribed manner. Compelling anyone into bonded labour is punishable by imprisonment for a term of 2–5 years, a fine of PKR 50,000–200,000, or both. Any ritual or custom leading to bonded labour by any worker or their family is punishable by imprisonment for a term of 2–5 years and a fine of up to PKR 100,000.

2018

► **National Labour Protection Framework, 2018**

The framework was developed by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development with the ILO's technical support. This time-bound document covers seven thematic areas: child labour, forced labour, labour inspection, freedom of association, non-discrimination, occupational safety and health (OSH), and social dialogue. For each area, it addresses legislative, institutional, coverage and capacity building-related issues. The framework consists of Provincial Implementation Plans (PIPs), which highlight promising legislative and policy initiatives, address specific provincial measures, and provide timelines on child and bonded labour.

Legislative and other milestones



2018

► Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2018

The Act's provisions seek to protect survivors of trafficking, ensure that victims are not criminalized, establish grave punishments for offenders – especially for the trafficking of women and children – and raise awareness among stakeholders and the public. Anyone who recruits, harbours, transports, provides or obtains another person, or attempts to do so, for the purposes of 'compelled labour' or commercial sex acts through the use of force' fraud or coercion commits the offence of trafficking in persons. This is punishable by imprisonment for a term of up to seven years, a fine of up to PKR 1 million, or both. Trafficking a woman or child is punishable by imprisonment for 2-10 years, and the offence is deemed 'cognizable' and non-bailable.

2018

► Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018

The Act classifies criminal offences into three categories. First, minor criminal offences, for which the maximum punishment under the Pakistan Penal Code of 1860 is imprisonment for a term of up to three years, with or without a fine. A juvenile is entitled to bail in the case of minor offences, with or without surety bonds issued by a Juvenile Court. Second, major criminal offences, which are subject to punishment under the Penal Code of more than three years and up to seven years, with or without fine. Bail can also be granted in the case of major offences, with or without surety bonds issued by a Juvenile Court.

Third, heinous criminal offences are serious, brutal, or shocking to public morality. Under the Penal Code, these offences are punishable by death, life imprisonment, or imprisonment for more than seven years, with or without fine. A juvenile under the age of 16 is entitled to bail for heinous criminal offences. Bail is granted at the discretion of a court if a juvenile is over the age of 16.

2018

► Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Labour Policy, 2018

The policy commits to the promotion of 'decent work for all' by prioritizing improvements in health and safety, ensuring the payment of wages through scheduled banks, addressing discrimination and promoting women's entry into the labour market. It aims to reinvigorate the labour inspection mechanism, promote social dialogue, extend the coverage of laws to uncovered workers, and integrate efforts for the sustained elimination of child labour and bonded labour. The policy seeks to extend social security to all brick kiln workers in the province within three years.

2018

► Sindh Labour Policy, 2018

The policy provides a framework for industrial relations and the promotion of workers' social and economic well-being. It commits Sindh to simplifying and consolidating labour laws, as well as eliminating child labour and bonded labour.

Legislative and other milestones



It also aims to extend social protection and worker's welfare to workers in the informal economic, including domestic and home-based workers. It also prioritizes dispute resolution, improved health and safety, the protection of workers' basic rights, the creation an environment that is worker-friendly and industry-friendly, minimum wages for working children, and increased access to education and training.

2018

► **Punjab Labour Policy, 2018**

The policy commits Punjab to the effective implementation of labour standards, social dialogue, improved workplace safety, an objective living wage, and the eradication of child labour and bonded labour. It involves awareness raising, strengthening labour inspection, quality technical training, simplifying labour laws, providing medical facilities for workers registered with the Punjab Social Security Institution – even after retirement – and gradually extending the labour protection framework to all workers.

2018

► **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Labour Policy, 2018**

Policy advocates for the gradual eradication of child labour through a participatory approach. This involves policy integration, the availability of reliable statistics, research and development, awareness raising of key stakeholders, workplace improvement, the immediate eradication of the worst forms of child labour, coordinated efforts to

increase enrolment in schools, referral mechanisms, and the effective enforcement of laws. The policy was developed in consultation with key stakeholders.

2018

► **Islamabad Capital Territory Prohibition of Employment of Children Bill, 2018**

The **bill** allows children under the age of 14 to engage in 'light work', as prescribed by the Government, if they are accompanied by a parent and work for a maximum of two hours per day to acquire skills in a private undertaking or any school established, assisted or recognized by the Government. No adolescent (anyone over 14 years old (inclusive) but under 18 years old) is permitted to work in any hazardous work or process, to work between 7.00 p.m. and 8.00 a.m., or to work over-time. Fines for employing a child in hazardous work range from PKR 10,000 to PKR 100,000 and prison terms of up to three years. Fines range from PKR 200,000 to PKR 1,000,000 and prison terms from 5 years to 10 years if a child or adolescent is engaged in any form of slavery, including their sale, trafficking, debt bondage, serfdom, forced or compulsory labour, engagement in armed conflict, procurement/offering for prostitution, pornography, illicit activities, or the production and trafficking of drugs.

2019

► **Pakistan Child Labour Survey, 2019**

To combat child labour effectively, policymakers require detailed information on the prevalence, forms, nuances and causes of child labour.

On 25 March 2019, the ILO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) jointly launched Pakistan's Child Labour Survey, an occasion presided over by the President of Pakistan. UNICEF is leading the survey by extending technical support to governments in the provinces and territories. The survey is guided by the internationally-recognized 'Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour' (SIMPOC) methodology. The ILO is part of the survey's provincial technical working groups, offering technical assistance on data analysis, interpretation and the development of policy tools. Due to be completed nationwide by 2022, the survey will strengthen the national statistical base, facilitate evidence-based policymaking on issues of child labour, and contribute to protecting children from abuse and exploitation.

2019

► **Punjab Domestic Workers Act, 2019**

The Act defines **domestic work** as any work that takes place within, or for, a household. This includes child care, caring for the elderly or the sick, natal/post-natal care, and related work. It sets 15 as the minimum age for domestic employment. Children over the age of 15 and under the age of 18 can be legally engaged in 'light work' or part-time work that does not negatively impact their health, security or education. The Act prohibits the engagement of domestic workers in forced labour. It affirms their right to safe and dignified working conditions, freedom from all forms of discrimination, medical care, compensation for accidents, disability payments and survivors' pensions, in line with the provisions of the Punjab Social Security Ordinance, 1965. It requires domestic workers to be provided with an employment contract that specifies their terms of employment, working hours, wages and benefits. Domestic workers' wages should not be less than the minimum wage specified by the Government. A copy of each domestic worker's contract must be sent to the labour inspector of the area where the worker is employed.

2019

► **Gilgit-Baltistan Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2019**

The Act prohibits children under 14 years old from working in factories, mines or any other form of hazardous employment. Light work is permitted for adolescents who are between 14 years old and under 18 years old, as long as it takes place alongside a family member, lasts for a maximum of two hours per day, and is undertaken for the purpose of acquiring skills, in a private or government school. Adolescents cannot be engaged in any form of hazardous work. They cannot work for more than 48 hours per week, work overtime or work at night. Violations are punishable by imprisonment for a term of 7-10 days, a fine of PKR.15,000-30,000, or both. Anyone who procures or offers a child or adolescent for the purposes of prostitution, the production of pornography, pornographic performance, or illicit activities such as the production of drugs, narcotics trafficking, or use in armed conflicts is to be punished with a prison term of 3-12 months. Anyone who employs a child or adolescent in any form of hazardous work, slavery or practice similar to slavery, such as debt bondage or forced labour, is to be punished with imprisonment for 15-30 days, a fine of PKR 20,000-40,000, or both.

2020

► **Balochistan Employment of Children Prohibition and Regulation Bill, 2020**

The Bill prohibits the employment of persons under the age of 18 in processes and occupations listed in the schedule attached to the Bill. For all other forms of work, the Bill regulates the employment of persons under the age of 18. It prohibits the employment of persons under 14 years old, although it permits children between 12 and 14 years old to engage in 'light work'. This is defined as work which does not affect children's health, education, growth and development.

2020

► **Notification Banning Child Domestic Labour, 2020**

The notification issued by the Ministry of Human Rights bans child domestic labour in Islamabad Capital Territory. It includes child domestic labour in the list of banned occupations listed in the schedule of the Employment of Children Act, 1991.

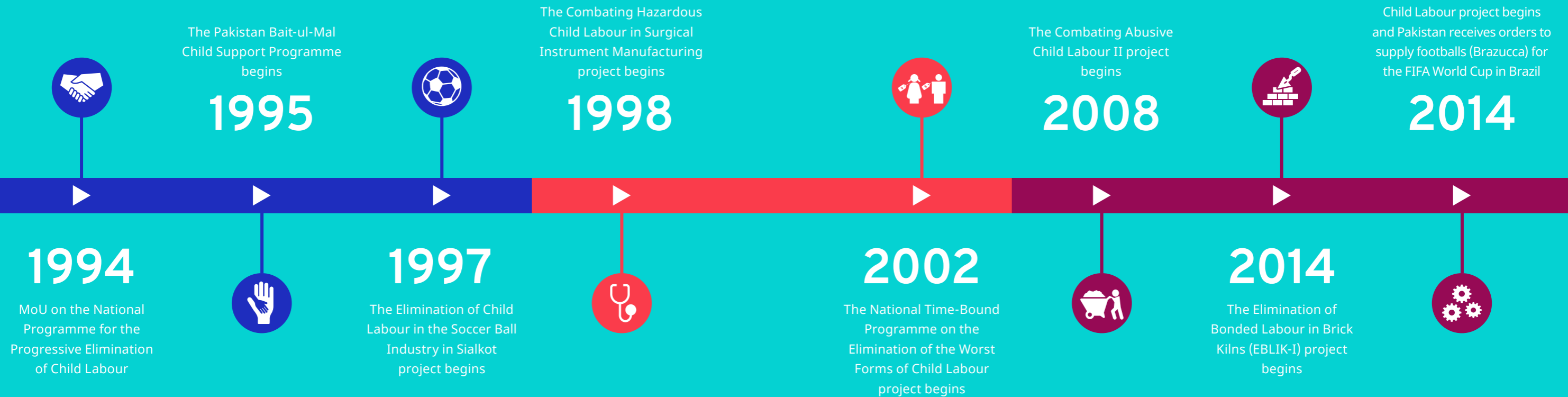
2020

► **Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Act, 2020**

This Act was introduced the Government in Pakistan to guide the state's response, alerts about, and recovery of missing, abducted, abused or kidnapped children. Based on the Act, the 'Zainab Alert' system was introduced, as discussed below.



Social and development programmes



1994

► **Memorandum of Understanding on the National Programme for the Progressive Elimination of Child Labour in Pakistan**

Under the framework of the ILO's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), the Government of Pakistan and the ILO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in June 1994 for the progressive elimination of child labour. By 1997, IPEC Pakistan was the largest of more than 20 IPEC national programmes worldwide. The programme successfully completed initiatives in Pakistan's export sector (related to football production, carpet weaving and surgical equipment) and at the local level (linked to deep sea fishing, leather tanneries, domestic work, coal mines, rag-picking, automotive-workshops, glass bangles, and brick kilns).

It contributed to the Government of Pakistan's ownership of the agenda on eliminating child labour. It enriched federal statistics by collaborating with the Ministry Labour on the country's first national survey on child labour in 1996. It also supported the Ministry of Labour to establish five Child Labour Units at the federal and provincial levels to holistically address child labour. With the programme's assistance, the Ministry of Education ensured that the National Education Policy of 2009 effectively responded to, and rehabilitated, thousands of child labourers through the provision of formal and non-formal education. The programme also encouraged the private sector (industries) to start various initiatives to eliminate child labour from their work processes and supply chains.

1995

► **Bait-ul-Mal Child Support Programme**

Since 1995, Pakistan *Bait-ul-Mal* National Centres for the Rehabilitation of Child Labour have been established nationwide. These aim to remove children from engagement in child labour, including its worst forms, and increase vulnerable children's access to education. *Bait-ul-Mal* initiatives also include a pioneering [Child Support Programme](#).

1997-2003

► **Elimination of Child Labour in the Soccer Ball Industry in Sialkot, Pakistan**

Under the Atlanta agreement of February 1997, the ILO and UNICEF implemented a project to eliminate child labour in Pakistan's football production sector, with the financial support of the United States Department of Labour and the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce. The ILO promoted a workplace monitoring system (focusing on prevention and removal) and social protection (for prevention and rehabilitation). UNICEF focused on prevention through awareness raising and primary school enrolment. Save the Children undertook social monitoring and rehabilitated adult workers through women's employment, paired with a savings and credit scheme.

1998-2007

► **Combating Hazardous and Exploitative Child Labour in Surgical Instrument Manufacturing**

The project aimed to withdraw children from the manufacturing of surgical instruments.

It sought to prevent their entry into the sector and to provide appropriate rehabilitation, prevention and protection services to targeted children and their families. It also strengthened the capacity of social partners (employers' and workers' organizations) to prevent and progressively eliminate child labour in surgical instrument manufacturing.

2002–
2008

► **National Time-Bound Programme on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Pakistan (Phase I-II)**

Funded by United States Department of Labour and the Danish International Development Agency, the project facilitated the withdrawal of 10,217 child workers, and prevented the entry of 1,834 children, into various sectors. These included surgical instrument manufacturing, leather tanneries, coal mines, glass bangle production, rag-picking and deep-sea fishing. The project trained 52 school teachers on the consequences of the worst forms of child labour and addressing children's needs in the classroom. It also supported the establishment of Child Labour Monitoring Cells.

2008–
2013

► **Combating Abusive Child Labour II Project**

With funding from the European Union, ILO-IPEC implemented the Combating Abusive Child Labour II Project (CACL II) which formed part of the National Policy and Plan of Action to Combat Child Labour. The project supported the establishment of federal and provincial Child Labour Units to monitor the implementation of programmes for the elimination of child labour. It contributed to the immediate and phased withdrawal, prevention and rehabilitation of children involved in the worst forms of child labour. At the district, provincial and national levels, it strengthened institutional capacities and the knowledge base on child labour. At the grassroots and district levels, it developed a model for addressing child labour. It mobilized the print and electronic media to raise public awareness and lobby for action against violators. As a result of its capacity building initiatives, the Government of Punjab launched a 5-year project to replicate interventions in four districts, earmarking PKR 180 million in funding. The Government of Pakhtunkhwa initiated a similar programme in the district of Haripur, with a financial outlay of PKR 14 million for the 2012–13 fiscal year. These efforts led to Pakistan's reconsideration for the supply of footballs for the FIFA World Cup in 2014 (Brazzucca, Brazil) and in 2018 (Telstar, Russia).

2014

► **Elimination of Bonded Labour in Brick Kilns (EBLIK-I) and EBLIK-4D23**

This ILO project supported brick kiln workers to obtain Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) – identity documents required to access basic services and protection. It delivered non-formal education for brick kiln workers and their children, conducted research studies, provided legal aid and linked families to micro-credit.

2014

► **Promotion of Decent Work for Vulnerable Workers through the Elimination of Child Labour and Bonded Labour Project**

The Government of Punjab, through its Annual Development Programme budget, supported this project to eliminate child labour and bonded labour from brick kilns.

Through integrated efforts. These included rehabilitating freed bonded labourers, education for vulnerable children, networking and coordination, strengthening legislation, training to increase the capacity of law enforcement and service providers, and increasing the knowledge on issues of child and bonded labour.

2015–
2016

► **Strengthening the Capacity of Constituents to Address Unacceptable Forms of Work Focusing on Child Labour, Bonded Labour and Informal Economy Workers**

Funded by Governments of Sweden and Denmark, the project strengthened the capacity of tripartite constituents to progressively eliminate child labour, bonded labour and other unacceptable forms of work. It enhanced knowledge on these issues through research, surveys, data collection and awareness raising. It enhanced institutional capacities and coordination to improve the implementation of international labour standards through effective monitoring and reporting. It also enhanced government capacities to design effective interventions for the prevention and elimination of unacceptable form of works.

2015–
2018

► **Elimination of Child Labour and Promotion of Decent Work in the Stora Enso Value Chain in Pakistan**

To strengthen its global efforts to promote decent work and progressively eliminate child labour in its value chain in Pakistan, Stora Enso – a leading paper, biomaterials, wood products and packaging company – entered into a public-private partnership agreement with the ILO. The project involved global and local components. The global component aligned company policies and practices with international labour standards, while strengthening the company's knowledge of child labour and labour rights. The local component promoted decent work and combatted child labour in the value chain of Bulleh Shah Packaging, Stora Enso's joint venture in Pakistan.

2015–
2019

► **Strengthening the Labour Inspection System for Promoting Labour Standards and Ensuring Workplace Compliance in Pakistan**

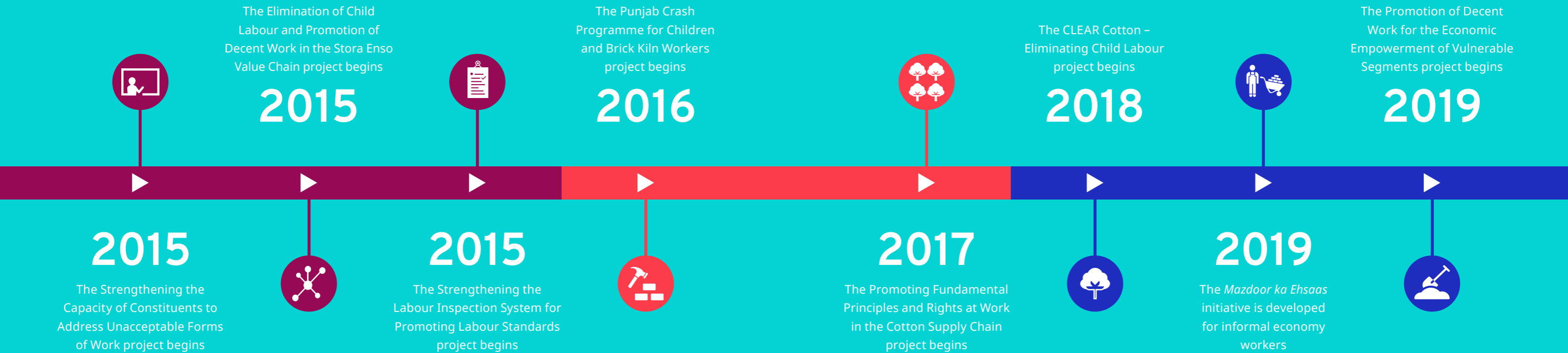
The ILO and the Government of the Netherlands embarked on a partnership in 2015 to revitalize Pakistan's labour inspection machinery. This project helped to strengthen the regulatory frameworks and institutional capacities of the labour inspection apparatus to advance the implementation of labour laws, including on child labour.

2016

► **Punjab Crash Programme for Children and Brick Kiln Workers**

This project by Punjab's Labour and Human Resource Department, School Education Department and Social Protection Authority identified 80,000 working children and brick kiln workers. It sought to enrol these children in education and link their families with the Punjab Social Protection Authority to receive assistance (stipends) if they could provide school attendance certificates. The programme could not be continued due to a lack of regular government support and coordination between departments.

Social and development programmes



2017–2021

► **Promoting Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work in the Cotton Supply Chain**

Funded by INDITEX, this ILO project fosters partnerships among stakeholders on fundamental principles and rights at work, in order to make the cotton supply chain sustainable. It focuses on improving the knowledge base, enhancing respect for fundamental principles and rights at work in the cotton supply chain, a meaningful social dialogue platform and promoting engagement at the industry level. Through awareness raising, training and the use of information, education and communications materials, the project enhanced the knowledge of 1,860 direct and 5,000 indirect beneficiaries on workers' rights and protection against COVID-19 (as of May 2021).

2018–2022

► **CLEAR Cotton – Eliminating Child Labour and Forced Labour in the Cotton, Textile and Garment Value Chains: An Integrated Approach**

Co-funded by the European Union, this project contributes to eliminating all forms of child labour and forced labour in the cotton, textile and garment value chains. It combines integrated area-based and value chain approaches to collaborate with governments, social partners, farmers, communities and industries. It has contributed to: (i) research, knowledge and policy development, (ii) capacity building and awareness raising (iii) the implementation of laws on child and forced labour, (iv) the development of monitoring and remedial mechanisms, (v) the direct withdrawal of child labourers and the prevention of child labour, (vi) improving children's access to education, and (vii) strengthening alternative skills in cotton producing communities.

2019

► ***Mazdoor ka Ehsaas* ('Compassion for Workers')**

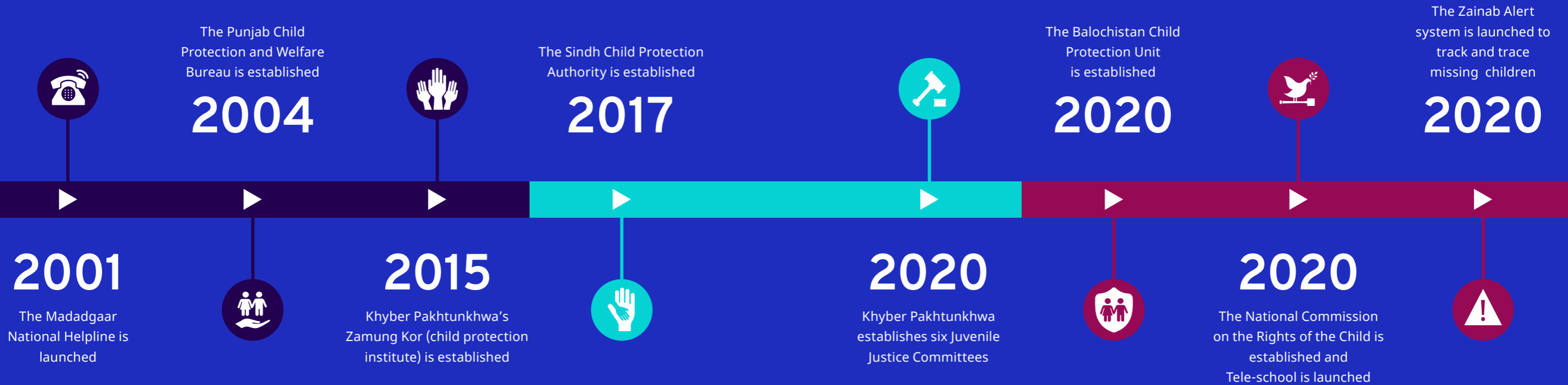
Part of the national *Ehsaas* Programme, this initiative aims to develop social protection measures for workers in the informal economy. It seeks to extend a monthly unconditional cash transfer of PKR 4,000 for these workers as an incentive to keep their children in school. This approach is intended to address child labour, especially in the brick kiln sector. The Government of Pakistan is also issuing *Insaaf* Health Cards to secure medical treatment of up to PKR 1 million for 'deserving' families.

2019–2021

► **Promotion of Decent Work Opportunities for the Economic Empowerment of Vulnerable Segments of Society**

This is innovative project supports jobs creation, social protection and decent work in Pakistan. It consists of three main components: (i) strengthening national capacities to effectively eliminate exploitative labour practices (child labour and bonded labour), (ii) promoting a coordinated social protection system, based on the concept of social protection floors, and (iii) engaging the Pakistani diaspora in Italy to create jobs and promote entrepreneurship in Pakistan. The project will build on past work by ILO and key stakeholders on the elimination of child and bonded labour in Pakistan, consolidating and replicating previous efforts to ensure sustainability.

Institutional mechanisms



2001

► **Madadgaar National Helpline 111-911-922**

Established in 2001, Pakistan's first helpline provides referral, rehabilitation and reintegration services over the telephonic and face-to-face for women and children in cases of sexual or physical abuse, violence, exploitation, trafficking, kidnapping, domestic violence, missing children, honour killings, and custodial abuse, among other offences.

2004

► **Punjab Child Protection and Welfare Bureau**

In order to provide care, rehabilitation, education and training to destitute and neglected children, the Government of the Punjab established [Child Protection and Welfare Bureau](#) in March 2004.

One of its objectives is to protect vulnerable children from criminals. In addition to providing food and shelter, it provides education and skills development opportunities for children, while seeking to reunite them with their families. The bureau's child psychologists support children's mental development and rehabilitation. A Child Protection Court has been established to address custody issues, and the legal reunification of children with their parents. A child helpline has been set up to provide guidance, support and coordination for rescuing and protecting children in vulnerable situations.

2015

► **Zamung Kor**

The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's child protection institute, Zamung Kor, was established in 2015 to address the needs of children engaged in child labour and street children who are vulnerable to abuse. It aims to provide them with a safe, respectable and comfortable shelter, alongside educational, health, recreational and sports facilities, psychological and career counselling to help children become engaged citizens.

2017

► **Sindh Child Protection Authority**

In line with the Sindh Child Protection Authority Act of 2011, three Child Protection Units (CPUs) were initially established in Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur. By 2014-2015, 15 Child Protection Units were fully operationalized, in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department, UNICEF, and international and national NGOs.

The Sindh Child Protection Authority was fully operationalized in 2017 to strengthen the provincial child protection system by establishing Child Protection Units in all of Sindh's 29 districts, create District Coordination Committees for Child Protection under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner of each district, and launch a 24-hour Sindh Child Helpline (1122).

2020

► **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Juvenile Justice Committees**

The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in collaboration with the Peshawar High Court, notified and established six Juvenile Justice Committees in Abbottabad, Bajaur, Mohmand, Peshawar, Mardan and Chitral to exercise the diversion process under the Juvenile Justice System Act of 2018.

2020

► **Balochistan Child Protection Unit**

Under the Balochistan Child Protection Act of 2016, the province established its first Child Protection Unit in the provincial capital, Quetta. The unit works to enhance the enforcement of the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance. It has developed a child protection case referral model, provides services for children, and addresses cases of abuse through Child Protection Officers, case referrals, a management information system and a helpline.

2020

► **Tele-school**

The Government of Pakistan launched the Tele-school television channel in 2020 to deliver education to children at home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2020

► **National Commission on the Rights of the Child**

The Federal Government constituted a [National Commission on the Rights of Child](#) in line with Section 3(1) of the National Commission on the Rights of Child Act of 2017, through a notification issued on 28 February 2020. The commission has started working with provincial members. Its mandate is to ensure child protection across Pakistan.

2020

► **Zainab Alert System**

In the wake of the Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Act, the Zainab Alert System was launched on the Pakistan Citizen's Portal, making it instantly available to 3 million registered users. This is a strong move to unify and strengthen efforts to track and trace missing children, and address cases of child abuse in Pakistan. The Zainab Alert System will activate state machinery at the provincial and district levels for an effective emergency response and the recovery of missing children.



ILO Country Office for Pakistan
ilo.org/islamabad

ILO Building, Sector G-5/2,
Near State Bank of Pakistan
Islamabad, 44000, Pakistan

Tel : +92 51 2276456-8
Fax : +92 51 2279181-2

