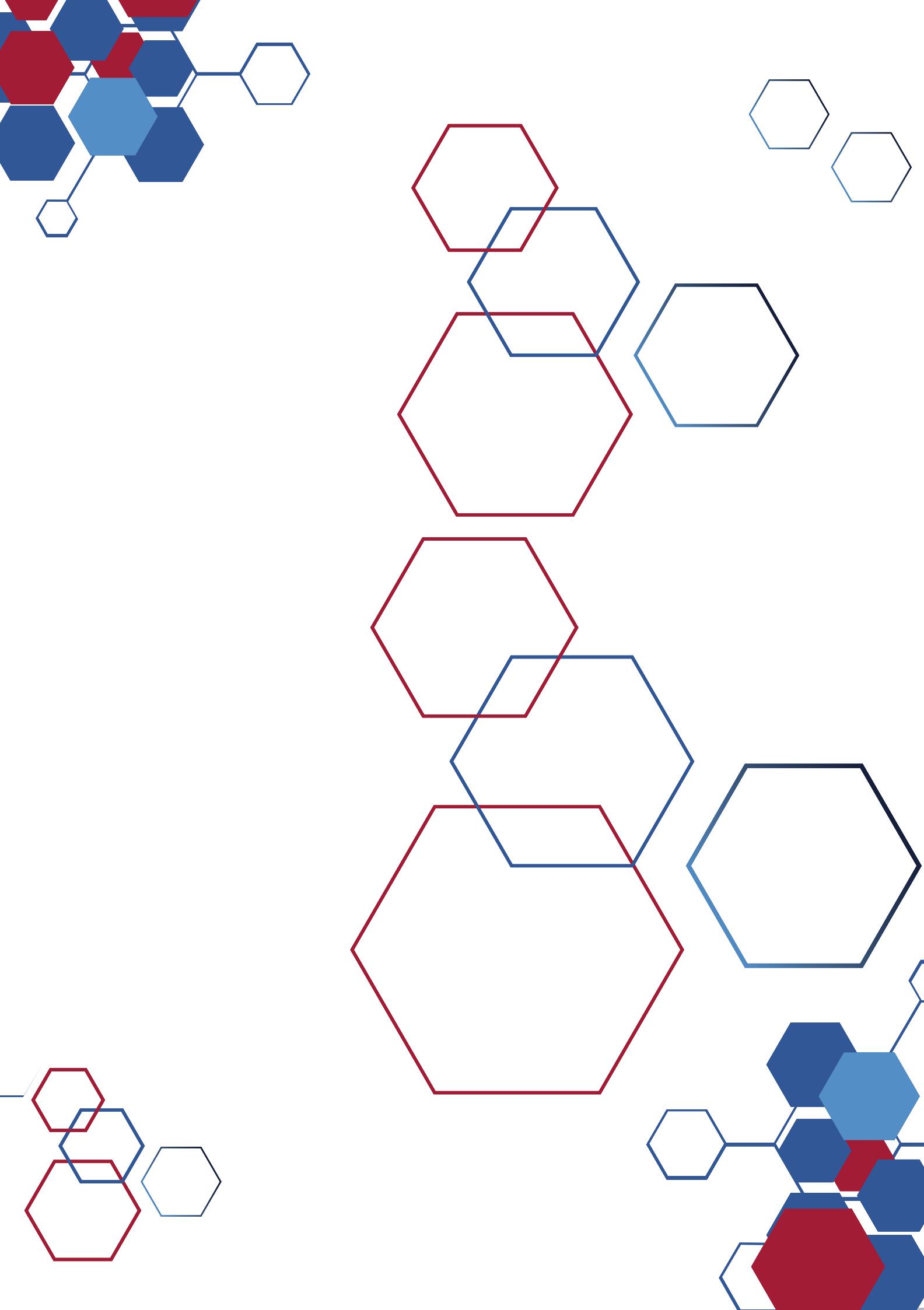




Digital Gender Inclusion Strategy







The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority has been steering Pakistan's telecommunication sector since 1996, introducing meaningful policy interventions to bring it at par with evolving global standards.



Vision

"Create a fair regulatory regime to promote investment, encourage competition, protect consumer interests, and ensure high-quality ICT services"

Acknowledgment

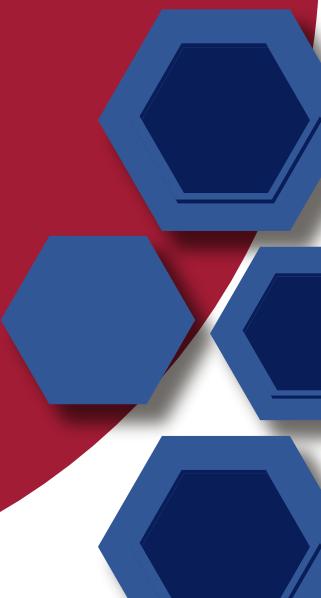
The Digital Gender Inclusion Strategy has been developed to increase gender participation in digital transformation of the country. The strategy gives a headway for digital inclusion of women from all segments of the society.

The Digital Gender Inclusion Strategy with a three year action plan has been prepared with financial and technical collaboration of UNESCO Islamabad Office and PTA. We express our gratitude to the Ministry of IT & Telecom (MoIT&T), Government of Pakistan for its continuing support and guidance, which has the objective of digitally progressive Pakistan.

Our collaboration with GSMA Association remains fundamental with their commitment to Mobile for Development. Sharing of international best practices, success stories and wealth of data are essential for which we are profoundly thankful to them. Gratitude is also due to our international partners, Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) (former) whose expertise and collaborative spirit proved vital in setting the tone for gender sensitization in the local ICT sector.

We are also indebted to our telecom operators specially Jazz and Ufone for their commitment and support. Lastly all those experts from the digital arena of the country who participated in the strategy building process - your input experience and expertise made us pave the way and strive for #HerDigitalPakistan.

At the heart of all accomplishments lies the dedication of the team, whose untiring efforts have made this milestone attainable. The support extended by Mr. Yousef Filali-Meknassi (Country Representative and Director UNESCO), the guidance provided by Members of the Authority led by Chairman PTA, Major General (R) Hafeez Ur Rehman, were the primary inspiration at every stage. The strategy has been compiled by Ms. Sadaf Khan (Lead Author), along with Ms. Syeda Shafaq Karim (Director PTA), Ms. Rabeeya Pervaz (Director PTA), Ms. Malahat Obaid (Director PTA), Mr. Waqas Hassan (Assistant Director PTA), Mr. Hamza Khan Swati (National Professional Officer Comms and Info UNESCO Islamabad Office) & Ms. Saira Faisal (Country Lead GSMA).

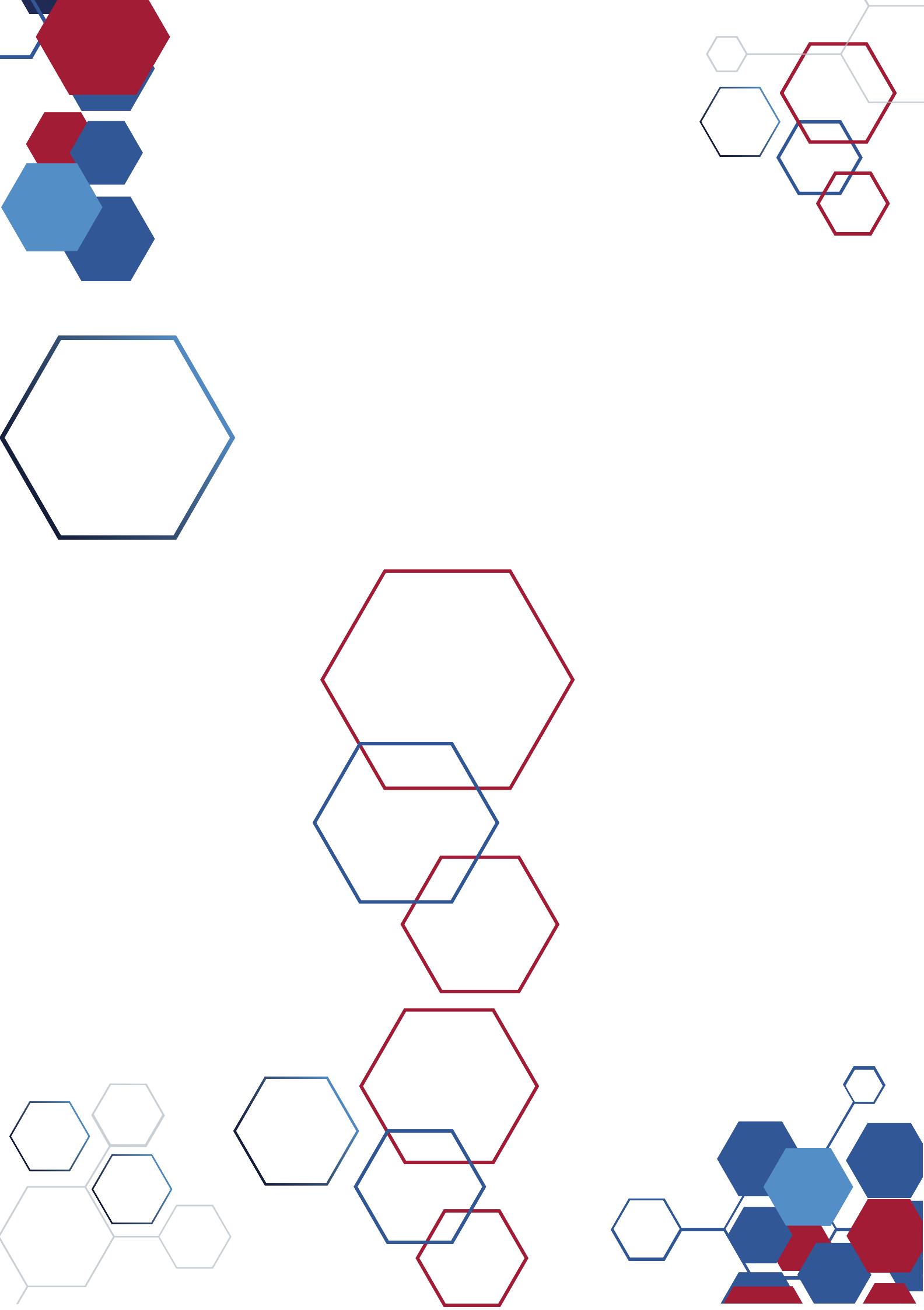


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Acronyms

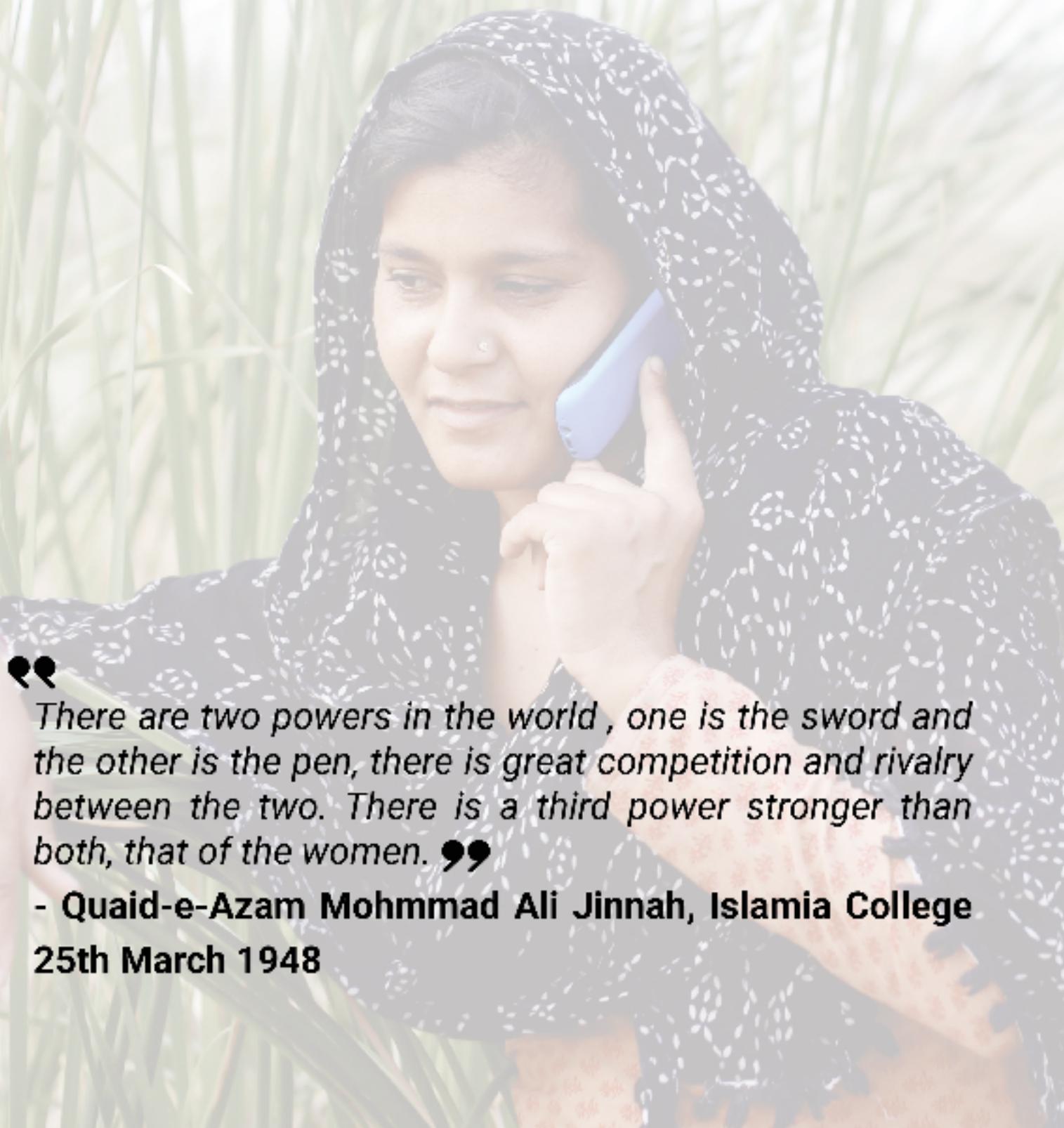
APC	Association for Progressive Communications
A4AI	Alliance for Affordable Internet
CNIC	Computerised National Identity Card
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
FIA	Federal Investigation Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSMA	GSM Association
HEC	Higher Education Commission
ICTs	Information and Communication Technology
ISPAK	Internet Service Providers Association of Pakistan
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LMIC	Low and Middle-Income Countries
MOHR	Ministry of Human Rights
MOITT	Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications
NCHR	National Commission for Human Rights
NCSW	National Commission on Status of Women
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NITB	National Information Technology Board
NTC	National Telecom Corporation
PBS	Pakistan Bureau of Statistics
PECA	Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act
PSLM	Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement
PTA	Pakistan Telecommunication Authority
PTCL	Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited
R & D Fund	Research and Development Fund
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIM	Subscriber Identity Module
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USF	Universal Service Fund





Section - 01

Introduction



“There are two powers in the world , one is the sword and the other is the pen, there is great competition and rivalry between the two. There is a third power stronger than both, that of the women. ”

- Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Islamia College
25th March 1948

Background

To achieve gender digital inclusion in Pakistan, it is vital to ensure that policies and initiatives related to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are inclusive and address the specific needs into key ICT and IT related policies, focusing on women, children, people with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged individuals. The digital gender divide, referring to the gap between men and women in access to digital technologies, remains a significant challenge, exacerbated by structural inequalities and social norms that affect education and income disparities between genders. In Pakistan, mobile technology is the primary means of accessing the internet for both men and women. However, despite the rapid growth of mobile technology, women in Pakistan continue to lag behind in mobile phone ownership and usage. The GSMA's Mobile Gender Gap Report 2022 highlights that women in Pakistan are 33% less likely than men to own a mobile phone and 38% less likely to use mobile internet. The barriers preventing women from accessing and utilizing mobile phones and the internet are multifaceted and interconnected.

A study by Media Matters for Democracy, titled "Women Disconnected: Feminist Case Studies on the Gender Digital Divide Amidst COVID-19," underscores that women from low-income households encounter significant obstacles, including financial, geographical, and cultural constraints. The Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) survey conducted by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reveals regional variations in the gender digital divide. Women from marginalized communities face severe barriers to digital technology access, stemming from factors such as limited education, financial constraints, cultural and social restrictions, and a lack of awareness about the advantages of digital technology. Bridging this divide requires targeted efforts, awareness campaigns, and policy changes to ensure equitable access and usage of digital technologies for all.

GSMA's 2021 Consumer Survey identifies that the top barriers to women in Pakistan¹ using mobile internet are: difficulties reading and writing, family disapproval, internet is perceived not to be relevant for them, and handset cost.² Other factors such as safety and security concerns, lack of formal proof of identification or access to sales agents and training facilities also impact the digital gender divide.³

The research further underscores the importance of women's access to digital technology, not only for their economic empowerment but also for their social and political empowerment. Digital technologies including mobile phones help empower women, making them feel more connected, autonomous, safer, and providing access to information, services and life-enhancing opportunities.⁴

However, there is a paradoxical relationship between digital technology and women's safety.⁵ While women report that mobile phones make them feel safer⁶ (e.g. to contact help if they are in trouble), safety concerns can inhibit women from using mobile and benefitting from content and services. Women who are connected to digital technology in Pakistan continue to face safety and security challenges. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) annual reports demonstrate that women often become victims of cyber harassment and face blackmail, leaking of private information, and intimate photographs and videos.

1. This is of female mobile users who are aware of mobile internet but haven't used it in the last three months.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. GSMA (2022). Policy considerations to accelerate digital inclusion for women in low- and middle income countries.

5. GSMA. (2018). A framework to understand women's mobile-related safety concerns in low-and middle-income countries.

6. GSMA. (2022). Mobile Gender Gap Report 2022.

The primary challenge in Pakistan's digital landscape is increasing internet adoption, with a significant portion of the population residing within reach of mobile broadband networks but not utilizing them. To bridge the gender digital divide, extensive efforts are needed, and this endeavor holds substantial societal, economic, and SDG-related benefits. Closing the gender gap in mobile access and usage in low- and middle-income countries could yield substantial economic growth, with an estimated \$700 billion in GDP growth over five years, according to GSMA. Bridging the divide also aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 5, focused on gender equality and empowerment.

A comprehensive approach is required to address the challenges women face in accessing digital technology. This includes enhancing digital literacy, improving affordability, investing in relevant content and services, ensuring online safety, and challenging prevailing social norms. Prioritizing marginalized communities, including women, children, people with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged individuals, in digital technology policies and initiatives is essential.

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has formulated a gender inclusion strategy in response to the gender digital divide. While PTA plays a central role as a telecom regulator, it emphasizes collaboration among various stakeholders, including government bodies, public, and private entities, to achieve gender digital inclusion. This inclusive approach is key to empowering women and enabling their full participation in Pakistan's digital economy and society. This strategy takes us one step closer by leveraging gender responsive digital transformation of the country.

Objectives

The digital gender inclusion strategy is drafted with the following key objectives

- 01.** Setting policy priorities based on an understanding of women's circumstances, challenges and needs through gender-disaggregated data-gathering and research in Pakistan;

- 02.** Identifying the specific needs for policy and regulatory interventions that can help bridge the digital gender divide in Pakistan;

- 03.** Defining measures that can be initiated by PTA to address the digital gender divide in Pakistan;

- 04.** Creating a platform and governance framework for multi-stakeholder collaboration and the effective coordination of joint efforts to address the digital gender divide in Pakistan.

Methodology for Assessment of Digital Gender Gap in Pakistan

The strategy development methodology for the gender inclusion strategy in Pakistan was designed to be inclusive and responsive. The methodology included data collection from mobile users through Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and door-to-door surveys, as well as primary data from GSMA on the mobile gender gap in Pakistan. The strategy design was made inclusive and responsive by conducting a gender policy analysis, stakeholder mapping, and analysis of external factors. A comprehensive literature review of existing challenges and mapping of issues women and girls faced in Pakistan with regards to digital access was also conducted. Additionally, a gender inclusion focused review of relevant policies was conducted, and a series of multi-stakeholder workshops and expert interviews were held.

To assess the gender digital divide and formulate strategy, multiple surveys were carried out and expert inputs were collected.

01.

A public perception survey was conducted in four districts with high gender digital gaps, including Hangu, Charsadda, Khairpur, and Tando Muhammad Khan. This survey involved 500 respondents, with 27% women, to analyze public perceptions of women's internet usage.

02.

An IVR-based survey focused on mobile and internet access was carried out on mobile subscribers. Jazz and Ufone, two cellular mobile operators administered the IVR survey, which garnered responses from 103,832 participants.

03.

The GSMA contributed primary data from its annual Consumer Survey, which assesses mobile access and usage in low- and middle-income countries, including Pakistan. These surveys are conducted face-to-face and cover a representative sample of the adult population, tracking changes in digital inclusion over time. Various demographic indicators, such as gender, location, education, occupation, income, and disability status, are included.

04.

A series of multi stakeholder workshops were held in Karachi, Lahore, Quetta and Peshawar to bring together tech, legal, gender and technology experts. The workshops were designed to map current situations and collect recommendations on legal, policy and practical solutions for gender inclusion.

05.

Additionally, expert insights were gathered through interviews and online questionnaires. Feedback was obtained from experts representing the public sector, civil society, legal fraternity, technology sector, and general internet users. This input played a crucial role in shaping the strategies outlined in the report.



Section - 02

Findings of Surveys and Consultations

“

Right now, one of the most impactful actions we can take to reduce the gender digital divide is to invest in education and #DigitalSkills development at every level to reach as many women + girls as possible. ”

- Secretary General International Telecommunication Union, Doreen Bogdan-Martin

Findings of Surveys and Consultations

This section presents a brief summary of the findings of the surveys, interviews and consultations⁷ held as a part of the strategy development process.

1. Core Findings of Public Perception Survey

The Public Perception Survey was conducted in four districts with the highest gender digital divide in the country, and included 500 respondents, of which 27% were women. The survey aimed to analyze public perceptions about women's use of the Internet. Following are the main findings:

- **Affordability Concerns:** The survey highlighted concerns regarding the affordability of digital technologies. Over half of the respondents perceived handsets, mobile services, and the internet as somewhat affordable. However, 36% found mobile handsets unaffordable, indicating the need for more affordable options for the population, especially those with lower incomes.
- **Gender Disparities in Affordability:** Women were more likely to perceive mobile handsets, mobile packages, and the internet as unaffordable, indicating that they face greater financial constraints in accessing these technologies.
- **Primary Reasons for Internet Use:** A substantial gender difference was observed in the primary reasons for internet use. Women primarily use the internet to connect with family and friends (44%), while only 24% of men cited the same reason.
- **Social Attitudes:** A concerning finding was that a significant proportion of respondents believed that women should only "sometimes" be allowed to use mobile phones and the internet. In some cases, 16% of female respondents and 23% of male respondents believed that women should not use mobile phones at all. Attitudes toward women's internet use mirrored these trends.

2. Core Findings of IVR Survey

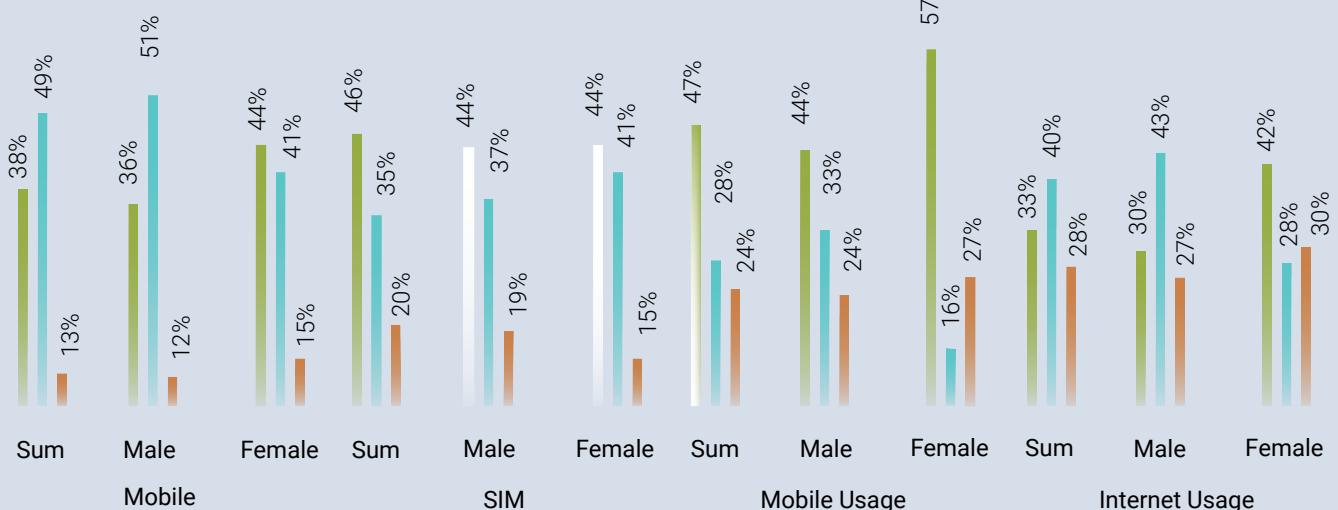
The IVR Survey on mobile and internet access and use was conducted by telecommunication companies Jazz and Ufone among populations that used mobile but not mobile internet to gauge their perceptions towards women's use of the Internet. A total of 103,832 respondents participated in the IVR survey. Following are the main findings:

- **Gender Gap in Mobile Ownership:** The IVR survey revealed a significant gender gap in mobile phone ownership within households. 51% of men and 41% of women reported that women in their families did not own mobile phones, indicating that women face barriers in owning mobile devices.
- **Gender Gap in SIM Card Ownership:** There was also a considerable gap in the ownership of SIM cards among women, with 35% of respondents stating that women in their families did not own SIM cards. This suggests that women may have limited access to this technology.
- **Shared Mobile Access:** The data suggested that some women who do not officially own mobile phones may still have access to them through sharing or borrowing devices, emphasizing the importance of understanding how women access and use technology beyond ownership.
- **Internet Usage Discrepancy:** The survey indicated a discrepancy between the number of women who own mobile phones and those who use them. This finding suggests that women who do not own mobile phones still access them, possibly through sharing or borrowing. This finding underscores the importance of understanding how women use technology, not just whether they own it.

7. Detailed findings of the surveys are available with PTA.

Mobile Phone Ownership, SIM Ownership, Mobile Usage, and Internet Usage by Women

Yes | No | No Response



Trends Seen in Both Surveys

- Gender Digital Divide: Both surveys pointed to a clear gender digital divide in Pakistan, with women facing greater barriers to accessing and using digital technologies, including mobile phones and the internet.
- Affordability Concerns: The affordability of digital technologies emerged as a common concern in both surveys. A substantial portion of respondents perceived these technologies as unaffordable, and this perception was more pronounced among women.
- Social Attitudes: The surveys identified prevailing social attitudes that restrict women's access to and use of mobile phones and the internet. Many respondents believed that women should only "sometimes" be allowed to use these technologies, reflecting the persistence of gender-based restrictions.
- Access vs. Ownership: Both surveys highlighted the distinction between mobile phone ownership and usage, revealing that women who do not own mobile phones may still have access to them. This underscores the importance of understanding how women interact with technology beyond ownership.
- Gender-Based Beliefs: The surveys also identified gender-based beliefs that contribute to the digital gender gap. Men were more likely to hold negative attitudes regarding women's use of technology, such as perceiving that women do not need mobile phones or cannot use them safely.
- Perceived Benefits: Despite the challenges, both surveys indicated that respondents, including those who believed women should not use technology, still recognized the benefits of women's Internet usage, particularly in improving communication with family and the community.

3. Recommendations from Experts

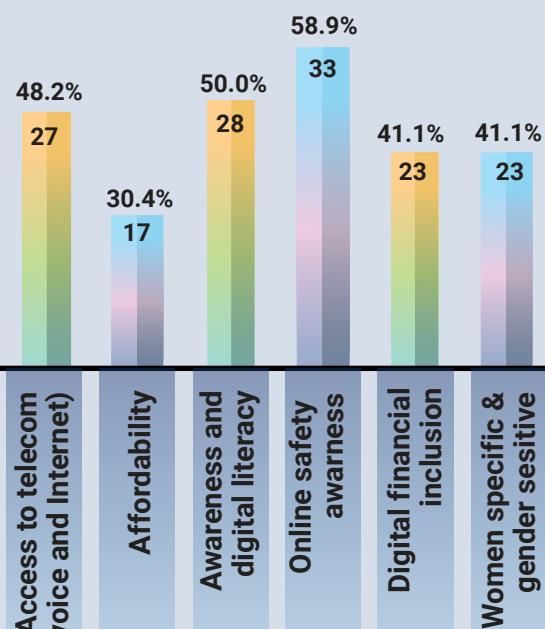
Experts feedback through online questionnaire

A comprehensive online questionnaire was designed to gather feedback from various stakeholders, including public sector representatives, the tech community, civil society, legal experts, and other key informants.

Public Sector Recommendations:

Public sector representatives identified key stakeholders working towards gender digital inclusion, encompassing various sectors such as telecom, education, finance, and government entities.⁸ Key Recommendations from the Public Sector included making digital services more affordable for women to improve their access, launching extensive awareness campaigns to challenge biases and ensure online safety for women and children. Additional suggestions included creating effective coordination mechanisms among stakeholders, promoting equality of opportunity, collaborative education initiatives, incentivizing young girls to join tech courses, spreading awareness among families to empower women, offering skill-building opportunities, establishing secure media groups, and adopting cohesive policies with implementation mechanisms.

Priority Intervention for Digital Inclusion (Online Survey)



Tech Sector Recommendations:

Nearly 47% of tech sector representatives believed that technology design could help close the gender digital divide in Pakistan. The tech sector recommendation included creating awareness, affordability, safety, training and education and provision of security services like tracking, blocking, and responding to harassment complaints. Experts also talked about creating gender sensitive environment within the tech sector and creating hybrid working models to female participation in the tech sector. Additionally, the GSMA emphasized gender-responsive tech design. All stakeholders, including the tech sector, should consider women's specific needs, circumstances, challenges, and barriers related to access, affordability, safety, security, knowledge, skills, and content.

Civil Society and Legal Fraternity Recommendations:

Civil society representatives provided a limited number of responses, suggesting approaches to overcome societal and cultural barriers. The recommendations included offering training and internships for women in digital skills, prioritisation of safety for women in the workplace and online and creating behaviour change campaigns to challenge stereotypes and biases that hinder women's participation in the tech industry. Legal experts emphasized the need for policy frameworks to protect women online and within the tech sector. They raised concerns about the lack of gender-focused aspects in existing laws and policies.

8. Notable institutions included the National Telecom Corporation (NTC), National Information Technology Board (NITB), Universal Service Fund (USF), Ignite, Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT), government universities, National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), Ministry of Human Rights, Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL), Finance Ministry, Planning and Development, public sector educational institutes, and the Education Ministry.

4. Insights from Expert Interviews

The following core insights were shared by the experts⁹ and key informants interviewed as a part of the strategy development process:

- Reliable and credible data is needed for policy planning.
- Gender-disaggregated data is needed to understand the ground situation, the issues, limitations, and the impediments.
- Attitudinal changes are needed in the cybercrime reporting agency FIA.
- Digital rights of women need to be clearly spelled out.
- Work needs to be done with community-based organizations for digital literacy and safety.
- Funds need to be dedicated to improving access to technologies through more affordable devices for women who face financial barriers.

5. Findings of Multi-stakeholder Consultations

A total of four multi stakeholder consultative workshops were held across the country. The first multi-stakeholder workshop was held in Peshawar on 30th November 2022. A total of 24 participants joined the workshop from different stakeholder groups. The second workshop was held in Lahore on 17th December 2022. A total of 18 experts from different stakeholder groups attended the workshop. The third workshop was held in Quetta on 19th December 2022. A total of 50 participants joined the workshop. The 4th consultative workshop was held in Karachi, on 22nd December 2022, and brought together 21 representatives from various stakeholder groups, including the tech sector, telecommunications sector, corporate sector, civil society, and academia. Core findings from the discussions in the multi-stakeholder workshops are as follows;

Barriers Identified in Multi-stakeholder Workshops

Access Barriers: Access to networks, handsets, formal identification documents (IDs), sales agents, training, and electricity emerged as significant challenges. Without reliable electricity, women face limitations in charging digital devices, hindering their ability to benefit from technology. In rural areas, network coverage remains a challenge. Many women lack official IDs required for registering SIM cards and mobile services, often due to the necessity of interacting with men. Furthermore, the lack of Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) among women restricts their access to online resources, as many services require CNIC verification. These technical barriers are interwoven with other challenges, such as patriarchal controls and financial constraints. The absence of local language content and services also contributes to access difficulties.

Lack of Formal Education and Digital Literacy

Gender disparities in digital literacy and technology access are pronounced in various parts of Pakistan. A higher proportion of women have lower levels of education and functional literacy compared to men. This education gap translates into limited digital skills and confidence among women. Illiteracy and lower education levels hinder women's ability to use mobile handsets and digital services effectively, including the internet. The disparity in literacy rates is stark, with a considerable difference between adult women and men. The low digital literacy rate among women is compounded by technology apprehension, especially among older women, who are often reluctant to test their digital skills. Cultural norms that restrict women's participation in public life and limit their access to education further aggravate this issue.

9. Interviews were held with key informants from Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Gender Rights Excerpt from Gilgit Baltistan, Digital Rights Foundation, Association for Progressive Communication, Public Interest ICT Lawyer from Mexico, Local Community Networks Lead at APC in Belur, and a victim of nonconsensual release of intimate images and a victim of blackmail over the internet include

Social and Cultural Barriers

The workshops revealed various cultural and patriarchal challenges affecting women's technology access in Pakistan. Three main categories of challenges were identified.

Patriarchal Controls: Traditional households often resist allowing women to use mobile phones and the internet, viewing it as a challenge to gender norms. Women's technology usage is closely monitored, limiting their autonomy and agency in technology use.

Restrictions on Interaction: Obtaining necessary IDs and SIM cards often necessitates interactions with men in government offices, which can be uncomfortable or even impossible for women from conservative families.

Fear of Social Media: A perception that women will misuse the internet for social media, like Facebook and TikTok, due to concerns about cultural values, results in denial of access to technology. Cultural and patriarchal challenges pose significant barriers to women's access and effective use of ICTs.

Economic Disparity and Affordability

Affordability, especially of handsets, is a primary obstacle to mobile ownership, impacting both men and women in Pakistan. Women, due to lower incomes, reduced access to external financial resources, and financial dependence on men, experience having affordability challenges more acutely. Many women rely on shared devices due to financial constraints, creating a power dynamic where men control and monitor women's technology use.

Taxation on Telecommunication Services

Taxation on telecommunication services which increases costs for companies and consumers, particularly affects women due to their lower incomes and financial independence. This taxation, coupled with the lack of recognition and support for the telecommunications sector, raises prices for telecommunications services.

Safety Concerns

Safety concerns, both related to social media and scamming/fraud, deter women from using mobile devices and the internet. Privacy, reputation, personal information, and financial risks are significant factors. Participants expressed a lack of trust in law enforcement agencies' ability to address these concerns, discouraging women from seeking legal assistance when they encounter safety issues online. The lack of trust, particularly in regions like Balochistan, where security challenges impact physical safety, makes women feel more vulnerable.

Policy-Related Concerns

Participants highlighted policy issues affecting telecommunication and internet infrastructure and service delivery in Pakistan. These issues include a lack of strong infrastructure safety policies, the need for quality service and network expansion to ensure coverage, and challenges in accessing and understanding policies. Concerns about hyper-regulation of content and unregulated user data usage by companies were raised. Additionally, regional languages were excluded from the policy-making process. Internet access challenges in specific areas due to spectrum auction policies were discussed. The workshops also pointed to the lack of internet access in certain regions. The participants stressed the importance of considering the impact on the daily lives of residents, particularly women, while balancing security with ensuring access to ICTs.

In Balochistan, network shutdowns were identified as a substantial challenge contributing to the gender digital divide. These shutdowns affect access to information, communication technologies, and online resources, particularly impacting female students. It's crucial for all stakeholders to work together to address these safety and access concerns to ensure women have equal access to technology, empowering them to engage in social, economic, and political spheres.

Stakeholder Recommendations

This section summarizes the key recommendations made by stakeholders engaged through surveys, interviews and multi-stakeholder workshops;

1. Increasing Digital Literacy

- *Digital Literacy Training:* Offering digital literacy training programs for women is crucial to enhance their technology skills and knowledge, enabling them to harness the full potential of technology and the internet.
- *Awareness Campaigns:* Participants recommended conducting awareness campaigns to educate women about the myriad benefits and opportunities that technology and the internet can offer. Creating resources like brochures and videos that illustrate the potential uses of technology and the internet for women can serve as valuable educational tools.

2. Enabling Access

- *Streamlining CNIC and SIM Card Access:* Simplifying the process of obtaining Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) and SIM cards, especially in rural areas, can alleviate the discomfort many women face during this process. Increasing the accessibility of CNIC and SIM card registration centers in women's residential areas is a recommended strategy.
- *Mobile Number Tokenization:* Implementing mobile number tokenization can address privacy concerns related to sharing mobile numbers and the harassment women users may face. Mobile number tokenization involves generating a unique token for a mobile phone number, safeguarding users' personal information from unauthorized exposure or sharing.
- *Dedicated Helpline for Women:* Establishing a dedicated helpline with women service providers can create a gender-sensitive support system. This helpline can help women access information and assistance related to digital technologies, thereby boosting their confidence and competence in utilizing these technologies.
- *Local Language Content:* Prioritizing the availability of local language content on the internet is essential. It serves as a gateway for women to access and utilize the internet effectively.

3. Establishment of Community Networks:

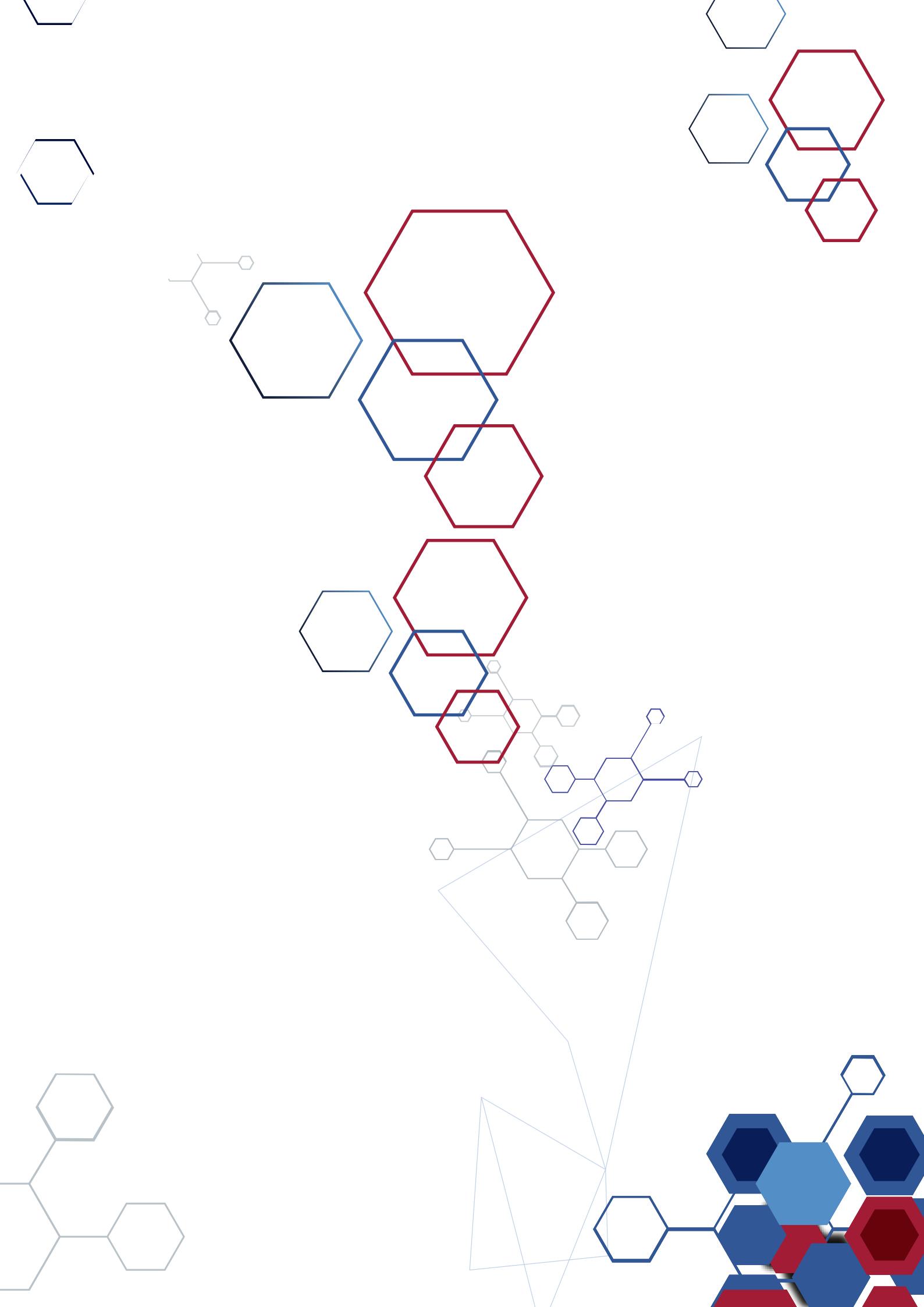
Community networks can provide localized solutions, particularly in under-connected and unconnected areas. These locally owned and operated networks empower communities, often in remote regions, to take charge of infrastructure and services. Involving local women in these networks can help address the gender digital divide, making women leaders in their communities and enhancing their access to digital resources. Training women to manage these community networks can be a powerful tool for providing internet access to under-connected communities and addressing the gender digital divide. By offering cost-effective, locally available technology, these networks can empower women and expand their access to digital resources and opportunities.

4. Changing the Negative Perception of Technology

- *Community Engagement Activities:* Conducting community engagement activities is vital for transforming the negative perceptions of technology and the internet held by families and communities. These initiatives aim to educate and raise awareness about the benefits of technology.
- *Resource Creation:* Developing resources such as brochures and videos that highlight the potential uses of technology to families and communities is another valuable tool.
- *Social Mobilization:* Traditional cultural norms and perceptions often restrict women's participation in public life and limit their access to education, including access to the internet. The workshops suggested employing social mobilization through local community leaders to change these perceptions and attitudes, creating awareness and education about the benefits of the internet for women.

5. Enactment of Data Privacy and Protection Laws

- *Data Privacy Legislation* - Participants emphasized the importance of data privacy legislation in safeguarding women's personal data and privacy rights. This legislation would provide women with greater control over their personal information and promote the fair and transparent use of personal data.
- *Creating a Safer Environment:* Enacting data privacy laws would not only benefit women but also society as a whole by ensuring equal access to the benefits of the digital age and creating a safer and more inclusive online environment.





Section - 03

Strategic Approach to Enable Digital Gender Inclusion

“ ”

Digital gender inclusion is the critical success factor to bring about all-inclusive digital transformation in Pakistan. While we remain steadfast to facilitate the implementation of this strategy, I firmly believe that the dream of #HerDigitalPakistan can only be realized through whole-of-the-government approach and stakeholder collaboration. We want to encourage female participation in the tech space by enabling a safe, progressive and friendly digital environment in the country. ”

- Chairman PTA, Maj Gen (R) Hafeez Ur Rehman

Strategic Approach to Enable Digital Gender Inclusion

Structure and Approach

The strategy is structured around five key areas: affordability; knowledge and digital skills; safety and security; access; and relevance. These areas are aligned with policy considerations recommended by GSMA in its September 2022 publication titled '**Policy considerations to accelerate digital inclusion for women in low- and middle-income countries**'.

In terms of **affordability**, the strategy aims to improve affordability of digital technology and services, particularly for women, for example by providing subsidies or other financial incentives. This could include targeted discounts or tax exemptions for women, as well as partnerships with the private sector to improve access to affordable devices.

The strategy also aims to **improve knowledge and digital skills** among women in Pakistan through targeted education and training programs. This could include basic digital literacy programs, training in using specific technologies, and mentorship programs to support women in developing their skills and confidence in using digital technology.

To address **safety and security concerns**, the strategy includes measures to protect women's personal information and ensure their online safety. This could involve the development of safe online spaces, the implementation of privacy policies, and the creation of dedicated helplines and support services.

In terms of **access**, the strategy aims to improve women's access to digital technology and services. This could include partnerships with the private sector to expand access to formal proof of identification, sales agents, as well as the development of community-based digital centers and other initiatives to promote access.

Finally, the strategy aims to ensure that digital technology and services are relevant to the needs and priorities of women in Pakistan. This could include the development of locally relevant content, as well as partnerships with women's organizations and other stakeholders to ensure that digital technology is used to address gender-specific issues.

While the **PTA** will be the primary implementer of actions focused on access and affordability, it will need to work closely with other stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector, to ensure that the strategy is successful. The implementation of the strategy will also require a strong commitment from all stakeholders to address the gender digital divide in Pakistan and ensure that women have equal access to digital technology and services.

Core Strategy of Action

Aligned with the approach suggested by the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development,¹⁰ Pakistan digital inclusion strategy is designed to contribute towards;

1. Understanding local context of digital inclusion for women and girls
2. Integrating gender perspectives in strategies, policies, plans and budgets
3. Addressing key barriers faced by women
4. Collaboration with relevant stakeholders

10. www.broadbandcommission.org/

To work towards improved digital inclusion of women, PTA aims to systemise the process for integrating gender considerations within policy and practice by initiating the creation of a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism that would work through various thematic groups to achieve gender inclusion objectives.

Rationale

Women's digital inclusion is a complex issue that requires a collaborative and holistic approach to address. The challenge of closing the digital gender divide is not only a matter of connectivity, but also a question of social, economic, and cultural barriers. Therefore, it is essential to create a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism that brings together public and private stakeholders to work collaboratively towards women's digital inclusion. All stakeholders have important roles to play in promoting digital gender equality. The public sector can create policies and regulatory frameworks that support women's access to and use of digital technologies, and invest in projects that cater to the specific needs of women. The private sector can design products and services that are accessible, affordable, and relevant to women, and support the development of women-led businesses. Civil society organizations can act as advocates for women's digital rights, mobilize communities, and provide support and services to women who face multiple forms of discrimination. Academia can contribute to research and data analysis, as well as to the development of evidence-based policies and programs. International organizations can provide technical assistance, funding, and coordination at the global level. Creating a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism is essential to address the complex and multifaceted challenge of women's digital inclusion.

By bringing together public and private stakeholders from different sectors, the mechanism can facilitate a comprehensive and coordinated approach that responds to women's diverse needs and perspectives. Moreover, it can ensure sustainability and accountability by fostering collaboration, transparency, and inclusivity. PTA, as the telecommunications regulator, has a limited mandate and cannot tackle all the barriers that have been identified. To truly address the challenge of digital gender divide, PTA will need support from a host of public and private stakeholders. As an independent regulator, PTA can take the initiative and lead on setting up and coordinating a mechanism that allows all stakeholders to work together in a cohesive and collaborative manner, allowing them to collectively make an impact.

Creation of Pakistan Digital Inclusion Forum for Gender Equity

As part of the gender inclusion strategy, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) will work to create a Pakistan Digital Inclusion Forum for Gender Equity. The Forum will be coordinated through a Steering Committee on the gender digital divide, and will work through thematic working groups focused on knowledge development, access, affordability, safety and security, digital literacy, and inclusion. The Forum will be a multi-stakeholder body that will bring together representatives from government, the private sector, civil society, and academia. It will be responsible for developing and implementing a national strategy to promote gender equality in the digital sphere. The Steering Committee will be responsible for the overall coordination of the Forum work. It will set the Forum's priorities, oversee the work of the thematic working groups, and ensure that the Forum's recommendations are implemented. The thematic working groups will focus on specific areas of gender inclusion in the digital sphere. The working groups will develop and implement programs and initiatives to address the challenges faced by women in accessing and using digital technologies.

STRUCTURES	GOAL	MEMBERS	ACTIONS
Steering Committee on the Digital Gender Inclusion	A high level committee coordinated by PTA and MoIT&T as the Convener to ensure continued formal collaboration by public and private stakeholders.	Secretariat: PTA Convener: MoIT&T Public Stakeholders: USF, Ignite, HEC, Provincial representatives, NCSW Planning Commission, NADRA, NAVTTC Private Stakeholders: ISPAK, Code for Pakistan, Telecommunication sector representatives, Civil Society representatives from gender rights and digital rights groups, academia and legal fraternity	- Formalisation of a 3 year action plan and assignment of responsibilities - Creation of evaluation mechanisms - Facilitation of support from related public and private entities - Resource mobilization - Monitoring and review of action plan
Working Group on Research and Data Collection	To collect, analyze, and track gender-disaggregated data related to ICTs, internet, mobile broadband access and use, to increase the understanding of gender digital divide and developing evidence-based policies to address it.	Lead: PBS, NCSW Public Stakeholders: NADRA, MoIT&T, PTA, USF, Higher Education Commission (HEC) Public Sector University Representatives, Ignite Private Stakeholders: Private Sector Universities with Tech and Gender Departments, Gender and technology focused civil society organizations, Telecommunication companies	- Identification of KPIs for assessment of digital gender status - Identification of methods for collection of the data - Annual national / household surveys on key indicators related to women's digital inclusion. - Facilitation of regular data collection and analysis of core ICT indicators

		<p>Technical Advisory: International academic institutions, multilateral bodies like the UN Women, ITU and broadband commission, international development agencies and technical groups like GSMA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of International rankings of digital and gender inclusion
Working Group on Affordability	To identify and advocate for actions that can help improve affordability of devices and connectivity.	<p>Lead: MoIT&T Public Stakeholders: PTA, Ministry of Finance, FBR, Ministry of Commerce, Planning Commission, USF, NCSW Private Stakeholders: Telecommunication companies, mobile manufacturer / import sector, civil society representatives from gender rights and digital rights groups Technical Advisory: GSMA, ITU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review & revision of telecommunication industry and taxation structure - Facilitation of policies that can bring down cost of manufacture and import of handsets - Draft probable models for providing affordable costs of devices and connection for women
Working Group on Access	To identify and advocate for interventions that can improve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - infrastructural access 	<p>Lead: PTA Public Stakeholders: MoIT&T, USF, Ministry of interior, FIA, HEC, NCSW, Gender studies department leads from public universities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring coverage and safety of telecom infrastructure - Draft policies and strategies to facilitate community networks

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - access to enablers such as formal proof of identification, sales agents and training facilities 	<p>Private Stakeholders: Representatives from Telecommunication companies, ISPAK, civil society representatives from gender rights and digital rights groups</p> <p>Technical Advisory GSMA, ITU, Broadband Commission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drafting of strategies to address non-infrastructure barriers to access (cultural, linguistic and technical barriers).
Working Group on Safety and Security	To address the challenges linked to safety and security of women online	<p>Lead: PTA, NCHR Public Stakeholders: PTA, MoIT&T, FIA, Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of Human Rights (MOHR)</p> <p>Private Stakeholders: Civil society representatives from gender rights and digital rights groups, legal fraternity</p> <p>Technical Advisory: UN Women, UNESCO, Association for Progressive Communications (APC), GSMA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of PECA from gender lens and other policies linked to cyber safety and security - Comprehensive review of FIA's process engagement with female victims of harassment and cyber crime - Facilitation of improvement in FIA's procedures to facilitate women victims of cybercrime and harassment - Solution focused engagement with social media companies on protection of women from digital violence

<p>Working Group on Women's Digital Literacy</p>	<p>To enable systemisation of efforts for improving women's digital skills and literacy</p>	<p>Lead: Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training Public Stakeholders: MoIT&T, NITB, federal and provincial education boards, HEC, National / Provincial incubation centres Private Stakeholders: Telecom Operators, Public and private universities, academics with expertise in adult education and pedagogy, education focused Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Technical Advisory: UNESCO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of framework for assessing women's needs for digital literacy, accounting for intersectional differences - Systemisation of adult digital literacy programs, focused on marginalised and rural areas - Creation of capacity building resources in regional languages - Strategization for integration of women's digital literacy components in programs like Ehsaas
<p>Working Group on Inclusion This can also work through three sub groups focused on</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. behavior change, b. relevance building via creation of use cases and initiation of e services and, c. digital financial inclusion 	<p>To help address negative perceptions regarding women's use of the Internet and coordinate actions to increase relevance of digital technology for women.</p>	<p>Lead: NCSW Public Stakeholders: MoIT&T, USF, Ministry of Interior, SBP, NITB, Ehsaas program Private Stakeholders: Representative from Telecommunication companies, ISPAK, academia, civil society representatives from gender rights, Banking sector representatives Technical Advisory: UNESCO, GSMA, UN Women, UNDP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design / facilitation of behaviour change campaign to deal with cultural barriers - Building Strategy for development of content /services in local languages and targeting women without formal education (audio formats)



Section - 04

Action Plan for Pakistan Digital Inclusion Forum for Gender Equity

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Unprecedented technological advancements have tremendously expanded our horizons. Yet close to half of the world's female population remains disconnected to internet. With a commitment to bridge the digital gender divide, UNESCO is integrating a right based and multi-stakeholder approach for internet and technology. To reach that objective, we are working with member states towards achieving more digital inclusive policies.”

**- Youssef Filali-Meknassi, Representative and Director,
UNESCO Islamabad, Pakistan**

Action Plan for Pakistan Digital Inclusion Forum for Gender Equity

The Action Plan for Pakistan Digital Inclusion Forum for Gender Equity is a comprehensive plan to address the challenges faced by women in accessing and using digital technologies in Pakistan. The plan is based on a thorough analysis of the existing situation and identifies key areas of intervention, actors, short-term, medium-term, and long-term targets, and expected impacts.

The plan identifies a range of actors who will play a role in its implementation, including the government, private sector, civil society, and academia. The plan also sets ambitious targets for the short, medium, and long term. These recommendations collectively provide a roadmap to empower women in Pakistan by breaking down the barriers that hinder their access to technology and the internet. By implementing these measures, Pakistan can take significant strides towards gender equality in the digital sphere.

Action Plan for Steering Committee

Purpose:

A high level committee coordinated by PTA and formed to ensure continued formal collaboration by public and private stakeholders.

Impact Objective: Efficient systemization of collaborative efforts between private and public stakeholders, facilitate effective actions aimed at increasing women's access and utilisation of ICTs.

ACTIONS	SHORT TERM TARGET 6 months	MID TERM TARGET 1 year	LONG TERM TARGET 3 years
Creation and Operationalization of Identified Thematic Working Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Establish all six working groups with diverse representation from public, private, and civil society stakeholders within 3 months.- Appoint experienced leaders or co-chairs for each working group within 4 months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Develop comprehensive ToRs for all working groups, specifying their roles, responsibilities, and targets, within 8 months. These terms can be based on the targets suggested for each working group further in this document.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ensure that all working groups are actively engaged in collaborative projects and knowledge-sharing within 15 months.- Implement a monitoring and evaluation system to measure the effectiveness of working group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold the inaugural meetings of each working group within 6 months, outlining their objectives and setting up communication channels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secure signed commitments from all key stakeholders, ensuring their active involvement and support, within 10 months. - Create and adopt detailed work plans, including specific activities and timelines, for each working group within 1 year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> initiatives within 18 months. - Establish a plan for long-term sustainability, including leadership succession plans and funding mechanisms, within 2 years.
Operationalizing and Providing Oversight to the Implementation of the Three-Year Plan / Gender Inclusion Strategy, for Digital Inclusion of Women in Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the final draft of the three-year plan within 4 months. - Receive formal approval and adoption of the plan from all relevant stakeholders within 6 months. - Initiate the first phase of the implementation plan within 6 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a mechanism for regular progress reporting and sharing of results with stakeholders within 8 months. - Develop and implement a clear management structure for overseeing the implementation of the plan within 10 months. - Within one year, work with the leadership of each working group to create a resource mobilisation plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that at least 30% of the plan's initiatives are fully implemented within 36 months. - Conduct an impact assessment and publish the first progress report on the plan's outcomes within 3 years.

Action Plan for Working Group on Research and Data Collection (WG-I)

Purpose:

To collect, analyze, and track gender-disaggregated data related to mobile and mobile internet access and use, to increase the understanding of gender digital divide and developing evidence-based policies to address it.

Impact Objective: Policy interventions, rules, regulations, budgets and procedures are informed by gender considerations and are thus, more responsive to the needs of women.

ACTIONS	SHORT TERM TARGET 6 months	MID TERM TARGET 1 year	LONG TERM TARGET 3 years
Creation of Framework for assessing women's needs for Digital Literacy and Identification of key performance indicators (KPIs) and initiation of Annual Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Develop a comprehensive framework for assessing women's digital literacy needs, accounting for intersectional differences, within 3 months.- Develop a conceptual framework for assessing women's needs for digital literacy, accounting for intersectional differences within 4 months.- Pilot test the digital literacy assessment framework with 100 women in Pakistan within 6 months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Validate the digital literacy assessment framework with 1,000 women in Pakistan within 8 months. In 12 months, develop a plan for the regular collection and analysis of digital literacy data among women in Pakistan, with a target of collecting data from 10,000 women per year.- By the end of 12 months identify and develop 5 key performance indicators (KPIs) for the assessment of digital gender status, in consultation with stakeholders from government, civil society, and the private sector.- By the end of 18 months, Establish a national baseline for digital literacy among	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Track progress on digital gender inclusion using the developed KPIs, by conducting annual assessments and publishing annual reports on the findings.- Use the data and evidence generated to inform the development and implementation of gender-responsive policies and programs, with a target of influencing 5 government policies and 10 private sector programs by the end of 3 years.

		women in Pakistan, based on data collected from 50,000 women.	
Conduct Policy and Legal Analysis for Women's Digital Inclusion regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Within 6 months, conduct a review of all relevant policies and laws related to digital inclusion in Pakistan, and publish a report on the findings. - Identify and analyse 10 specific policies and laws that have a positive or negative impact on women's digital inclusion. - Develop recommendations for improving the gender responsiveness of 5 policies and laws related to digital inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and assess the implementation of the recommendations made in the short-term phase, and publish a report on the findings. - Conduct additional policy and legal analysis as needed to inform the development and implementation of gender-responsive policies and programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to the development of a national policy framework for gender-inclusive digital inclusion, with a target of influencing 3 key policies. - Enable other working groups and civil society organisations with knowledge to effectively advocate for the enactment of laws and regulations that promote women's digital inclusion, with a target of influencing 2 laws and regulations.
Facilitation of Regular Data Collection and Analysis of Core ICT Indicators and Assessment of International Rankings of Digital and Gender Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and prioritise 10 core ICT indicators for the assessment of digital gender inclusion within the first 3 months. - Develop a plan for the regular collection and analysis of the identified ICT indicators, with a target of collecting data on a quarterly basis within 4 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to collect and analyse ICT data on a regular basis, and publish annual reports on the findings. - Develop and implement a system for tracking Pakistan's progress on international rankings of digital and gender inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a sustainable system for the regular collection and analysis of ICT data on digital gender inclusion. - Use the data and evidence generated to advocate for increased investment in gender-inclusive digital initiatives, with a target of increasing public and private investment in

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin collecting and analyzing ICT data to assess the current status of digital gender inclusion in Pakistan, and publish a report on the findings by the end of 6 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use the data and evidence generated to inform the development and implementation of gender-responsive initiatives. - Begin collecting and analyzing ICT data to assess the current status of digital gender inclusion in Pakistan, and publish a report on the findings by the end of 6 months. 	gender-inclusive digital initiatives, with a target of increasing public and private investment in gender-inclusive digital programs by 15%.
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Action Plan for Working Group on Affordability (WG-II)

Purpose:

To identify and advocate for actions that can help improve affordability of devices and connectivity.

Impact Objective: At least 25% more women are able to afford mobile phones and Internet.

ACTIONS	SHORT TERM TARGET 6 months	MID TERM TARGET 1 year	LONG TERM TARGET 3 years
Review & Revision of Telecommunication Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a framework for reviewing and revising the telecom taxation structure in 2 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocate with relevant bodies, including FBR and Ministry of Finance for implementation of at least 30% of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a telecommunication industry and taxation structure that is conducive to investment and innovation within 3 years

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and assess key areas for improvement in the telecommunication sector and taxation structure in 4 months - Develop recommendations for improving the telecommunication sector and taxation structure in 6 months. 	<p>the recommendations for improving the telecom taxation structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and evaluate the impact of the implemented recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieve a significant reduction in the cost of telecommunication services for consumers and businesses within 3 years
Facilitation of Policies that can Bring Down Cost of Manufacture and Import	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiate consultations with industry stakeholders, experts, and relevant government bodies to identify specific policy barriers within the first 3 months. - Within 5 months, conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing policies contributing to manufacturing and import costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a preliminary policy proposal that addresses the identified cost barriers within 9 months. - Initiate discussions with industry associations and experts for piloting proposed policy changes within the 1st year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce the cost of manufacturing and importing to the same level as in other developing countries within 3 years - Increase the domestic production of within 3 year
Develop Probable Models for Providing Affordable Costs of Devices and Connection for Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and assess existing models for providing affordable mobile devices and services to women. - Develop a framework for evaluating the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scale up the pilot test to reach a larger number of women. - Continue to measure the percentage increase in affordability of mobile devices and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieve at least a 15% increase in the percentage of women in Pakistan who can afford mobile devices and services. - Contribute to the development and

	<p>feasibility and impact of different models. Conduct a pilot test of one or more models in selected areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Measure the percentage increase in affordability of mobile devices and services by women in the pilot test areas. 	<p>services by women in the project areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and implement a plan for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the models on the affordability of mobile devices and services for women. 	<p>implementation of national policies and programs that promote affordable access to mobile devices and services for women</p>
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Action Plan for Working Group on Access (WG-III)

Purpose:

To identify, advocate for and work towards interventions that improve women's access to ICTs.

Impact Objective: At least 20% more women in Pakistan have access to mobiles, ICT devices, internet based services and digital content.

ACTIONS	SHORT TERM TARGET 6 months	MID TERM TARGET 1 year	LONG TERM TARGET 3 years
Facilitate the Establishment of Community-based Networks where Local Communities can Actively Participate in Building and Maintaining Telecom Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder Identification: Identify and engage with key stakeholders, including local community leaders and telecom operators, within the first 3 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide training to local community members on telecom infrastructure building and maintenance within 8 months. - Secure necessary resources, including funding and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Network Expansion: Expand the program to an additional 15 remote communities and initiate network establishment within the next 3 years

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site Assessment: Conduct a site assessment in 3 selected remote communities within 5 months to determine infrastructure needs. 	<p>equipment, for the establishment of community-based networks within the 1st year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin the establishment of community-based networks in the selected communities within 18 months and establish at least 5 new community networks 	
Develop and Implement a National Telecom Infrastructure Protection Plan, Especially Focused on Disaster Prone Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct an assessment to identify critical vulnerabilities in the telecom infrastructure within 3 months. - Develop an initial draft of the national telecom infrastructure protection plan within 5 months. - Engage with key stakeholders, including telecom operators and government agencies, for feedback on the draft plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refine the protection plan based on feedback and vulnerability assessments within 9 months. - Get the national telecom infrastructure protection plan approved by the relevant government bodies. - Launch pilot projects to test the effectiveness of proposed protection measures within the first year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin full-scale implementation of the protection plan, including regulatory changes and infrastructure upgrades, within 18 months. - Achieve at least 30% reduction in the number and impact of incidents affecting Pakistan's telecom infrastructure.

Action Plan for Working Group on Security and Safety (WG-IV)

Purpose:

To address the challenges linked to safety and security of women online.

Impact Objective: Analyzing Prevailing laws through gender lens, suggest amendments in the laws that provides a safe cyber space for women in Pakistan.

ACTIONS	SHORT TERM TARGET 6 months	MID TERM TARGET 1 year	LONG TERM TARGET 3 years
Review of PECA and Cyber Safety Policies from Gender lens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Conduct a review of Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) and other related cyber safety and security policies, identifying gender-related issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Develop policy recommendations based on the review findings and work with relevant authorities to make specific amendments to address at least 5 identified gender-related issues.- Work with relevant stakeholders for implementation of the amended policies, leading to a minimum of 20% improvement in women's safety perception in the digital space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fully implement at least 30% of recommendations for improving the gender responsiveness of the identified policies.- Establish a mechanism for regularly reviewing and updating the identified policies to ensure that they remain gender-responsive.
Conduct Comprehensive Review of FIA's Engagement with Female Victims of Cyber Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Conduct a comprehensive review of the Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) engagement process with	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Support FIA in advocacy and implementation of the identified actions to improve gender responsiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Monitor the impact of the improved procedures, aiming for a minimum of 30% increase in the number of cases that

	<p>female victims of harassment and cybercrime, identifying at least 15 areas where FIA's procedures can be improved to facilitate women victims of cyber-crime and harassment, within 6 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a baseline to document the proportion of women victims of cybercrime who express satisfaction with FIA's handling of cybercrime. - Develop a framework for engaging with social media companies on the protection of women from digital violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborate with the social media companies to implement at least 5 specific measures aimed at enhancing the protection of women from digital violence. 	<p>the agency has been able to investigate and at least 30% increase in the proportion of women victims of cyber-crime who express satisfaction with FIA's handling of cybercrime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and assess the effectiveness of the implemented measures, aiming for at least 15% reduction in reported cases of digital violence against women on these platforms.
<p>Solution Focused Engagement with Social Media Companies on Protection of Women from Digital Violence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiate engagement with at least 3 social media companies on the basis of the developed framework in 6 months. - Create a baseline to document reported cases of digital violence against women on these platforms within 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborate with the social media companies to implement at least 5 specific measures aimed at enhancing the protection of women from digital violence within 1.5 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and assess the effectiveness of the implemented measures, aiming for at least 15% reduction in reported cases of digital violence against women on these platforms within 3 years.

Action Plan For Working Group on Women's Digital Literacy (WG-V)

Purpose:

To enable systemisation of efforts for improving women's digital skills and literacy.

Impact Objective: At least 60% of the adult women population in Pakistan have the skills and knowledge to use the Internet effectively.

ACTIONS	SHORT TERM TARGET 6 months	MID TERM TARGET 1 year	LONG TERM TARGET 3 years
Adoption and Operationalisation of a National Framework for Women's Digital Literacy. The Framework should Address the Specific Needs and Barriers Faced by Women in Digital Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Develop a comprehensive national framework for women's digital literacy. The framework should outline clear objectives, guidelines, and proposed budget allocation for digital literacy programs targeting women.- The framework should address the specific needs and barriers faced by women in digital literacy. The framework should be drafted and ready for review by stakeholders and policymakers within six months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- At least 70% of the public and private actors should be on board and actively playing a part in implementation of the framework- At least 60% of planned digital literacy programs for women, as outlined in the framework, should be initiated and operational.- Within 1.5 years of initiation, the majority of initiatives under the framework should be actively supporting women in gaining digital literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Evaluate the impact of the national framework on women's digital literacy. Conduct an impact assessment, showing an increase in digital literacy rates among women, with a target of at least 25% growth. At the end of 3 years, an evaluation and a review of the programme would be ready.
Systemisation of Adult Digital Literacy Programs, Focused on Marginalised and Rural Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Identify and prioritize marginalized and rural areas where digital literacy programs will be initiated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Implement adult digital literacy programs in the selected marginalized and rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Assess the effectiveness of adult digital literacy programs in marginalized and rural areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select at least 50 specific locations or communities and gather baseline data on their digital literacy levels. - The selection should prioritise areas with the greatest need for digital literacy programs. Within six months of initiation, a list of prioritised areas and baseline data should be ready for program planning. 	<p>At least 60% of the identified areas should have active digital literacy programs, reaching a minimum of 3,500 adults.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These programs should be tailored to address the specific challenges faced by marginalised and rural communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct an evaluation, showing an increase in digital literacy rates among adults in these areas, with a target of at least a 20% improvement. At the end of 3 years, an evaluation and a review of the programme would be ready.
Integration of Women's Digital Literacy Components in Public Plans and projects (Like the Ehsaas program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify relevant public plans at the national, provincial, and local levels that can incorporate women's digital literacy components. Select and analyse at least ten major public plans and policies and determine their suitability for integration. In 6 months a list of at least 8 identified plans and a preliminary integration plan for at least three of them should be ready. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and present detailed integration proposals for the selected public plans. Submit integration proposals for a minimum of five public plans and secure formal approval for integration in at least three of them. - Prioritise plans with the potential for wide-reaching impact and significant benefits for women's digital literacy. - At the end of 1.5 years, the pilot integration in at least 2 of the selected plans should have started. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Over a 3 year period, initiate implementation in at least two more national plans, monitor the implementation and assess the impact of integrating women's digital literacy components into public plans. Present a comprehensive impact assessment report, aiming for at least a 15% increase in women's digital literacy rates within the integrated plans. At the end of three years, the comprehensive impact assessment report, including suggested changes for improvement and replication.

Action Plan for Working Group on Inclusion (WG-VI)

Purpose:

To help address negative perceptions regarding women's use of the Internet and coordinate actions to increase relevance of digital technology for women.

Impact Objective: Negative perceptions around women's use of the internet start changing and patriarchal / cultural attitudes start shifting, enabling more women to use the internet safely.

ACTIONS	SHORT TERM TARGET 6 months	MID TERM TARGET 1 year	LONG TERM TARGET 3 years
Design Behaviour Change Campaign to deal with Cultural Barriers Negatively Affecting Women's Digital Inclusion in Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Conduct research to identify the key cultural barriers negatively affecting women's digital inclusion in Pakistan in 4 months.- Develop a behaviour change campaign to address the identified barriers within 6 months- Establish a baseline to document in cultural barriers affecting women's digital inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Run a test pilot of the campaign in at least 4 districts in 8 months- Evaluate the impact of the behaviour change campaign through surveys, aiming for at least a 20% positive shift in attitudes and behaviours toward women's digital inclusion within 1 year.- Assess the feedback and performance of the pilot campaign and revise the campaign within 12 months.- Launch the behaviour change campaign targeting at least 800,000 people, with a focus on men, to raise awareness about women's digital inclusion issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Continue to assess, revise and implement the behaviour change campaign for 3 years.- Sustain the behaviour change campaign, reaching a cumulative total with an end goal of achieving a 20% reduction in cultural barriers affecting women's digital inclusion within 3 years.

<p>Creation of Women-Centred Digital Content, in Partnership with Universities, Social Media Platforms, Media and Advertisers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a comprehensive analysis to identify content gaps in addressing women's needs and interests in the digital space. - Develop a framework for creating and distributing women-centred digital content. - Establish partnerships with media companies, civil society groups, and technology groups to develop women-centred digital content. - Initiate discussions with leading social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) within 6 months to explore potential collaborations for content promotion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and launch at least 50 women-centered digital content pieces, such as articles, videos, and webinars, within the first year. - Establish feedback mechanisms to gather input from the target audience within the first year to make content adjustments based on user preferences within 12 months. - Begin the implementation of at least two online courses tailored to women's needs, with collaboration from partner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand the library of women-centred digital content to at least 200 pieces by the end of the second year, offering a diverse range of topics and formats. - Scale up online courses, offering a minimum of five courses within the third year, reaching a broader audience of women. - Conduct an impact assessment of the content, with measurements related to increased women's digital literacy, engagement, and empowerment, and share findings.
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