

Media Update

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UNICEF

PRESS RELEASE

FJA and UNICEF Sign MoU to Accelerate Progress on Justice for Children in Pakistan

Collaboration to ensure justice as an integral part of the child rights agenda in the country

Islamabad, September 10, 2024 — The Federal Judicial Academy (FJA) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to collaborate on accelerating justice within the child rights agenda in Pakistan.

The MoU, signed by Hayat Ali Shah, Director General, FJA and Abdullah Fadil, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan, emphasizes that access to justice is a fundamental right of every child for ensuring fair treatment, protection, and appropriate legal representation whether as victims, witnesses or alleged/recognized offenders. It is essential for children’s well-being and development.

“Being premier judicial education institution, FJA is striving to improve service delivery by ensuring accessibility and predictability. The collaborative engagement with UNICEF is likely to sensitise Judges about the rights of children in contact with law,” said Hayat Ali Shah, Director General, FJA.

According to UNICEF’s Global Reimagine Justice for Children Agenda, children should: know and claim their rights; be able to access free legal aid, representation, and services; be diverted for those in conflict with the law; be protected from detention; receive justice for survivors of violence, abuse, or exploitation; and access alternative dispute-resolution mechanisms and child-friendly courts.

“Collaboration with the FJA would go a long way in realizing and implementing children’s rights to live free from violence, exploitation, abuse and to end the detention of children in all its forms, “said Abdullah Fadil, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan.

“For children of Pakistan to survive, thrive and grow to their full potential, it is imperative to have child-friendly and gender-responsive alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and courts within the judicial system,” he added.

Under the MoU, FJA and UNICEF would synergise their respective expertise to generate evidence and data on child related justice; strengthen capacity of the justice workforce to better understand and respond to the needs of children and equipping judges, lawyers, and other legal practitioners with the skills and knowledge to handle child-sensitive cases effectively; modelling child friendly and gender responsive interventions that aim to create judicial environment that supports and protects children throughout legal proceedings and supporting advocacy through local and regional dialogues to promote greater awareness and understanding of children’s rights among legal professionals.

About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.

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