



NATIONAL COMMISSION ON
THE RIGHTS OF CHILD

Strategic Plan 2023-2026

National Commission on the Rights of Child





National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) is an independent statutory body established by the Government of Pakistan for the promotion, protection, and fulfilment of children's rights in Pakistan. NCRC has the mandate to examine and review policies, laws, practices, and proposals, inquire into violations of child rights, conduct research, raise awareness, build capacities, provide technical support, and advise the Government on legislative and policy matters by virtue of the National Commission on the Rights of Child Act, 2017.

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Table of Contents

Message from the Chairperson	01
Acronyms	02
1. A glance at the National Commission on the Rights of Child	03
2. Strategic Approach, Priorities, and Methodology	05
3. Goal, Expected Results and Strategies	08
4. Synergies	11
5. Annexures	11



Message from the Chairperson

It is my pleasure to present this comprehensive 3-year strategic plan of the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) - a testament to our unwavering commitment to safeguarding and promoting the rights of every child in Pakistan. The need for this strategic initiative is based on the rapidly changing dynamics affecting the child rights landscape across Pakistan. Acknowledging the critical need for foresight and adaptability, we initiated an extensive consultation process that brought together key stakeholders such as children, child rights experts, and voices from civil society. This collaborative effort was crucial in navigating the intricate challenges in enforcing child rights.



Our strategic vision is rooted in the promise to uphold the rights of every child, aligning with both our mandate and international obligations. By 2026, our overarching goal is to witness a tangible improvement in the enforcement of child rights through cohesive, evidence-based actions by state entities and civil society. To achieve this transformative goal, the NCRC has identified three strategic priorities: evidence and knowledge, partnership, and transformation.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the stakeholders who actively contributed to shaping this document. It serves as a manifestation of our collective determination to do more and do better in the face of an increasingly complex and challenging environment, marked by interconnected crises such as pandemics, climate change, security tensions, economic uncertainties, and growing population.

As we embark on this transformative journey, let us unite to turn this vision into reality. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that the rights of every child in Pakistan are not merely acknowledged but enforced. This strategic plan is a structured response to the evolving needs of our time, and the actions we take now will undoubtedly shape the destiny of our children for years to come.

Ayesha Raza Farooq,
Chairperson,
National Commission on the Rights of Child

Acronyms

CDL	Child Domestic Labour
CPI	Child Protection Institutes
CPWB	Child Protection and Welfare Bureau
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ICT	Islamabad Capital territory
IS	International Standards
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LMS	Learning Management System
IMS	Information Management System
NCRC	National Commission on the Rights of Child
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
PPC	Pakistan Penal Code
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
WCD	World Children Day
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
VAC	Violence Against Children
VfM	Value for Money

1. A Glance at the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC)

1.1 History

Realizing its commitment under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the State of Pakistan established the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) through the promulgation of the National Commission on the Rights of Child Act 2017. The first Commission was notified in February 2020 for a three-year term which was completed in February 2023. The second Commission was notified in April 2023 for three years that is till 2026.

1.2 Vision and Mission



Vision

The National Commission on the Rights of Child envisages Pakistan as a country where every child realizes his/her rights of survival, development, protection, and participation.



Mission

Promote and protect the fundamental and inalienable rights of each child in Pakistan as per international obligations.

1.3 Mandate

The National Commission on the Rights of Child (the “NCRC”) is an independent statutory body established by the Government of Pakistan for the promotion, protection, and fulfillment of children's rights in Pakistan. The NCRC has the mandate to examine and review policies, laws, practices, and proposals, inquire into violations of child rights, conduct research, raise awareness, liaise with other commissions and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), build capacities, provide technical support, and advise the Government on legislative and policy matters related to child rights, by virtue of section 15 of the National Commission on the Rights of Child Act of 2017(the 'Act'). The said section is reproduced as follows:

“The Commission shall perform all or any of the following functions, namely:

- (a) examine existing or proposed legislations and administrative instruments and proposals related to child rights and make such recommendations as it deems appropriate;
- (b) liaise with provincial commissions set up under provincial laws and other concerned provincial organizations;
- (c) examine and review any law or policy or practice, for the time being in force, for protection of child rights and recommend measures for their effective implementation;

- (d) present to the Division concerned and to the departments concerned of the provincial governments, as the case may be, reports upon working of such law or policy or practice specified under clause (c);
- (e) inquire into violation of child rights and recommend to the relevant agency or department initiation of proceedings in such cases;
- (f) examine all factors that inhibit enjoyment of rights of child, such as violence, abuse and exploitation, trafficking, torture, pornography and prostitution and recommend appropriate remedial measures;
- (g) sponsor, steer, encourage research and maintain a database relating to children and their issues to provide knowledge and awareness for national policy and strategic action for its remedy;
- (h) spread awareness and promote dialogue on child rights among various sections of the society and promote awareness of the safeguards available for protection of these rights;
- (i) examine international instruments and undertake periodical review of existing policies and programmes on child rights and make recommendations for their effective implementation in the best interest of children;
- (j) advise the Division concerned to sign, ratify or accede to any such proposed international treaty, protocol, etc.;
- (k) while inquiring into complaints of violations of child rights, may call for information or report from the ministries, divisions, attached departments and subordinate offices of Federal Government, civil society organizations and autonomous or concerned bodies and in this regard the Commission shall have the powers vested in a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (Act V of 1908) for enforcing the attendance of any person and compelling the production of documents: and
- (l) undertake such other functions as assigned by the Prime Minister or the Division concerned and as it may consider necessary for promotion and protection of child rights and any other matter incidental to the above functions.”

1.4 Composition of the NCRC

As per section 3 of the Act which deals with the composition of the Commission, the NCRC consists of a chairperson and seven members (one from each of the 4 provinces, one from ICT, the NCRC Secretary, and two child members). It also includes ex-officio members – that is, officers of grade 20 and above - from the Federal Ministries of Human Rights, Interior, and Foreign Affairs, the Chairs of the Provincial Children's Rights Commissions, and the Chairs of the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) and National Commission on Status of Women (NCSW).



Ayesha Raza Farooq
Chairperson



Khalid Latif
Secretary NCRC



Khalid Naeem
Member ICT



Mehek Naeem
Member Punjab



Pirbhu Lal Satyani
Member Sindh/Minorities



Nadia Bibi
Member
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



Muhammad Hassan
Male Child Member



Rabia Imran
Female Child Member

2. Strategic Approach, Priorities, and Methodology

This document aims to structure and plan the NCRC's action over the period of its second tenure, taking into consideration past achievements, lessons learnt, gaps and current needs. The strategic plan was developed through the following steps.

- A desk review was conducted, which included latest recommendations from the UN treaty bodies, reports, policy briefs and previous strategic plan produced by the NCRC¹.
- Recommendations collected through provincial consultations with children, CSOs, government representatives, legal fraternity and media.

The NCRC will use a tri-dimensional strategic approach over the next 3 years to achieve its strategic objectives.



Figure 1: NCRC's tri-dimensional strategic approach 2023-2026

¹<https://ncrc.gov.pk/resources>

2.1 Evidence & Knowledge Generation

The NCRC has an essential role to play in generating and disseminating evidence to inform legal/policy reforms and programming related to child rights. This includes data collection and analysis based on complaints handled. Furthermore, the knowledge generated by the NCRC will also comprise research on children's issues, policy briefs, position papers and technical notes that will reinforce the basis of evidence to guide adequate state-led action to protect and promote child rights in the country. This knowledge approach entails ensuring collection, access to/sharing of reliable information, taking part in local, regional and global research related to child rights using new technologies² such as digital hubs, Learning Management Systems (LMS), and Child Protection Information Management System (CP-IMS).

2.2 Partnerships

The NCRC is aware that an impact in the sphere of child rights can only be made through synergies. The aim is to multiply expertise, reinforce engagement and outreach, coordinate with civil society, various commissions³ and other state actors, foster partnerships with technical agencies, donors, multilateral organizations and consequently create Value for Money (VfM) through optimal use of resources. Teamwork also entails inclusion and participation, especially child participation for a efficient, and effective action.

2.3 Transformation

The purpose of generating knowledge, guaranteeing a participatory process, and fostering public private partnership is to support advocacy for a positive change in favour of children. To this end, the NCRC will concentrate on adequately advising the government, and guiding duty bearers to improve the enforcement of child rights in Pakistan, as per its mandate and in line with Pakistan's international obligations. Therefore, the NCRC will focus on addressing child rights related complaints, reviewing laws, policies and practices, and engaging with various stakeholders to raise awareness and generate a child-centric conceptual, behavioral and governance shift that realizes the best interest of the child as a key priority and one of the most valuable investments.

This tri-dimensional approach envisaged by the NCRC will constitute the basis for the following strategic priorities:

- **Priority 1:** Increased social, political, and institutional awareness and support for child rights in Pakistan aligned with the international standards.
- **Priority 2:** Enhanced enforcement of child rights in line with the international obligations and protocols.
- **Priority 3:** Strengthened evidence and knowledge on child rights to inform legal and policy reforms and programming.

²An illustration of this strategic approach component is the child online protection evidence generated under the global Disrupting Harm II programme.

³National and Provincial Human Rights Institutions

While addressing these three priorities, the NCRC will implement a “5Es” methodology:

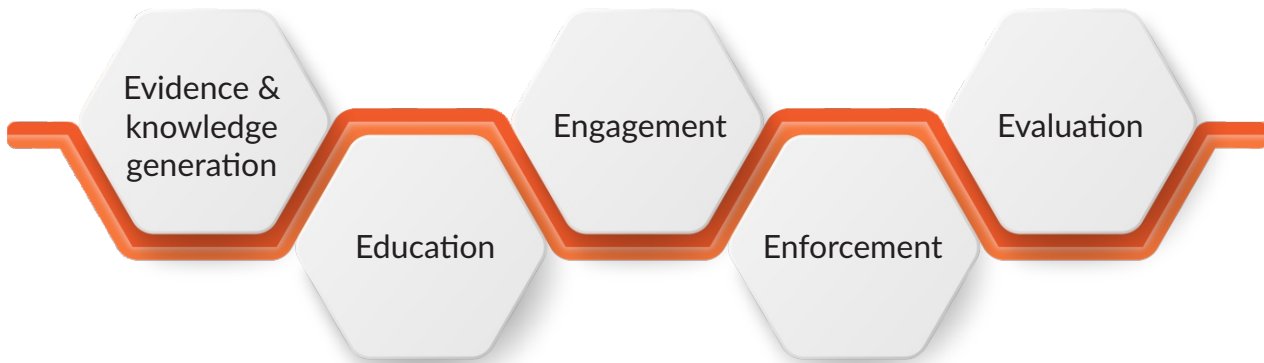


Figure 2: NCRC's “5Es” Methodology

The NCRC will follow a “Do no Harm” policy and abide by the principles of:

- Best interest of the child
- Dignity of the child
- Non-discrimination
- Right to be heard

Furthermore, inclusion of disability, religious minorities, and other vulnerable groups, as well as gender equality will constitute transversal themes that will impact each strategic component. Specific efforts were made to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity and consolidation. The overall strategic structure envisaged by the NCRC for 2023-2026 is presented underneath in Figure 3.



Figure 3: NCRC's strategic priorities

3. Goal, Expected Results and Strategies

The NCRC's goal by 2026, is the improvement in the enforcement of child rights through synergic evidence-based action of state entities and civil society.

To achieve this goal, the following results (R) and strategies(S) are envisaged:

Result 1: Increased social, institutional and political awareness and mobilization for child rights aligned with the international obligations

R1.1 Increased awareness to address the issues of rights of children including survival, development, protection and participation, and justice for children.

S1.1.1 Creating public awareness and promoting dialogues on child rights among various sections of society.

S1.1.2 Promoting awareness of the laws available for the protection of child rights.

S1.1.3 Awareness raising on child rights through media engagement.

S1.1.4 Advocating for the mainstreaming of child rights into the education system.

S1.1.5 Advocating for the rights of children in the standing committee meetings of the senate, parliamentary briefings and on government forums.

R1.2 Improved engagement and capacity of government, children, civil society members and media for upholding child rights and intersecting topics.

S1.2.1 Nation-wide engagement of children on child rights issues.

S1.2.2 Supporting children-led initiatives for the promotion of child rights across the country

S1.2.3 Sensitizing and building the capacity of civil society organization, media, Government entities, law enforcement agencies and members of parliament on child rights and intersecting topics.

Result 2: Enhanced enforcement of child rights in line with the international obligations and protocols

R2.1 Improved national capacity to address child rights violations aligned with the international obligations and protocols.

S2.1.1 Developing and operationalizing the NCRC overseeing, monitoring and accountability framework on child rights.

S2.1.2 Operationalizing child-friendly complaint handling mechanism to address the child rights violations.

S2.1.3 Capacity building of the NCRC, government entities, and relevant stakeholder on the rights of children and intersecting areas such as justice for children, United Nations Special Procedures and local compliant handling mechanisms aligned with the international obligation/protocols.

R2.2 Strengthened collaboration of the NCRC with federal, national and provincial institutions and stakeholders

S2.2.1 Establishing thematic committees and task forces at national and provincial level.

S2.2.2 Strengthening coordination and collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission, National Commission on the Status of Women, Child Protection Welfare

Bureau (CPWB), Child Protection Institutes (CPI), Balochistan Child Protection Commission (BCPC), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission (KPCPWC), Sindh Child Protection Authority (SCPA), and CSOs for the enforcement of child rights in the country.

S2.2.3 Coordinating with CSOs and federal and provincial government institutions for referrals of complaints for provision of services.

R2.3 Increased technical support to the Government of Pakistan for the review of legal and policy reforms, and child rights programming for enforcement of child rights

S2.3.1 Conducting review of law reforms, policies, programmes, and proposals to advise the government to improve the enforcement of child rights.

S2.3.2 Meetings with federal government, standing committee of the senate and parliamentary committees to provide progress update on child rights.

S2.3.3 Developing and disseminating guidance and technical notes on the child rights.

S2.3.4 Supporting the government in developing policies, roadmaps, action plans, legal drafts, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to improve the enforcement of child rights in the country.

S2.3.5 Advocacy for child rights related to legal and policy reform and child-centric programming.

Result 3: Strengthened evidence and knowledge on child rights to inform legal and policy reforms and programming

R3.1 Evidence generated and disseminated on the rights of children

S3.1.1 Producing and publishing the state of children report and disseminating knowledge to inform policies, legislations and programme development.

S3.1.2 Supporting and building partnerships for local, regional and global research interventions to inform policy briefs, training tools, awareness programmes, and behavioral change communication materials.

S3.1.3 Developing a booklet on the UNCRC, Constitution of Pakistan and Islamic jurisprudence in light of child rights.

S3.1.4 Publishing and disseminating of a quarterly newsletter, organizing and participating in meetings, seminars, and conferences.

R3.2 Increased access to research materials for developing training tools, digital portal and knowledge hub.

S3.2.1 Developing and operationalizing a digital knowledge hub on child rights.

S3.2.1 Developing Child Protection Information Management System (CP-IMS) for compliant handling and referral system.

S3.2.3 Developing Learning Management Systems (LMS) on child rights.

S3.2.4 Organising Exposure visits at the provincial, national, regional, and international levels to exchange knowledge and learn from the best practices on the rights of children.

S3.2.5 Organising and participating in national, provincial, regional, and international seminars, conferences, and workshops on the issues of child rights.

This strategic articulation is further described in the theory of change below (See figure 4). Based on this theory of change, an action plan is developed for three years that is accessible at the NCRC's website.

NCRC's Theory of Change

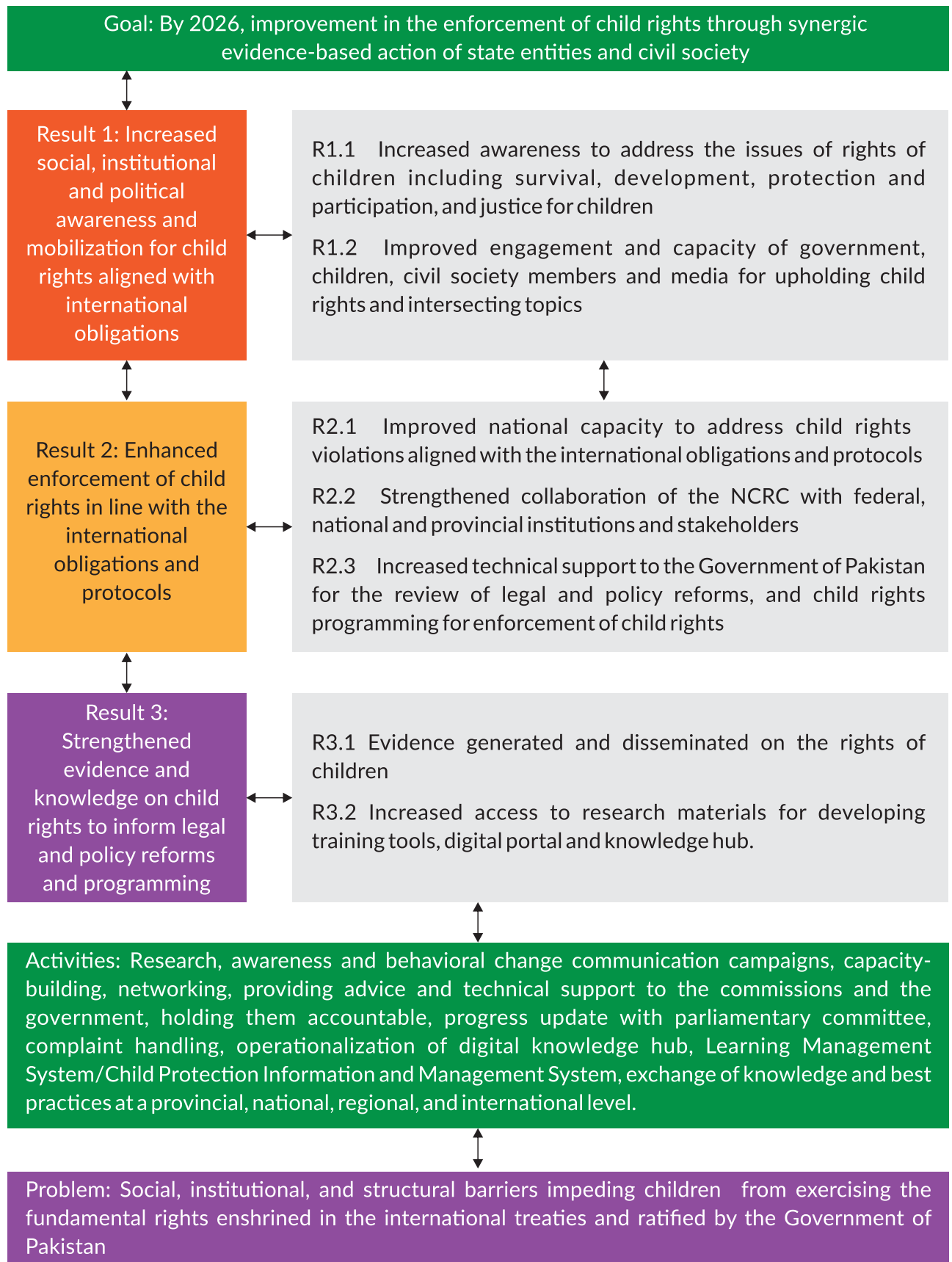


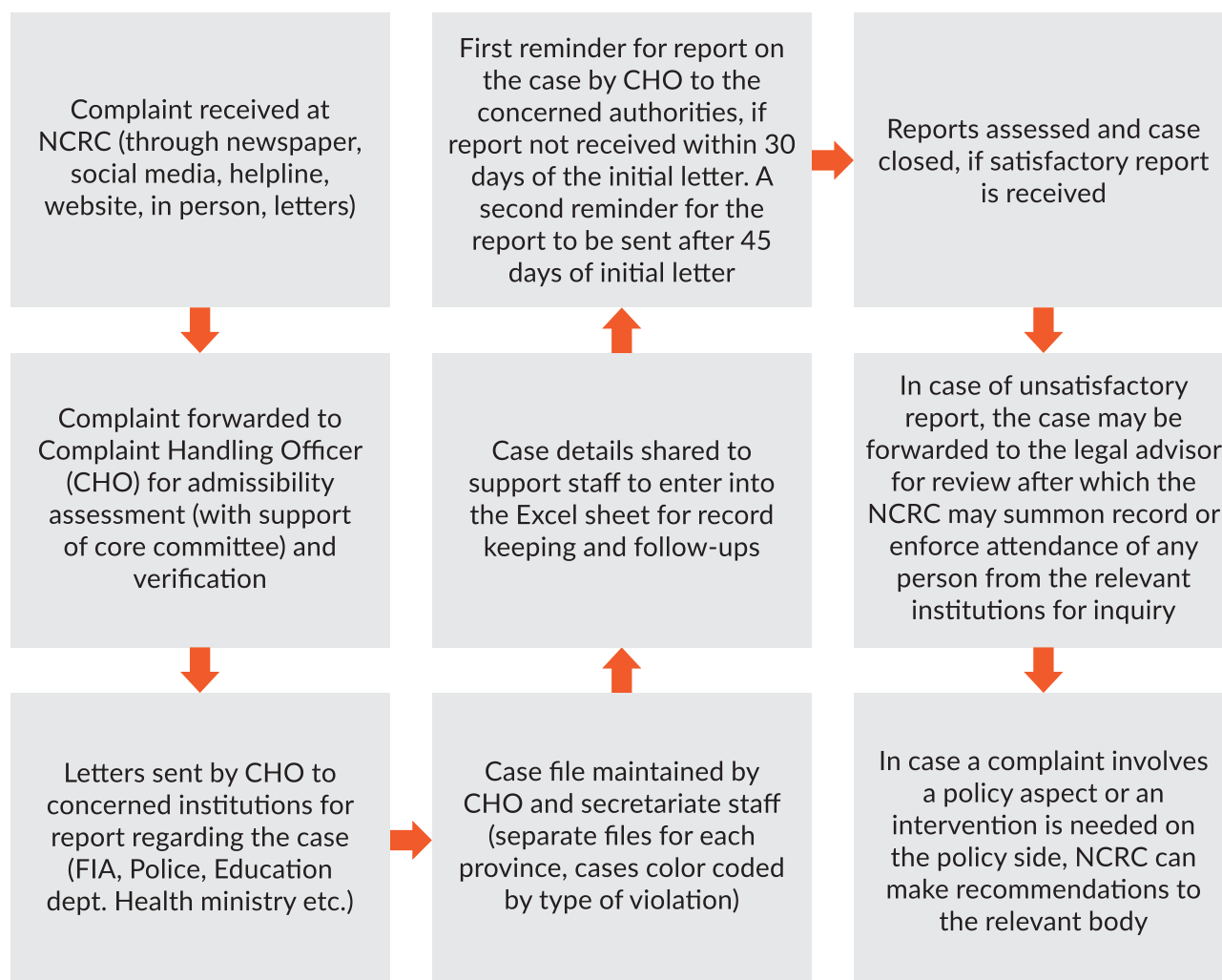
Figure 4: NCRC's Theory of Change

4. Synergies

- State actors including government representatives, parliamentarians and relevant committees, judiciary;
- NGOs, INGOs, media, legal fraternity, academia;
- UN agencies and World Bank;
- Foreign missions in Pakistan; and
- Other child rights related international platforms.

5. Annexures

Annexure 1: NCRC complaint mechanism (see figure below)



Report Complaints



National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC)

5th Floor, Evacuee Trust Complex, Agha Khan Road, F-5/1, Islamabad

Tel: +92-51-920-2733 | Email: complaints@ncrc.gov.pk | Website: www.ncrc.gov.pk

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