

## Federal Judicial Academy Concludes First National Training on Reimagining Justice for Children

### Training of Trainers Brings Together Judges from Across Pakistan to Advance Child-Centred Justice

**Islamabad – 8 May 2026.** The Federal Judicial Academy (FJA) in partnership with UNICEF Pakistan and Group Development Pakistan successfully concluded a four-day Judicial Capacity Building Programme on Reimagining Justice for Children (RJ4C), marking an important step for strengthening the protection and upholding of child rights within the judiciary.

The Training of Trainers (ToT) programme, held from 4–7 May 2026 at the FJA, brought together 27 members of the judiciary from all provinces and territories, under a comprehensive curriculum designed to embed child rights principles across all dimensions of judicial practice in Pakistan.

The ToT follows the launch of the “Reimagine Justice for Children in Pakistan” initiative by the FJA in December 2024, in partnership with UNICEF Pakistan, and collaboration from Group Development Pakistan, constituting a critical step toward institutionalising a child-centered approach across the country’s justice system, in line with international standards.

Delivering the opening address, Ms. Sharmeela Rassool, Deputy Representative Programmes, UNICEF Pakistan, underscored the depth of UNICEF’s partnership with the Federal Judicial Academy. “UNICEF is proud to partner with the Federal Judicial Academy to implement the Reimagine Justice for Children programme in Pakistan. The judiciary plays a unique role. For a child, an encounter with the justice system can either deepen harm or restore dignity and hope. Justice for children is not only about applying the law. It is about seeing the child not as a case, but as a rights holder with dignity and a future,” said Ms Rassool.

Mr. Hayat Ali Shah, Director General of the Federal Judicial Academy, expressed strong judicial commitment to the RJ4C agenda, describing the training as the beginning of a much larger systemic transformation. He conveyed his aspiration that every judge in Pakistan come to recognise children as central to the justice system, and that children’s access to justice and effective remedies is not a peripheral concerns, but essential foundations of a healthy, prosperous society and nation.

The training covered five categories of children encountering judicial proceedings: children at risk of coming into conflict with the law; children in conflict with the law; child victims; child witnesses; and children involved in family and civil proceedings.

Participants engaged in specialized sessions on the Justice for Children (J4C) framework and its alignment with Pakistan’s constitutional and international child rights obligations. The programme covered child-centered court design, diversion and restorative justice, trauma-informed judicial practices for child victims and witnesses, and the application of the best interests of the child principle in judicial proceedings. Trained judicial officers are now equipped to replicate, adjust, design, deliver, and assess peer trainings on Justice for Children across the Judicial Academies in the country, creating a multiplier effect that can reach the entire judiciary.

All the Partners remain committed to supporting sustainable, child centred and rights-based justice reforms, in line with the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018, and applicable international standards and look forward to continuing collaborative efforts with relevant stakeholders to advance Justice for Children as a national priority through judicial education, institutional capacity-building, and improved access to child-sensitive justice mechanisms.