



CAUSES & CIRCUMSTANCES OF ENROLMENT & MOVING-OUT OF THE CHILDREN IN CHILD CARE CENTERS & ORPHANAGES

Action Research in Islamabad and Rawalpindi



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Acronyms

CCC: Child Care Center

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

IDRAC: Institute of Development Research and Corresponding Capabilities

NCCWD: National Commission for Child Welfare and Development

NDMA: National Disaster Management Authority

NGO: Non Governmental Organisation

OVC: Orphans and Vulnerable Children

SIF: Secours Islamique France

Glossary

Child Care Center/Institution: Residential care settings where children are looked after in any public or private facility, employed by child care professionals or volunteers. In Islamabad and Rawalpindi CCCs, capacity ranges from 30-1800.

NGO: Non-governmental organization

Orphan: A child that has lost one or both parents. The loss of one parent classifies a child as a “single orphan” and the loss of both parents as a “double orphan”.

Orphanage: An orphanage is a type of child care facility and is most often thought of as a child care Center or institution (see definition above).

OVC: Orphans and vulnerable children.

Family Reunification: A child enrolled in a CCC, returning to their respective family. This could include kinship or parental care and often involves return to communities of origin.

Executive Summary

The aim of this study has been to assess the reasons for the increased enrolment of children into orphanages and child care centres. An action research was conducted in Islamabad and Rawalpindi between November and December 2017 to assess the situation and identify the causes and circumstance that bring in and compel orphans and vulnerable children to move out after a certain age or grade. But the last bit does not apply to all the centres.

Recent data shows that 4 out of 5 children in CCCs are not double orphans, suggesting parent(s) are forced to send their children to CCCs largely because of unbearable poverty. Other reasons for this enrolment are access to education, parental caused either by natural disasters or for some other accidents, natural death or otherwise. Literature review also shows that admitting children in CCCs imprints adverse psychological, social, emotional and physical impacts on children's personalities and behaviours.

IDRAC has employed Quantitative and Qualitative research methodologies to acquire a holistic understanding of the causes and circumstance of the children themselves and the parents, those who are alive. Precisely, the methodology relies and attempts to draw results both from primary and secondary sources of information. It is essential to emphasise that gender dimensions have been carefully taken care of while designing and implementing the researching tools, and during interpretation of the findings.

The qualitative and quantitative findings are corroborated with the ideas and insights learned through the literature review. Poverty, large family size and access to education are the three dominant reasons for the enrolment of children in CCCs and orphanages in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Parental physical or mental disability and other forms of vulnerabilities, especially of the father, also cause putting children into the centres. With increased population growth, unplanned and haphazard urbanization accompanying multiple social problems, more and more families are turning economically marginalized and threatened.

The study recommends that programmes and interventions be devised at the family level as well as at the district administrative level to discourage enrolment of children in care. Parents and families need to be supported at the household and community level, through financial and technical support. Strengthening their capacity to take care of their children will reduce the tendency of enrolling them to the child centres and orphanages. Family planning need to be further intensified and new strategies be adopted while intervening both in rural and urban suburbs to reduce the sizes of the families. Social protection and social security measures be adopted to discourage the trend of the putting children into residential care.

Availability and accessibility of education may also reduce the trend of enrolling the children into child care centres as seeking children's education also emerged as one of the major causes of enrolling children in bid cities where education is compulsory part of raising these children along with food and shelter.

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Section 1: Introduction

The number of orphan children in Pakistan is said to be constantly rising. Apart from several other socio-economic reasons, incidents such as the earthquake - 2005, periodical floods including the super floods 2009-2011, terrorist attacks and blasts and road accidents multiplied the number further, mainly in the last couple of decades. Most of these children have lost either one or both of the parents. **In 2011, for instance, approximately 1500 orphans were registered with Pakistan Bait-ul-Maal's (PBM) Child Care Center (CCC) known as Sweet Homes. Just in one year i.e. in 2012 the number jumped to 2800 (Dawn, 2012).** The orphan children without any other member of their family to care depend on alternative modes of care such as orphanages. It is likely that children deprived of special care may fall victim to child abuse, beggary, trafficking, child labour, juvenile delinquency and other anti-social behaviours.

In Pakistan, some children are enrolled in CCCs because their primary care givers are no longer alive, but there are many others reasons. In case of parental divorce or separation, single mother or father or facing extreme poverty, parents find themselves unable to raise their kids appropriately. Many a children may run away from homes because of domestic or school violence and end upon streets and other public places where from they are enrolled in one or another orphanage/ CCC.

It is widely recognised that children without parental care are at a higher risk of discrimination, inadequate care, abuse and exploitation. Family-based care is frequently emphasized in the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989. The convention also stresses that family environment is best for the child's emotional and social growth and development. Pakistan has signed and ratified CRC in 1990 and claims of its commitment to uphold the principles of child nourishment and care as envisaged in CRC. However, there is very little comprehensive legislation for the protection of children without parental care. Even where there is some legislation, institutional mechanisms and support is very little.

Purpose of Study

This action research has been conducted to assess different causes of children in and out of the orphan centers to set the future priorities in SIF's program intervention. This research aims to serve SIF for devising strategies for future interventions for child welfare and wellbeing at household level by focusing on the family reunification of the single parent children and on the other end, SIF has an intention to build the capacity of the children leading to age 18 years to aid their reintegration into society.

Structure of Report

The report has been divided into several sections. The first section has briefly described the current situation of OVC. The study has aimed to be specific to Pakistan, and thus avoided generalisations by discussing orphans at a global scale. We understand there are certain geographical events such as vulnerability to floods and earthquakes, and cultural and social norms such as role of extended family and the patriarchal context that are specific to Pakistan. The next section has given an overview of the current literature relevant to children and CCCs. Section 3 describes the methodology used in this action. Section 4 focuses on the quantitative findings, whereas section 5 focuses on the qualitative findings of the study. Section 6 combines both quantitative and qualitative findings to analyse the current reasons for the enrolment of CCCs in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, and these form the basis for the administrative and programmatic policy recommendations described in section 7.

Section 2: Literature Review

2.1 Causes of Children's Enrolment in Child Care Centers

This section will highlight the different causes of children's enrolment in CCCs. There is discussion of poverty, access to education, disability, natural disasters and others as possible "push" factors. There was limited literature available especially one that was specific to Pakistan. Therefore, secondary data has been extracted from NGO reports that describe the global situation, and academic literature highlighting the risk of enrolling children in CCCs. There was no literature available relevant to capacity building and ageing out of children in CCCs.

2.11 Poverty

Generally, poverty is recognised, as one of the major causes of children's admittance in child care institutions. Parents, living in dire situations and being unable to feed, educate or clothe their child properly will have little choice but to put their child to an institution – public or private. Reportedly, material poverty is another cause of abandoning children at the time of birth (Better Care Network, 2009). Although, lack of care givers is a major factor contributing in the enrolment of children in CCCs, poverty remains the prominent reason (Bilson and Cox, 2007). In parts of Asia, poverty combined with the inability to provide educational supplies, transport and clothing, coupled with parental illness is forcing families to place a child in CCCs and orphanages (UNICEF, 2010). Moreover, studies have shown that in almost 90% of the cases, poverty and homelessness are deciding factors in children's placements in CCCs/ orphanages (University of Nottingham, 2012).

2.12 Access to Education

Another reason for the enrolment of children appears to be to gain access to education. For instance, in Sri Lanka, 20% of the children under institutional care in the North East Province were said to be there to access education (Save the Children, 2010).

2.13 Disability

Children with disabilities are also likely to be enrolled in CCCs or orphanages (Faith to Action, 2014). When families fail to access right support services or if inclusive education is missing in the local area, that also becomes of the causes to put children in CCCs. Negative and derogatory social attitudes towards disabilities also play a role in enrolling children in the Centers. In some countries parents are encouraged to place babies with disabilities in institutions (UNICEF, 2013) whereas in others children with disabilities are considered unlucky or cursed.

2.14 Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination might be another cause of admitting children into the CCCs. In India, of the 11 million abandoned or orphaned girls, 90% are observed to be girls (The Guardian, 2009). As reported by UNICEF, the number of girls in child care institutions is considerably higher than that of boys in Sri Lanka, despite the fact that boys represent majority of the child population as estimated by the 2001 Census (Save the Children, 2010). Unfortunately, similar statistics are not available for Pakistan but the context of the patriarchal society and gender discriminatory trends are the same. This suggests a need to address the social and cultural norms and attitudes that oppress and undermine girls and women.

2.15 Child Trafficking and Exploitation

In some of the developing countries, poor parents are offered money to give up their children. Corrupt institutions, and unethical and illicit adoption agencies profit from the children by collecting donations for their orphanages or through child trafficking (Csaky, 2009).

Families with limited access to education for their children in rural areas are often targeted. Convincing families that their child will receive a better education and will have better future in a boarding school, they succeed in securing children for their Centers. Under this guise, the recruiters often collect several children from a village and then depart with the children to a big city (Doore cited in The Conversation, 2015), where they make profit through several means.

There are detailed cases of children then being placed for inter-country adoption, but limited state attention has been paid to what happens to the children who are brought to the orphanages. The orphanage/ CCCs profit in many ways from the presence of these “orphans” in their institutes. Some of the orphanages encourage volunteers to come, educate and facilitate children in number of ways. Taking advantage of their time and free of charge contribution, such institutions profit through the fees they charge and lower care costs due to the free services provided by the compassionate albeit naïve volunteers.

2.16 Child Abuse, Neglect and Violence

There are children who simply cannot live with their parents due to child abuse and/or neglect. Moreover, violence within the family may place those affected children at a higher risk of being placed in an orphanage than their peers. In certain cases, almost half of the children found in CCCs are reported of going through the trauma of physical or psychological violence, including sexual violence. These children, in-fact, need family-based alternative care which is protective and is carefully monitored.

2.17 Street Children

Haphazard urbanization, rising unemployment in rural areas, excessive poverty, family disintegration and large family size are some of the chief causes that increase the number of street children. Street children ending up in CCCs – directly or indirectly – also multiplying the strength of children in the orphanages and CCCs. Street children either find their way to a child care Centers themselves or referred there by a friend, relative or through child welfare services.

Street children are a common and growing occurrence in the large cities of Pakistan, particularly in Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi/Islamabad, Faisalabad, Peshawar and Quetta. Currently, around 1.2 million children are estimated to be living on the streets of Pakistan. Although there are no reliable official statistics, the number of street children, only in Punjab is estimated to be 130,000, that constitutes the largest of the neglected social groups in the country.

2.18 Natural Disasters

Increased flooding and frequent natural disasters such as horrible earthquakes also lead to the loss of family and may become just another cause of children being admitted in orphanages and CCCs. Being a disaster prone country, Pakistan also experiences massive floods and appalling earthquakes. After the unprecedented earthquake 2005, the Government of Pakistan (NDMA), along with child welfare NGOs (mainly UNICEF and Save the Children) collected data of orphans and vulnerable children. About 40,000 children were found to be orphans, most of whom had reportedly lost one or both of the parents before the earthquake. It is impossible to ascertain the whereabouts of these 40,000, however, one could assume some are with their remaining parent, some are with extended family members, some are in CCCs/orphanages, or some, sadly have become involved in child labour or become victims of child trafficking. Specifically, in Kashmir more than a 1000 thousand children were evacuated from the danger-zone to receive medical care. Thousands more, was separated from their parents and relatives (Fox News, 2005).

Recently the National Commission for Child Welfare and Development (NCCWD) drafted a policy for the orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) in the earthquake affected areas of Hazara and Azad Kashmir. It is argued that the extended-family system in Pakistan is quite strong, however, the responsibility of caring for the relative's children puts extra burden on the underprivileged families. Families, themselves living in extreme poverty, are forced to send the orphaned children of their relatives to the alternative care institutions such as orphanages, madrasas or CCCs.

2.19 Summary

This section identifies, possible 'push' factors that may place the children in institutions ranging from poverty to child trafficking. In addition to the reported reasons, many other factors such as unregistered marriages, babies born out of wedlock, insecurity due to war on terror, displacement, homeless street children and other family disputes and squabbles also lead to the enrolment of children in CCCs.

2.2 State of Children inside Child Care Centers

A broad range of evidence (cited in Faith to Action, 2014), suggests that a nurturing family environment is directly linked to positive child development. A family provides a child with care, love and a sense of belonging. Through families, children learn and participate in cultural traditions which become a vital part of their identity. Children also learn vital social skills through interacting and engaging with family and friends. These aspects are reportedly found lacking in CCCs and orphanages. Various studies reveal that children staying in CCCs are at risk from psychological, physical, social and emotional issues. Moreover, many factors may contribute in determining the cognitive, behavioural and emotional development of children in these institutions. Some of the issues are discussed below:

2.21 Psychological Impact

Placing children in child care institutions involves serious psychological risks. Despite good physical care and social stimulation, such children nurture the feeling of being 'unwanted' and lack the experience of motherly love and care (Freud et al. 1973). Most of the orphanage children go through traumatic incidents yet they are rarely offered mental health facilities (Ahmad et al. 2005). Other studies consider the children living in institutes and orphanages more susceptible to long-term psychological and social effects than children in foster care.

2.22 Physical Impact

According to a study conducted in orphanages, malnutrition cases among orphan's result in poor mental health (Panpanich, 1999). Orphans represent an important an important section of society as being children all of them pass through a crucial phase of their physical and mental growth in the child care Centers. Obviously, they need special health and nutritional care with proper guidance. The study finds 12 percent of the orphans to be anaemic. Another study, reports that poor hygienic conditions are observed to be a cause of orphans' infectious status. In an orphanage, children usually eat without washing their hands and ate in non-hygienic

places. Many of them also share the same dish. More orphans than non-orphans report a lack of food at home, being hungry at school and going to bed while hungry (Makame, 2002).

2.23 Emotional Impact

Research suggests few options are available for the rehabilitation of orphans in south Asia's orphanage rearing. A study conducted in four major orphanages of Srinagar describe the lack of desired facilities and their impact on psychological adjustment of these children. Adverse living conditions like poor residential setup, rigid timetables, missing recreation facilities, lack of nutritious food and lack of modern educational facilities were found to be causal factors in children's psychological difficulties in adult life (Hassan and Marghoob, 2006).

2.24 Social Impact

As per certain reliable research findings, orphans are more depressed and pessimistic about their future than non-orphans. Schooling is essential for normal child development. Orphans missing schools fail to avail the opportunity to socialise with their peers. Hence, the mental development of these children is negatively affected. Other studies offer evidence that poor social-emotional interactions play a role in troubling developmental outcomes of children ranging from poor physical growth to attachment problems, and general behavioural and mental deficits (Foster et al. 1997). Such studies also suggest that young children raised in institutional care where quality interactions with their caregivers is absent, are particularly at risk of experiencing these outcomes.

Section 3-Methodology

To accumulate representative, dependable and generalizable data in the given time and resources, IDRAC adopted a cluster-based and a non probability sampling technique. IDRAC developed and implemented a research design which covers diversified areas, incorporates all voices, ensures maximum data collection and covers all realistic possibilities. To develop an extensive research publication and update SIF's existing knowledge management documents, IDRAC uses a Quantitative and Qualitative research methodology to acquire a holistic and deeper understanding of the project. We adopt a participatory approach which allows inclusion and engagement of all key stakeholders at all stages of the study. Precisely, the methodology allows us to produce a comprehensive report that relies both on primary and secondary data to approach to certain conclusions that are evidence-based and trustworthy. Gender dimensions are carefully taken care of while drafting, implementing the researching tools, and during discussion of the findings. 10 CCCs were visited across Islamabad and Rawalpindi (Annex 1). The eminent tools employed by the research team are as follows:

3.1 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

KIIs proved vital for gaining an in-depth understanding of the views and perceptions of the key stakeholders. KIIs were used to interview key persons, using semi-structured interview guidelines. Findings approached from this tool form a major part of our analysis. A list of key informants was drawn in consultation with the SIF team, which includes the parents of children, who are enrolled in alternative care, and management/administration and respective teachers of the Centers/orphanages. Implementing KIIs with the administration of the Centers/orphanages did not prove to be difficult, however, during KIIs with parents, enumerators were faced with some obstacles, mostly dealing with conservative codes and language issues. Firstly, all mothers had to be interviewed by a female enumerator, except in one Center. Secondly, due to parents being from areas like Swat, Peshawar and Multan, and being illiterate, they had difficulty understanding the questions, so there was a prominent language barrier during most interviews with parents. To overcome this, some interviews were

conducted in Potohari, Saraiki and Pashto, to make the respondent more comfortable and extract maximum information. In one case, a daughter of a father being interviewed who did not understand Urdu, had to translate for him.

3.2 Structured Questionnaires

Structured Questionnaires were one of the vital tools employed by IDRAC to collect statistical responses of the participants. Structured questionnaires were employed in the child care institutions/orphanages across Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Structured questionnaires were conducted only with children aged 12-18. The questionnaires allowed us to gather additional information on the reasons why children are enrolled in such institutions, what their living conditions are inside the institutions, how are they prepared for life outside the institution, and more importantly to assess the ways and the extent to which SIF can aid both the children and the institutions. The process of selecting students was voluntary, pluralistic, non-discriminatory and democratic. All students, aged 12-18 of the Center received an open invitation to participate, a presentation was made to them outlining the research aims.

All the children were approached through their respective administration, by requesting them to allow us to interact with the children. Where upon meeting a child, we kindly explained the process of the tool and explained the the aim of study. After the child was comfortable the enumerator started the questionnaire, the questionnaires have been asked in a polite and slow manner, and enumerators made sure that no answers were forced even if children were reluctant, which is why we added a 'No Response' section in Questionnaires, as the literature review showed children living in child care Centers often have psychological and socio-emotional issues, and therefore may have trouble expressing themselves. An issue faced was that younger children sometimes did not manage to grasp the purpose of the study and failed to answer some questions. Therefore, our preference was to conduct the tool with children who were above 16, as they would better understand the study and also give more reliable answers due to intellectual matureness.

3.3 Focus Groups

An important aspect of focus groups is that participants present a viewpoint, listen, reflect on what is said and further consider their own viewpoint. It is argued that focus groups present a more naturalised setting than individual interviews because participants just like in real life, are influencing others and being influenced by others. While interacting with the Centers, the situation was unique. As these Centers are administered by limited employers and all have demanding schedules, getting key figures in the same room together at the same time for a full length FGD proved impossible.

Therefore, we have considered short conversations with 3-4 people which included children, managers, community mobilizers and teachers, a tool which will form some part of our analysis. In one Center, during IDRAC's visit, the manager, community mobilizer and administrator happened to be having an impromptu meeting, so we asked a couple of vital questions and gained some valuable insight from the key figures of the establishment. The group context of the discussion ensured that data was generated through interaction between the key stakeholders, with little intervention from IDRAC's moderators.

3.4 Case Studies

The strength of this research method is its ability to discover a wide variety of social, cultural, and political issues that are related to the enrolment of children into child care Centers, and their prospects once they leave. IDRAC's team conducted a study of individuals with exceptional circumstances. These included parents who were living in extreme poverty and forced to send their children to Centers and success stories of students who came into the Centers under dire circumstances, and now were excelling in academia.

3.5 Observations

Observations can be effective in exploring or underlying realities of situations, researchers can discover discrepancies between what participants say and believe, and what actually happens.

IDRAC understands that analysis of such information depends on upon the judgments, assumptions and prior knowledge and experience of the observer themselves. Observations made inside the Centers, during the interviews and structured questionnaires form an integral part of our research strategy. Our approach consisted of a mix of techniques; ranging from informal interviews to direct observation of body language, health of respondents, confidence, and comfortability/irritability during questioning or on specific questions.

Enumerators were advised to make note of things such as eye contact made during interviews, physical injuries of parents which may limit their ability to find labour, reluctance to questions, too see people or see some areas of the institution. Some Centers did not let the team visit the girl’s sections of the institution, even to the female enumerator. The supplemental information gathered through observations, provides some context to the findings from our other tools and allows us to gain a better understanding of the current situation regarding child care Centers in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

3.6 Sample Size

Research Tool	Male	Female	Total
Case Studies	1	4	4
FGDs	1	1	2
KII with Parents	5	11	16
KII with staff of Centres	5	5	10
Questionnaires with children	11	10	21

Table A- Gender Wise Division of Research Tools

Key informant interviews, Structured Questionnaires, Focus Groups and Case studies were conducted in 10 Centers situated in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The table above illustrates the sample size for this particular study.

3.7 Limitations

Finding parents to interview proved to be challenging. In some Centers there is no record of the parents of the children, and in some parents/ relatives/ guardians of the children are not traceable or accessible as they are geographically scattered across Pakistan, coming from Lahore, Swat, Karachi, Bahawalpur, Peshawar, and FATA. According to the management of the Centers and evident from our visits, few will agree to talk or have the capacity to do so. Therefore, it has proved somewhat difficult to interview a larger number of parents, despite our genuine efforts and sincerity to achieve the task. Moreover, for parents who were living in the aforementioned places, we requested their contact information so we could interview them over the telephone, however, this information was not made available. Therefore, the sample size of the parents consists largely of parents who are part of community where the Center is, or of parents who stay with their children inside the child care institution.

Moreover, an assessment of the Centers reviewed suggest that the age-out principle is not so relevant, as there is no limit or strict guideline pertaining to the age a child has to leave the Center. Not many Centers deploy the age-out principle as of yet as they are relatively new so no child has reached that point. However, in most Centers boys can leave once they find a job, and girls can leave once they get married. One Center, who has been operating for over 20 years in Islamabad, has had children who have aged-out, but the Center was adamant on not giving us their information for an interview, for unknown reasons.

Furthermore, the field team also had to be careful and sensitive towards the gender dimensions of the project. IDRAC understood the context in which the study was being conducted, and was aware that some social and cultural norms would restrict data collection especially the regarding gender dimensions. For instance, it is not acceptable for a male enumerator to

interview a girl or mother, or on occasions enter the building of all girls Centers. Moreover, the conservative moral codes of Rawalpindi and Islamabad diminished any chances of conducting a focus group with a mixture of girls and boys, or mothers and fathers together.

Logistics was an additional issue faced by the field team. Due to the Khatam-e Nabawut dharna several roads leading into Rawalpindi from Islamabad were and still are closed, making travel to some Centers impossible. Due to the unstable circumstances, this has an obvious security dimension and the field team were cautious in their visits by postponing trips or taking alternative routes. Understandably, some Centers near Faizabad were unwilling to accommodate the team so alternative institutions had to be explored.

Other issues faced during this study were the non responsiveness of Centers managers and an unwillingness to collaborate during the initial request to visit, renegeing on commitments of providing contact information of parents, or inviting them to Centers for interviews. A few Centers cancelled our appointment to visit the Centers at the last minute. Bureaucracy was obvious in some Centers, with the team waiting hours to speak to management, and at the end finding out that we would not be able to speak to them even after following relevant protocols such as providing a signed engagement letter. Overall, issues of traceability, accessibility and availability were faced when dealing with management, parents and aged-out children, which will be further discussed in the findings.

Section 4- Findings Based on Quantitative Analysis

Part of the findings of this study are based on quantitative analysis presented in this chapter. Results drawn from the structured questionnaires, conducted with children aged 12-18 in child care Centers and orphanages form the basis of this section. The said tool allowed us to identify the following:

- 1) Causes of enrolment of children in the Child Care Centers;
- 2) The state of children inside the Centres;
- 3) Role of the Centres in capacity development of the children

4.1 Causes of Admitting Children in Child Care Centres

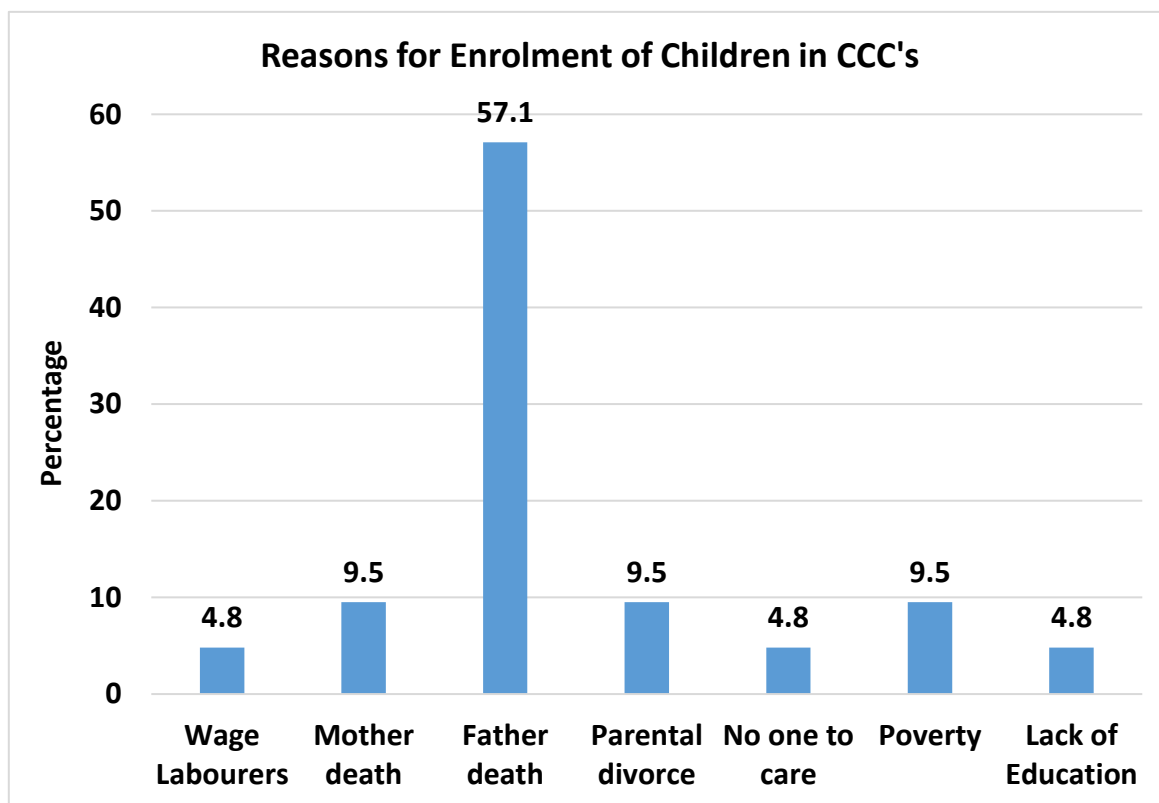


Figure 1.0- Children's perceived reasons for their Admittance in CCC's

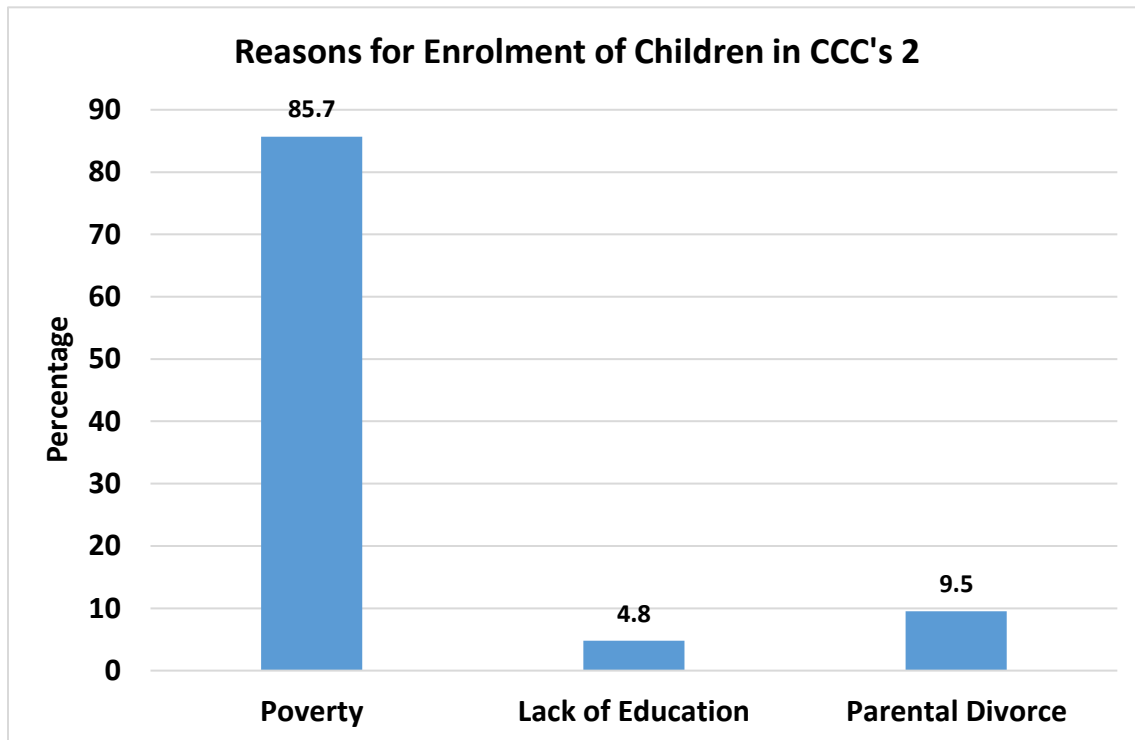


Figure 1.1- Combined Reasons for Enrolment of Children

In response to the questionnaires conducted with children enrolled in the child care centres and orphanages **about 57% of them are there because their father passed away (Figure 1.0)**. Whereas **10% are there because their mother passed away**. Only **5% of them are there because they have no one to care**. The results, therefore, suggest that majority of children in relevant institutions are not double orphans.

It is reasonable to combine the 'wage labouring', mother's and particularly father's death, and the 'no one to care' categories, as they all contribute towards poverty. As an outcome, the combined factors reveal that almost **85% of the children are enrolled in child care institutions either due to the abject poverty or situations leading to poverty** (see **Figure 1.1**). Moreover, it can be interpreted from the data that some of the social, cultural and economic causes highlighted in the literature review can also be associated with our findings about admitting children in CCC's. Poverty, parental death, divorce or separation and access to education are predominant causes of pushing children in the centres in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

4.11 Who brings children to the Centers?

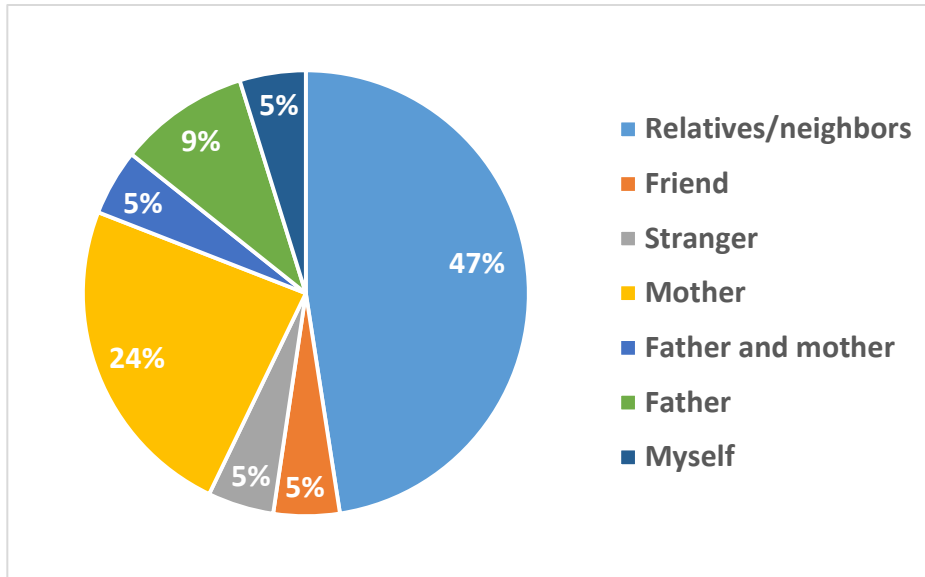


Figure 1.2- Children's Perception of who brought them to the Child Care Centers

In response to the query, 'who brought them (children) to this centre', **up to 50% of the children said they were brought to their respective institutions by their relatives/neighbours** (see **Figure 1.2**). In 5% of the cases, it was both the parents that enrolled him or her in the respective centres whereas in 24% of the cases, it was the mother who put the child there.

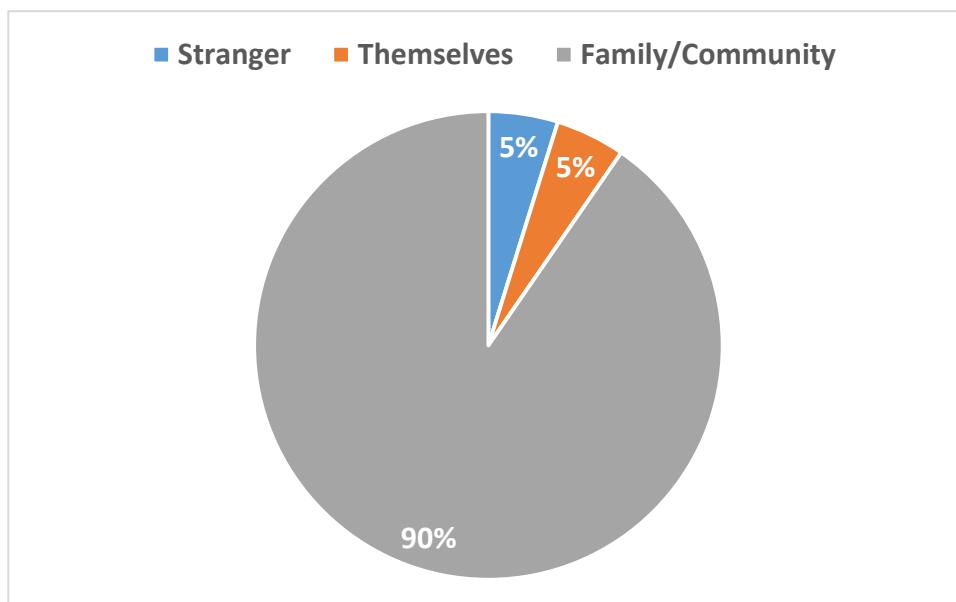


Figure 1.3- Combined Categories of who brings Children into Child Care.

The analysis suggests that in Islamabad and Rawalpindi's CCCs, father's death plays a significant role in admitting children into the centres. Aggregating relevant factors propose that in **almost 90% of the cases** (see **Figure 1.3**), the children are brought there by someone who is either part of the family or community, say mother, neighbour, relative, friend, or father. **Only 5% of the children state of being brought there by a stranger or getting in there by themselves.**

4.2 State of the children inside the Centers

Reviewing secondary data suggested that children in Orphanages and Child Care Centres suffer from adverse psychological, social, emotional and physical problems. Therefore, one of the concerns of this study was to investigate the living conditions of the children. The dimension was directly explored through structured questioning.

Ironically in response to, "are you comfortable/happy here?", all the **children (100 %) viewed themselves as being comfortable or happy there.** They were also enquired about the quality of their diet. Once again all i.e. **100% of the children thought, they were receiving sufficient food to eat,** with many lightly citing in informal interviews that they are fed up of eating meat.

4.21 Staff behaviour towards Children

In response to the question about the behaviour of the care givers in the centres, quite interestingly rather surprisingly, **all i.e. 100% of the children stated that they were satisfied with the behaviour of the staff and administration** of the Centres and/or Institutions towards them. Children who were also asked 'if they faced any issues in the centres say abuse or corporal punishment', all answered, "no", except a few who mentioned the cases of quarrels between children in the centre. To identify other problems such as **sexual or physical abuse,** children who were asked, if they have experienced any abuse during their time in the centre, all replied no. Suggesting, apart from quarrels between peers, which is common among adolescent children even outside Child Care Centres, children do not face any issues in this regard.

4.22 Children meeting with Family

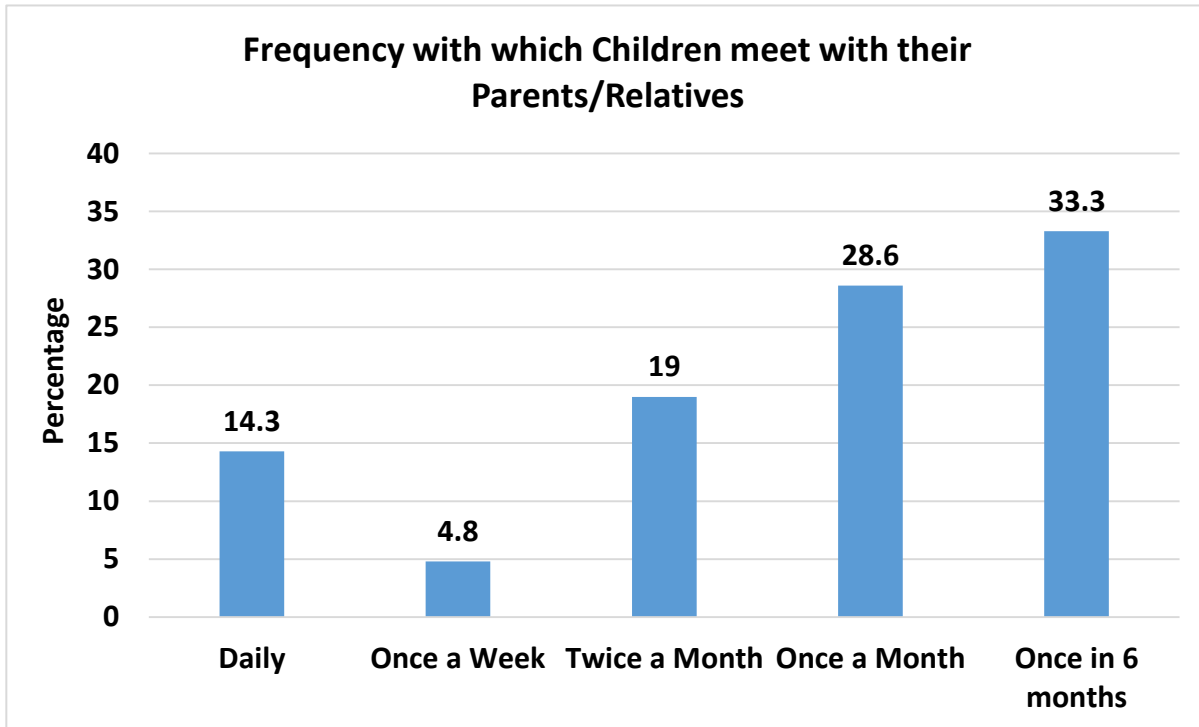


Figure 1.4- Frequency with which Children meet with Parents/Relatives

Spending time with parents/relatives is part of healthy psychological, social and emotional development as the literature review indicates. In cases where it was applicable, children were asked if they ever meet with their parents/relatives and if yes how frequently. All i.e. **100% of the children stated that they did meet their parents or family members.**

However, when asked how often they meet, the results were more varied. Around **33% (Figure 1.4) of the children stated that they meet their family/relatives, once in 6 months.** This may be the case with children in, for instance, Basaira or Al-Islah, where parents/relatives live in distant locations such as Swat, Mardan and Bajaur Agency as frequently visiting their children from such a long distance is difficult. A little above 28% met with their parents once a month while **19% agreed of meeting their parents once in two months.** A little above **14% children met their parent/relative every single day** while a little below **5% met them once a week.** This is evident in centres like SPARC, which operates as a Day Care Centre, or for Centres where

family members live in proximity and they have no one to care when and mother and father go to work. All children stated that there was a telephone service available to them if they ever want to get in contact with.

4.3 Role of the Centres in Capacity Development of Children

Capacity development of children often proves to be one of the key factors in preparing children to lead independent lives once they leave the Centres. In this context, we assume that education and extra-curricular activities play a significant role in children's capacity development.

4.31 Education

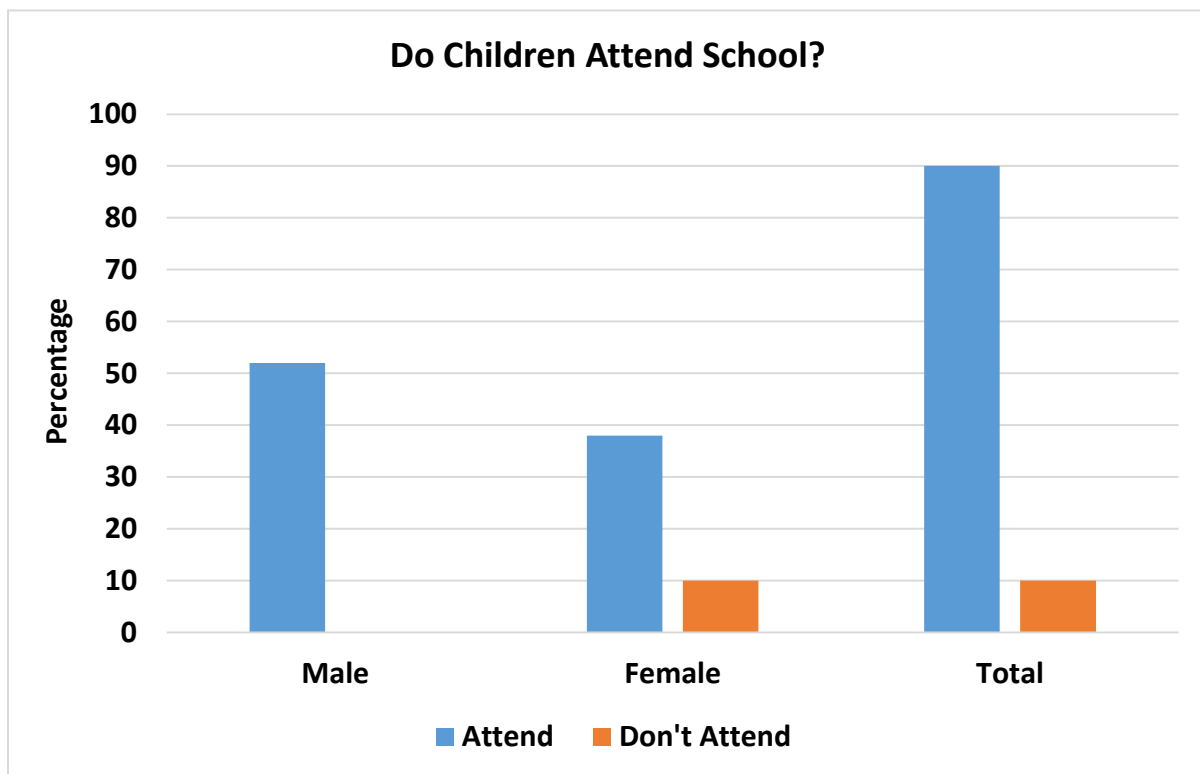


Figure 1.5- Attendance of Children in Schools with Gender Differences

As calculated from the frequency of response in the structured questionnaire, around **90% of the children attend school**. Out of the 90 % who attend school, a little above **52% are boys** (Figure 1.5) and a little below **40% are girls**. Although, educating even 90% of the children is an

impressive achievement, ensuring each child is educated should be a priority. It could also be argued, that the 10% who do not attend school are intellectually or physically incapable to do so. In certain cases, those who do not attend schools enter into the Centers at an older age, and prefer learning a technical skill, rather than attend school.

4.32 Extra-Curricular Activities

Activity	Percentage
Art	9%
Board-games	5%
Debates	24%
Sports	52%
None	10
Total	100

Table 1.0 - Children’s Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities are an important part of a normal and healthier upbringing as they teach hard-work, competition, team-work and determination. Offering pleasure is also part of children’s healthier growth. In response to the relevant question, **90% of children stated that they took part in extra-curricular activities (Table 1.0)** such as arts, board-games, debates and sports etc.

Interestingly, the same number of children who attend school, also observed of taking part in extra-curricular activities as well. The reasons for the 10% not taking part in extra-curricular activities are various. Ranging from disinterest, Centers’ not offering preferred activity, physical/ intellectual incapability and even discrimination and exclusion by other children. In

any case, management of institutions should promote inclusivity and ensure each child has an equal right to partake in their choice of extra-curricular activities.

4.33 Future of Children

Do you feel the Center has prepared you for an Independent Life, one you leave the Centre?			
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	38	24	62
No	14	24	38
			100

Table1.1 Gender Wise Capacity Building Perceptions

In what way has the Center has prepared you for independent live in future? (%)			
Activity	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Computer Training	10	10	20%
Education	24	18	42%
Electric Work	6	0	6%
Don't Know	14	18	32%
			100%

Table 1.2- Gender Wise Capacity Building Activities

In response to the children being prepared for independent life in future, **62% of the children thought that their respective Center was preparing them to live an independent life (Table 1.1)**. Results also reflect that **24% of the girls** in the sample size did not think that their respective Center had prepared them enough for an independent life, compared to **14% of the boys**. Moreover, out of the 62% who agreed of being prepared for self-reliant life, **42%** of the children stated that the preparation was through **formal education**, whereas, **20%** mentioned computer education, and **6%** stated it was through learning vocational skills such as technical or **electric work (Table 1.2)**. The remaining **32%, were not sure of or in what manner they were being prepared for an independent life in future**. Although they still thought the Center was preparing them for an independent life.

4.34 Empowering Children

Social and intellectual empowerment of children counts as an important indicator in improving the current state of children within the institutions. In other words, the Centers are supposed to play an important role in capacity development and enabling children to aspire for a better future. A positive and encouraging institutional environment helps developing children’s positive outlook towards life in future.

Do you have Aspirations and Goals?			
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Yes	50%	40%	90%
No	0	10%	10%
			100%

Table 1.3- Male and Female Aspirations and Goals

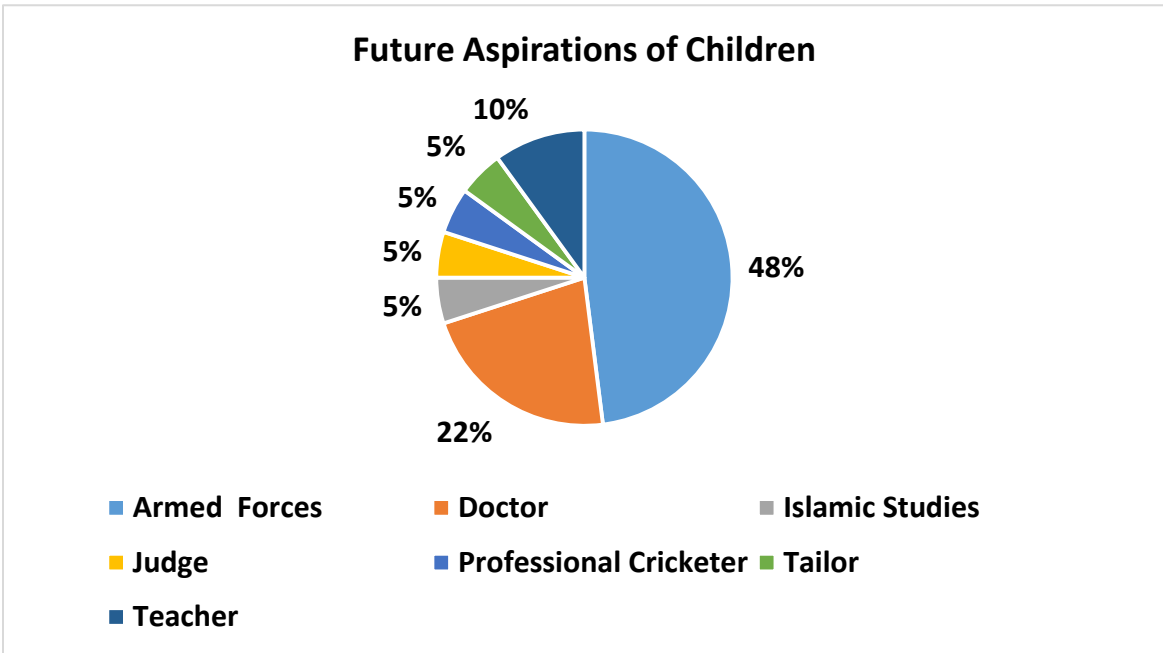


Figure 1.6- The Future Aspirations/Goals of Enrolled Children

The data divulges that **90% of the children have a goal or aspire for a professional life in the future**. Out of the 90%, **48% of children stated that they would like to join the armed forces, and 22% of the respondents stated, they would like to become a doctor in the future (Figure 1.5)**. Other professional choices included judge (5%), tailor (5%) and teacher (10%). This implies that children feel like there is enough emotional and financial support from the Center to achieve their respective goals in life.

Section 5- Findings Based on Qualitative Analysis

The findings in this section are based on Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) and Key Informant's Interviews (KIIs) with the parents of the enrolled children and KIIs with the administration of the Centers. Some Case Studies and Observations collected from the Centers in Islamabad and Rawalpindi are also described and interpreted. The tools employed enable us to analyse, discuss and draw conclusions about the following aspects of children's life:

- 1) Causes of enrolling children in the Child Care Centres
- 2) Capacity Development of the Children
- 3) Children's (re)Integration in Society

5.1 Social, Economic and Cultural Reasons for the Enrolment of Children in CCC's

Quantitative findings suggest that children perceive their father's death to be the main reason for their admittance in CCC's, however, qualitative findings propose wider socio-economic causes, such as growing poverty in rural and urban areas, larger family sizes, lack of education and employable skills, increasingly diminishing employment opportunities in rural areas, natural disasters, terrorists' attacks and other similar factors that contribute towards enrolment of children in the Centres. Conversations with parents and management of the Centres reveal the possibility of such issues existing before a father's death. But father's or mother's death, especially the father's, exacerbates the state of poverty or vulnerability as in most cases the father is the sole bread winner in Pakistani society and culture.

The KII with Fazil Basaira, the founder of Basaira Trust, sheds light on the role poverty plays in enrolling children in the Centres in the following words:

“All the children in my Centre don’t have lost their father in 2005 earthquake or in a terrorist attack. Some of them have lost their mother too but almost all have got a family. The reason children end up here is that a mother on her own can’t provide the children with the basic necessities of life. Also the extended family, usually already have their own children or other responsibilities to take care and find it impossible to assist the orphaned child of a near one. Simply, they do not own enough resources, which is why they leave their children here. We provide these children with food, shelter and of course education too.”

A similar sentiment was expressed by the manager of SPARC, an NGO which mimics a sort of Day Care Centre where children are provided with food once a day. Also the Centre offers non-formal education for 3 months and the parents are then encouraged to put their child into the mainstream public schools. Mr Azfar, states:

“No child here is singly or doubly orphaned and yet they are here. They come from the community where poverty is widespread. Most of the children belong to the refugees’ or migrant parents. Their fathers are either fruit vendors or do manual labour. In their community, the family size is quite large, seven plus people living in one room. Obviously, it is difficult to feed a family of seven or above, pay rent and utility bills all from a fruit vending. We fulfil fundamental needs of the children. Most come here just for food. They are so poor that they hardly think beyond food. You rarely find one with an interest in education.”

5.11 Large Family Sizes

The role of large family size has been a recurring theme in our conversations with parents and administration of the Child Care Centres. Arguably some of the families, in this current economic climate, drive themselves into poverty by having multiple children. Then they find it difficult to make the two ends meet. Eventually, children’s health suffers due to a lack of food and hygienic place to live. They fail to educate their children due to the associated schooling costs. Parents, therefore, are left with no choice but to hand over their progenies to Child Care

Centres where they find a better standard of life. The Centres help lift off some of the burdens associated with bringing up a child.

The Case Studies 01, 02 and 03, here below, highlight the socio-economic problems large family sizes pose to the parents who put their children in the CCC's. Also there are instances highlight, where parents register multiple children in a Centre, sometimes up to 5 in the same Center or in more than one Centre. In the words of a child in SPARC: *"I live here with three of my brothers. My elder brother stepped in first; he really liked to be here; so my father sent me too. Before, I used to sell fruits with him"*. However, there are Centres like Al- Islah Welfare Society, who allow only one child of the same parents to be admitted at a time.

The Old Maid

My name is Farhat Taj and I am 57. I come from Hawelian, District Abbottabad. I came down to Rawalpindi about 30 years ago. I have got two children, a daughter and a son. My daughter, Iqra is 14 years old. My husband is an old man of 75 and cannot work. He lives back home in Hawelian with his brother. I preferred Rawalpindi to find some household work. I take up domestic chores in the local area and earn around Rs. 4000-5000 per month. I live with my son in a rented in single room which has no bathroom or kitchen. Being an old woman, it is hard to find work with a decent income.

Many people don't prefer hiring an old maid. My son lives with me and helps me too. It was hard to pay rent and feed three people, so I sent Iqra to Kashana. It feeds her, clothes her and provides her education too. She is enjoying her life there. She is in Grade 4 now and I want her to complete her education and even go for higher studies. Growing up, I could not learn much. Thus, I wish my daughter to go to school and learn so that she can earn an honest and decent living and educate her children too. Iqra is also learning how to stitch and use the computer. It will help her when she grows up. I am already seeing positive changes in my daughter. She is happier, healthier and more

confident. May God bring my wishes true.

Case Study (01) of Farhat Taj, aged 57. Mother of Iqra who is enrolled in Kashana.

One of the 5 Sisters

I am Hanifa, 21 years old and the elder sister of Ammara, who lives in Kashana – the government managed Child Care Centre. We are seven; two brothers and five sisters. With aging, my father has turned visually impaired and cannot work. My mother stays at home. We moved from Rajanpur to Rawalpindi, 8 years ago. Two of my sisters and I, work as maids in the houses of wealth people. This is how we manage our day to day needs. We don't want our younger brother (name, if noted?) and Ammara to face the same circumstances. Ammara been there in Kashana for 3 years. One of the younger brothers lives in Faiz-ul-Islam and the other goes to a regular school. So all three younger siblings go to school, which, I think, is really important.

Sometimes, we feel like the management in Kashana is being discriminatory. It has nothing to do with race or gender, I am not sure what it is. Madam Yasmeen (of Kashana) says that she will send Ammara home after she completes her primary schooling, although this is not the same for all children. We shouldn't complain really, they are already doing so much for us and Ammara. She gets proper meal three times a day; goes to school; has friends to play with; and does all the things children her age should be doing. We want Ammara to study at least till Grade X but Madam Yasmeen (of Kashana) says that she will send Ammara home after she completes her primary schooling. This is their system. We will then think, what to do when it comes to it, but for now Ammara is provided all basic necessities. Though she misses us; we miss her too but we all know this is good for her and the whole family.

Case Study of Hanifa (02), aged 21. Sister of Ammara who is enrolled in Kashana.

The Cook with 16 Children

My name is Azizullah and I am 58. I work in a hotel as a cook. Originally, I come from Peshawar but migrated to Rawalpindi about 25 years ago. I have two wives. Sadly, one of them passed away. In total, I have got 16 children; 11 girls and 5 boys. Both the wives have been living in the same house. We live in a very small two roomed house, right here in Fauji Colony. Two of my girls are married. Six of my children are enrolled in SPARC's Centre. Some of my children have been coming here every day for four to five years at least. Others have recently started to come. Earlier, we sent them here for food only but now we realize that education too is important. Therefore, we now send them for education as well.

Working as a cook, I earn Rs. 2000 a day. One of my sons also works in the hotel with me. Although, I earn Rs. 60,000 a month, it is really difficult for me to fulfill all of my family needs such as food, clothing, schooling, health and others. Two of my daughters are married and I married them off really early in my relatives. The circumstances, now a days are tough. Without education, it is difficult to survive. Therefore, my key focus now is to educate my children. All my children feel very happy coming to the SPARC's Centre. They do not face any problems. In fact, they enjoy it. I understand education is very important but managing books, uniform, fees and other needs for multiple children becomes challenging. This is why I send them to the Centre. It provides them with their basic needs and education too. Both me and my wife have come to understand the importance of education that is why we will, as far as we can, support our children in receiving education.

Case Study of Aziz Ullah (03), aged 58. Father of 6 Children enrolled in SPARC.

5.12 Disability and Morbidity

Key Informant Interviews with parents suggest that disability and/or illness is also a contributing factor to the enrolment of children in the Child Care Centers. Although, disability and/or illness of the child is also indicated by the parents in their interviews, it is the disability and/or illness of the parents, especially of the father's that is more relevant. Both physical and mental disabilities too were discussed during the conversations with the parents. The parents stated that they find it hard to work and earn a reasonable living. Unemployment, lowly paid work or partial employment also contribute to the already severe material poverty. Large family sizes, are also relevant here, as parents find it difficult to raise several children on minimal income which forces them to send multiple children to one or multiple Child Care Institutions to secure food, shelter, education and health care facilities. Poverty runs through as a common theme in all these cases. They find it impossible to feed all the children, provide clothing and at the same time buy medicine for themselves and/or for their sick children. Case Studies 04 and 05, described here below highlight the problems of sickness or disability as discussed.

The Case of the Mentally Disturbed Father

I am Fazeelat Shaheen and I am 29 years old. I have three children, two daughters and a son. My daughter, Alishba is here at Kashana, while I put my son at Gehwara. I live in a small rented house with one room, a kitchen and a bathroom. One of my daughters and husband live with me. My husband works as a cleaner. He is supposed to make 8000 Rupees per month but he only makes 5000 Rupees as he can't go to work every single day. As he is mentally disabled so he finds it challenging to provide for his family. Like their father, both of my daughters are mentally unstable. But my son is fine.

To help with costs, I also work as a cleaner at Gehwara. Being mentally challenged, Alishaba used to be a very carefree messing up girl. The Center has been helping her develop and improve for the last two years. As education is important for girls, I want her to study at least till she does her Matriculation. I also want her learn to computer skills and stitching to help herself in future. Management here and at Gehwara is very cooperative towards. I visit my daughter twice a month. I am already noticing positive changes in my daughter. She is turning into a polite and smart girl. It is all because of Kashana.

Case Study of Fazeelat Shaheen (04), aged 29. Mother of Alishba who is enrolled in Kashana.

Partially Blind Divorced Mother

My name is RubinaFraqat and I am 48 years old. I work as a cleaner and I earn 200-300 Rupees a day. I have got two sons and three daughters. One of my daughters is married and the other three of my daughters are here at Kashana. It is now seven years that I sought divorce from my husband. He did not use to work and was mentally disabled. Also, he would beat me very badly. After divorce I, with my children, lived at Edhi Centre for four years at least. I had to leave it as too many restrictions were there. I or my children could not leave the premises. It felt like a prison. Now, I live in a small rented room.

Kashana, has been very kind to us. It also assisted me financially to marry off one of my daughters. I myself find it very challenging to work as my eyesight is weak. Also, I am physically unfit. My legs hurt and I have got kidney problems too. I need medicine but cannot afford to pay for. I come and see my daughters twice a month. I wish they could stay with me but I am unable to afford the house rent, food and their education expenses. For now, we have to put up like this. All of us have sacrificed a lot but what is important that all three of my daughters are healthy and happy.

Case Study of RubinaFraqat (05), aged 48. Mother of 3 daughters enrolled in Kashana.

5.13 Access to Education

Conversations with the management of the Centres suggests that education may not necessarily be the main reason to enrol children there at their Centres. Main concern for the parents, they suggest, is to secure sustained and reliable provision of quality food, shelter and health facilities. On the contrary, KIIIs with the parents put forward children's education as an important and increasingly essential priority for them as most of them realise growing importance of education in society. They, the parents, also understand that, it is not possible for them to fund their children for education; therefore, they urge Child Care Centres to continue helping their children with their education. In several cases, it is also possible that parents send one child to the Center X; and seeing the impact of the Centre (including education) on their children's develop they decide to send the other child too to the same or to

some other similar Centre to secure similar benefit, mainly education. Others send their children to madrasas no necessarily to become religious extremist but to secure fundamental education. During a KII, one of the parents detailed, **“right now I have one son who goes to this centre. I have seen how effectively the Centre has been helping him. When my other child attains the age of schooling, I will also enrol him in this Centre”**.

Another parent states that, **‘as the Centres helps their child with schooling costs such as uniforms, stationery, bags and books. He does not have to worry about his/her education’**.

A parent from Kurram Agency, states that, **“My daughter has always been smart but I could not afford to send her to school. Being at the Centre, I have seen her becoming even smarter. This is only because she is studying here. Now, I will try to put my other children too in the Centres.”** Another parent states, **“I myself am illiterate. But I understand without education there is nothing in the world. One finds it very difficult to survive without education. If my children acquire education; it is likely to help them a lot in future.”**

Although KIIs with parents prescribe ‘education to be one of the most important purposes of putting their children into the Centres,’ management of Centres had some concerns. For instance, one of the manager states, **“I have seen many cases where children were mainstreamed into public schools with great efforts put in by the Centres. After a while, and so unfortunately, they were found back on streets or doing petty labourers with their fathers. This way, all the efforts made by the Centres, goes waste. The Children loose all the progress made by the Centres.”** Despite a valid observation made by the management, the problem is understandable. Poverty is widespread; as all key stakeholders explained; parents find it quite cumbersome to facilitate their child’s education due to several other costs associated with it.

On a positive note, however, one of the managers expressed her opinion in these words: **“Obviously, we can’t facilitate everyone’s schooling, but we do try to help some of the eminent children whose parents and the children themselves are keen to continue their schooling”**.

SPARC, therefore is the kind of Center which is trying its best to develop a strategy that children, once they quit the Centre, should not end up back on streets. It is therefore, struggling to initiate an in-house private school system up to the 10th level. The facility, it believes, will make sure that the children enrolled stay at school and should finish at least their Matriculation here. Post matriculation, several children become sensible enough to decide about their future in a better manner. The initiative will drastically reduce the number of children falling back on streets or assuming wage labouring. Most parents, spoken to during this research, were encouraged by the aid initiative and stated, they would want their child to complete at least their Matric level qualification. Matric is the base, they understand.

5.2 Capacity Building

Quantitative findings suggest, the Centers are doing a good job in preparing children to live life on their own. KIs with parents, as highlighted in the case studies, also suggest that the Centers have had a positive impact on their child's upbringing, both mentally as well as physically. Visits to the Centers indicate that they have set procedures and mechanisms which aim to increase the capacity of all children and their integration into the larger society.

Data collected leads us to believe that all Centers try to ensure that when children are enrolled in their Child Care Centers, they are equipped with vital skills and attributes to help them live independent lives. For some it is possible. Given the lack of funding, others find it quite difficult. For instance, the manager of the Stephen Relief states, **“we do not have the necessary funds to further invest in our children. We have 3 teachers for almost 50 children, aged 4-16. We provide the very basic necessities like three times meal a day and basic education. That's it.”**

However, the Centers such as Anjuman Faiz-ul-Islam, a well funded institute, are in a position to further invest in children and build-up their skills and abilities to help them successfully integrate into the labour market. In the same Centre, for instance, the students are provided with Islamic education, regular schooling up to the higher secondary level, tutoring facility in the evening and the vocational cum technical training with a recognized certificate. Such trainings stretch out from one to three years in a formal technical training institute which

provides them with a diploma certificate. In certain cases, Faiz-ul-Islam facilitates some of the more distinguished children with university education as well.

In the SPARC's Centre, girls learn employable skills such as stitching, tailoring and others. In parallel, there is no employable skill programme for boys, although the need is felt. SOS, who appear to be one of the best funded institutions in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, extends children quality education, quality care, safeguard, guidance, counselling and also advocates for children's basic rights as well. Also they protect and provide relief and rehabilitation facilities to the children affected by natural disasters like earthquake, flooding or others. According to the manager at SOS, ***"quality education and training are a key to a successful future"***. SOS, therefore, helps ensure that children enjoy their fundamental right to education. Also they train and prepare young people to live independent and dignified lives.

5.3 Integration into Society

In most Centers there is no set procedure or well defined mechanism for the age-out process and integration into the society and the labour market. In Al-Islah, so to speak, boys leave whenever and wherever they find a job and girls are permitted to go when they get married. The same is true for SPRAC, Kashana, Edhi Centre, Gehwara and other Centres in the twin cities. When asked from management, 'why that is that', the common justifications are the lack of staff, lack of funding to develop proper mechanisms, the lack of cooperation from parents (and children) and most importantly the lack of assistance or cooperation from the government. In Basaira Trust, on the other hand, both girls and boys remain connected to the Centers till they leave themselves. In Centers, where there is a steady influx of children being enrolled, they do not possess appropriate resources to stay in touch with all the children. Sometimes, the Centers use a simple random snow-ball approach to ascertain the whereabouts of the ex-children. In case of SPARC, it is quite apparent as all the children who get enrolled belong to one particular community (Fauji Colony).

While in Faiz-ul-Islam, when children leave the Center, they are provided with counselling and support. Some of the children stay in touch with the Center even after they quit the Centre. Due to Faiz-ul-Islam's generous individual and local stream of funding from the old ex-persons and Islamic philanthropists, they often integrate into society and labour market quite well. Previous students of the Center, reportedly, work in various private and public departments such as judiciary, administration, education, health, advocacy, army, and engineering. The Centre asks for further and deeper engagement and research.

Section 6- Broader Analyses

Results drawn from the qualitative and quantitative findings suggest that no social, economic or cultural factors act in isolation to determine the causes enrolling children in Child Care Centres and Orphanages. Each variable generates multiple cases and multiple cases, at times, may converge to a single cause. Inductively speaking, the findings of the research hint back to various reasons that are inherently inter-connected and intertwined right from poverty to large family sizes, to inability of parents to work due to disability and morbidity to seek education etc.

In case of girls, given the frequency of sexual abuse and violence in society, keeping them at a safer place, mainly when parents go to work or work in other or big cities, is also one of the reasons to put them in CCCs and orphanages. Deeper and intensive analyses of the 'push factors' causing children's enrolment to various Centers should provide basis for policy makers to make appropriate and informed policy decisions and formulate strategies to protect the vulnerable.

6.1 Abject Poverty

By and large 'poverty coupled with lack of decent employment opportunities' in its various shapes and forms, is identified as the chief cause of enrolling children in the Centers studied. The parents of the enrolled children are not only economically poor but also happen to be vulnerable, physically weak or mentally disturbed, emotionally broken and socially marginalized. One way or the other, they remain trapped in a vicious cycle of deprivation, triggered by poverty and lack of opportunities. In this very context, poverty is inextricably linked to parental separation due to divorce, domestic violence, parental chronic illness or disability and/or the death of the father in natural disasters or conflict and terrorism and to other factors associated to that. Essentially, parents/relatives put their children to the Child Care Institutions to receive basic necessities, which they find hard to provide on their own.

6.2 Large Family Sizes

The study provides sufficient evidence that large families and poverty go hand in hand. In the large family households, even the bare minimum humble financial resources turn short of growing necessities. As a result of having very limited economic or financial resources, children of a large family households survive without basic necessities such as food, education and health facilities. The study demonstrates that large families typically have a very low standard of living. Therefore, it becomes near impossible to support multiple children, which is why some, or sometimes all, are enrolled in Child Care Centers. To such families, the Centers, serve as an alternative source to provide sufficient food, shelter, education and health facilities to their children.

6.3 Access to Education

The good thing is that, all the Centres visited have established strong mechanisms to provide at least primary education to the children. This includes non-formal literacy, computer education, vocational and technical skills, stitching and embroidery, religious education, and formal public or private schooling. As discovered by the study, the parents feel that the only way their children can get educated is to be placed in a child care institute. Likewise, the parents also hope or expect the Centers to support their children's public or private school education. The study dispels the impression that the poor parents are not interested in putting their children to schools. Excessive poverty might be a reason for some of the parents to opt out of schools but, where a facility is available, they are enthusiastic to educate their children.

Oftentimes, multiple children are sent to the same or to different Centers to seek the facility of education. The institutions too are quite keen to provide educational opportunities to the children in their care. A large number of children - living at the Centers - attend government schools in their vicinity. However, some of the institutions maintain in-house private schools too. Such schools vary in their capability to meet with the educational needs and associated cost of the process. In some of the institutions, the in-house academic services are not

sufficient and are characterized by a lack of modern educational and creative aid materials. Such Centers lack appropriate recreational facilities for in-house children.

6.4 Public support for institutions

Several Centers visited during the study were found to have international and national support system. 'Traditionally, Pakistan's cultural and social norms (still prevailing in rural areas and urban suburbs) have been dictating that extended family is good. In crises the support system is strong there. More children mean a greater support and greater opportunity to earn. If a child/children get orphaned by one or both the parent's demise, the extended family would support'. The assumption, as amply evidenced by this study, proves false. The extended family prefers shedding off the burden of extra children by putting them here and there. Child Care Centers is one of the choices.

Without doubt, this is admirable that many of the institutions are greatly helping the destitute, the orphans and the vulnerable children. Known as better sources of care, the Centers attract parents/relatives to send their children there. Local philanthropists, particularly the kind hearted religious people, provide abundant food, shelter, hard cash and other stuff needed by the Centers. International donors also play a vital role in this regard. The issues they choose to fund, and the principles they promote, greatly influence what support is available to poor children and families.

6.5 Types of Centers

More than one forms of Child Care Centers, including Day Care Centers, Orphanages and faith-based organizations are operating in the field. Naturally, when a wide range of child care institutions are there without any authentic regulatory mechanism, anyone can set up an institute. There is a risk of this becoming a business to capture individual donations, institutional funding and receiving organized international grants. Visits to the Centers point out that some of them operate on a first-come, first-serve basis without ascertaining do the respective parents or child x deserves seeking enrolment in the institute. It is very much that

the most vulnerable may not necessarily get enrolled in the Centers. Therefore, CCCs may lose focus on 'the best interest of the child' and are driven more by the economical interests and sustenance of the institutes than construing what might change the situation or what serve the children better.

Funding of some of the Centers depends on how many children do they have. Although, not explicitly stated by the administration of the Centers or inquisitively asked in the KIIs, but it is much likely, they actively recruit children for being paid against the number of children living in their respective facilities. Several Centers mentioned of the university students visiting child care institutions to help out, teach, and give donations. The recent phenomena of volunteering in child care institutions can also generate business opportunities for more institutions and for more children to be recruited to fill the Centers. In this case, children run the risk of becoming a commodity.

While visiting these Centers, the team realized that except a few, almost all the Centers were keener to receive a support or funding than proactively providing information for the purpose of research and analysis. Excluding the few – including the government Centers too – number of Centers were highly reluctant in providing access to the children or allowing the team to roam freely around the Centers. They were also reluctant in facilitating the team to meeting parents to know the causes of enrolling in or moving out of children from the Centers. Many of them even did not give time, despite repeatedly calling they repeatedly turned down the appointments. There is no reason to suspect but one thing is clear, they warmly welcome support or funding, whilst discouraging detailed assessment.

Section 7- Conclusions and Recommendations

Altogether, quantitative and qualitative analyses suggest that enrolment of children is taking place for number of reasons. Poverty springs out as the dominant reason why children are enrolled in various Centers. With increased population growth, unplanned urbanization and industrialization and accompanying social issues, more and more families are turning economically marginalized. All this creates conditions where many families fail to cope with their ever children's ever increasing needs.

Seeking education for their children emerges out as the second most eminent reason for parents to enrol them into the Child Care Centers. Children are also enrolled into the residential cares because of the prolonged illness, disability or death of one or both the parents, abandonment (for whatever the reasons) and family breakdown. Larger family sizes only exacerbate the complex circumstances. Some parents and relatives are not able to perform their care-giving duty due to inadequate financial resources and being unequipped with problem-solving skills. Cumulatively, all such reasons leave the vulnerable parents with no option but to find alternative sources of child care.

The living standards maintained in these institutions are generally good evident from the observations, perceptions and experiences of the enrolled children and their parents. Parents value these institutions for safer living arrangements, provision of shelter, sustained availability of food, security and surety of education to their children.

To sum up, the study prescribes two major reasons accounting for the enrolment of majority of the children in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, as poverty and access to education. Certain recommendations can be made with confidence to contribute in improving the situation for children, parents and child care institutions. Besides that, government as well as NGOs can also find workable suggestions to effectively respond to the problem in terms of policy mechanisms, institutional development, project interventions or large scale programming.

7.1 Policy, Administrative and Programmatic Recommendations

7.11 Addressing Cultural, Economic and Social Causes of Enrolment in CCC's

- In-fact, the very conditions causing the tendency towards the enrolment of children need to be dealt with. Programmers and interventions be made at the family level to discourage them to put their children in residential care. Parents and families need to be supported at the household and community level. They must be supported to gain strength by providing financial and technical support. Strengthening their capacity to take care of their children will reduce the tendency of enrolling them to the child centres. Family planning need to be further extended to get to the rural and urban suburbs to reduce the family size.
- The results propose that the role of extended family or community support for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) should be focused on if the responding organisation's priority is to eventually stop having children enrolled in child care centres. Many child welfare organisations around the world, such as Lumos, who already aim to eradicate admission of children in Child Care Centres by 2050. One can learn from other successful experiences in the world.
- Parents should be made to understand that family based care is in the best interest of the child and the family too. Enrolment of children in CCC's ought to be the last resort for parents.
- A professional social work infrastructure is critical to developing a child welfare system i.e. parents need to be recruited, trained, supported and monitored.
- Financial investment and support of professional social services network are required to help at-risk parents through difficult circumstances and adequately provide for their children so they stand a better chance of retaining custody and avoid placing heir children in child care institutions, foster care or other alternative arrangements.

7.12 Improving Conditions Inside Centers

- Management should provide inclusive education – emphasis on educating girls and boys together - for children with special education needs, with the necessary and appropriate accommodation and modifications.
- Inclusive education without gender and/or any other discrimination and exclusion should be made part of the agenda of private and public education institutions.
- Management should promote inclusivity and ensure each child has an equal right to partake in their choice of extra-curricular activities.
- Management should avoid gender stereotypes as some of the institutions were observed imparting traditional skills to girls.
- Management of the Centers should provide a homely environment to the children so long as they are there.
- Children should be imparted further technical and intellectual skills through objectives and critical education to face real-world situations as their stay in CCC's is temporary and eventually children are expected to leave the institution, integrate in society and stand on their own feet.

7.13 Reintegration into Society

It is important to see reintegration as a process. In most cases, a child will reintegrate into kinship or parental care, and be reunified. Children, who don't have anyone to care outside the CCC, will find it challenging to live an independent life and integrate into society and in the labour market. Therefore, mechanisms that smoothly and successfully (re)integrate age-out children have to be carefully devised and implemented.

- More and more opportunities for vocational and technical training for the children enrolled in Centers be provided.
- Improved counselling facilities for parents and children be extended.
- Gender-neutral approaches towards the age-out children be adopted.
- Better mechanisms for staying in touch with age-out children be evolved.

- Possible adoption measures for younger children be proposed and advertised with utmost care and caution – lest they fall in wrong hands.
- Maintaining family relationships while children are in care is also important to minimize their feelings of deprivation.
- Reunification preparation and post-reunification supports must be based on the needs and preferences of the children and family.
- Post-reunification emotional and financial support should be directly or indirectly extended.
- Link with universities and colleges be established to provide merit based scholarships for the under-privileged.

In general, the report concludes that securing sustainable and effective child care improvement in Pakistan is not possible overnight with a quick fix. Rather, it requires a complex, culturally and socially responsive effort and multipronged strategies to be adopted to solve or at least minimize the magnitude of the problem.

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Annexure

Annex 1

Name of Center	Location
AL-ISLAH	ISLAMABAD
ANJUMAN- FAIZ-UL-ISLAM	ISLAMABAD
BASAIRA TRUST	ISLAMABAD
EDHI	ISLAMABAD
GEHWARA	RWP
HASSAN ACADEMY	RWP
KASHANA	RWP
SOS CHILDREN VILLAGE	ISLAMABAD
SPARC	RWP
STEPHEN RELIEF	RWP