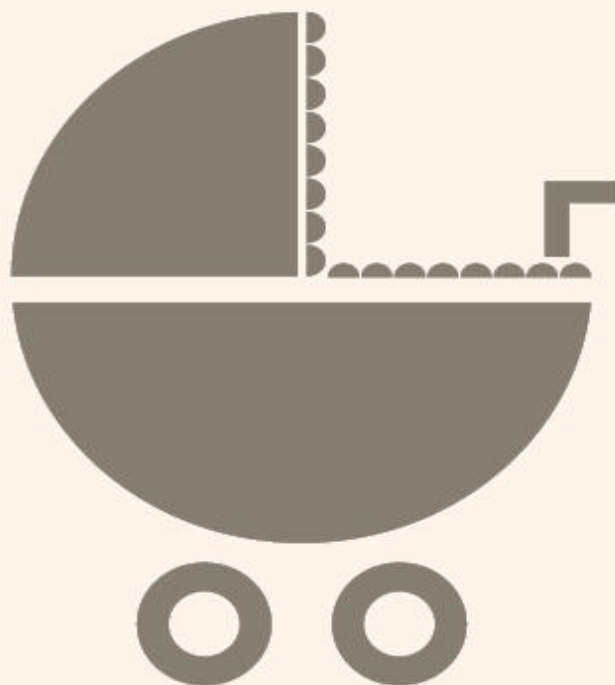




Gallup Pakistan Health Cyber Letter

Edition 12 | Under-five Child Mortality
Rate in Pakistan



Editor's Note

Welcome to the 12th edition of the Gallup Pakistan Health Cyber Letter. In this issue, we turn our attention to a critical aspect of public health: the under-five child mortality rate in Pakistan. This metric is a vital indicator of a nation's overall health and well-being, reflecting the effectiveness of healthcare systems, socio-economic conditions, and public health policies.

Pakistan, as highlighted by recent data, faces significant challenges in reducing under-five mortality rates. Despite some progress, our country still has one of the highest rates both regionally and globally. This sobering reality demands our urgent attention and action.

The numbers, while stark, tell a story of gradual improvement amidst persistent challenges. Over the past decades, there has been a notable decline in under-five mortality rates in Pakistan, particularly between 2010 and 2022. This decline, however, has not been uniform across all demographics. Disparities persist, especially when viewed through the lens of wealth quintiles. Children from the lowest wealth quintile experience nearly double the mortality rate compared to those from the highest wealth quintile. This inequality underscores the need for targeted interventions that address socio-economic disparities.

Neonatal deaths, constituting the majority of under-five deaths, reveal another layer of complexity. While the overall mortality rate has decreased, the proportion of deaths occurring in the neonatal period remains alarmingly high. This suggests that while older children's health outcomes have improved, newborns still face significant risks that need to be mitigated through enhanced prenatal and postnatal care.

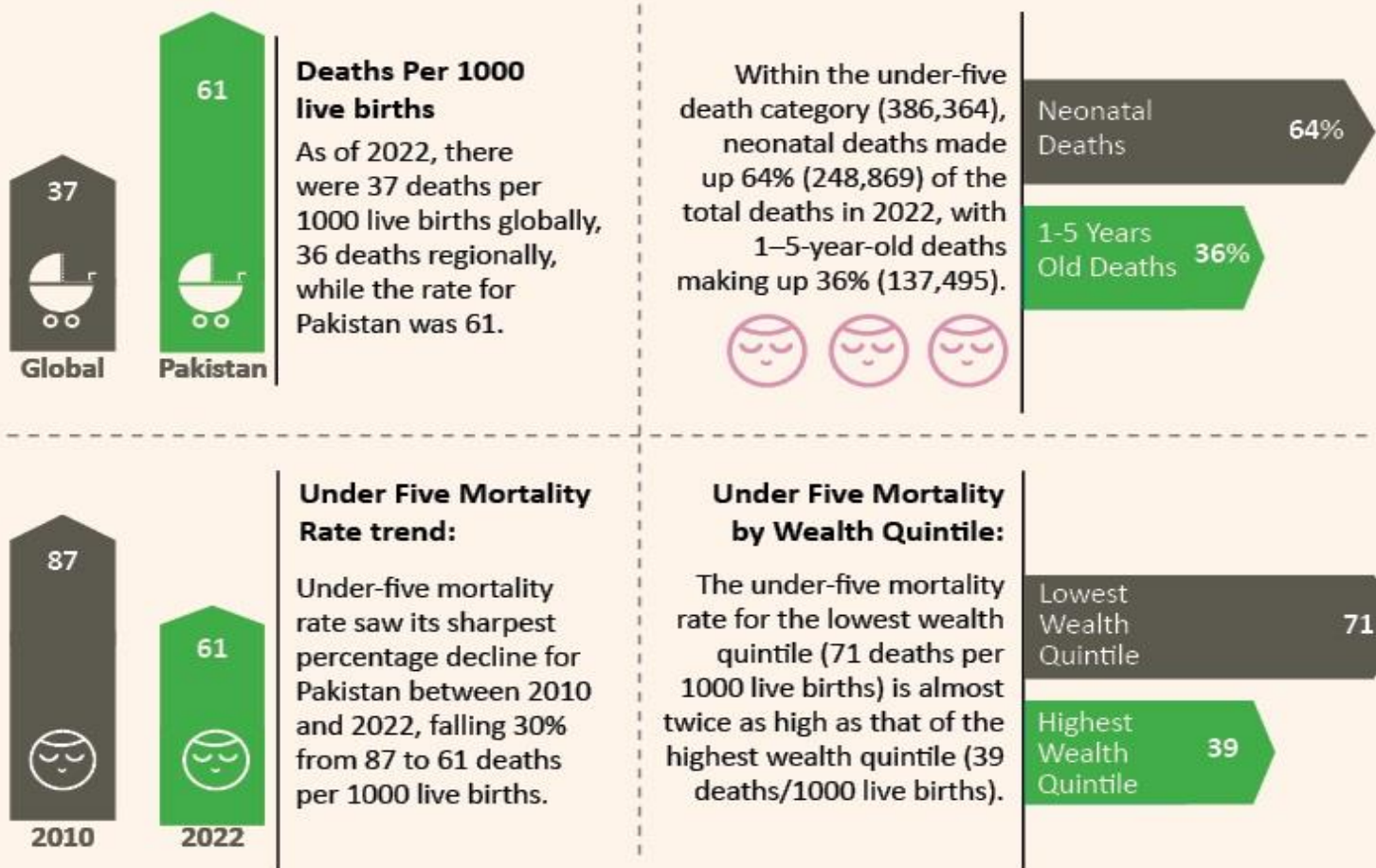
It's crucial to recognize that behind these statistics are the lives of our youngest and most vulnerable citizens. Each number represents a child who didn't survive to see their fifth birthday, and a family enduring unimaginable loss. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach—improving healthcare infrastructure, increasing access to quality maternal and child health services, and implementing policies that ensure equitable health opportunities for all segments of society.

The data serves as a call to prioritize child health, to advocate for policies that bridge the gap between rich and poor, and to strive for a future where every child in Pakistan has the chance to thrive.

Zainab Khan

Gallup Pakistan Health Cyber Letter

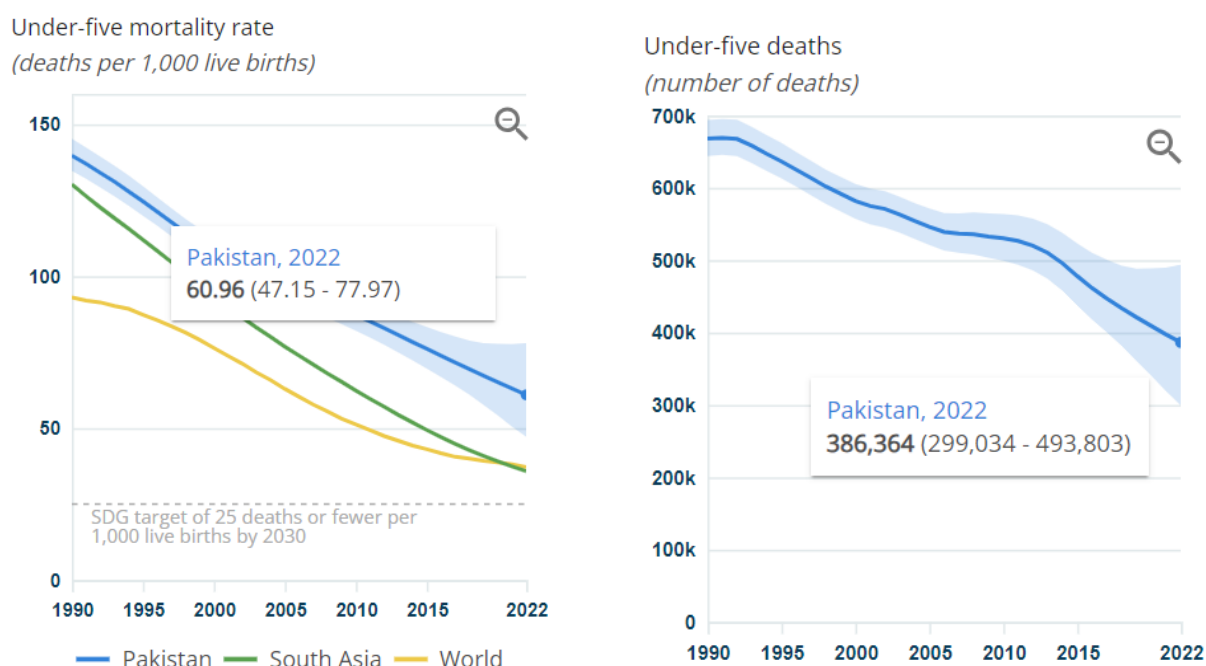
Under-five Child Mortality Rate in Pakistan



Under-five mortality rate (U5MR) is the probability of dying between birth and exact age 5, expressed per 1,000 live births.

The United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, or UN IGME¹, is led by UNICEF and includes the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank Group and the United Nations Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs as full members. It was formed in 2004 to share data on child mortality, improve methods for child mortality estimation, report on progress towards child survival goals, and enhance country capacity to produce timely and properly assessed estimates of child mortality.

- 1. Pakistan has one of the highest under-5 mortality rates (U5MR) both regionally and globally. As of 2022, there were 37 deaths per 1000 live births globally, 36 deaths regionally, while the rate for Pakistan was 61.**



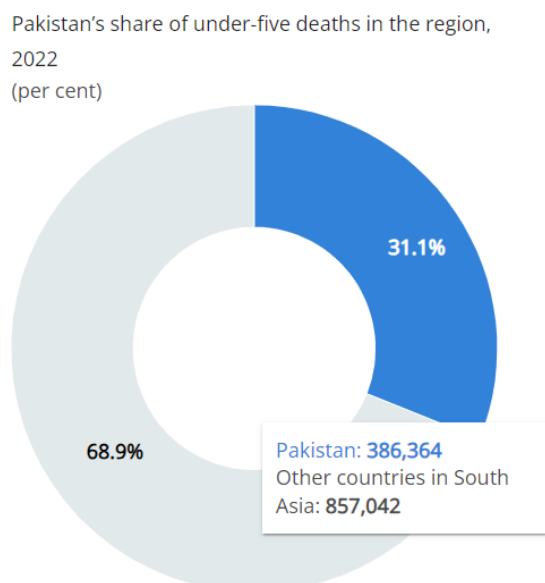
Source: United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME)

Pakistan has one of the highest under-5 mortality rates (U5MR) both regionally and globally. As of 2022, there were 37 deaths per 1000 live births globally, while for South Asia the rate was 36 deaths. Pakistan, on the other hand, had almost double the rate, at 61. At the current rate, the chances for Pakistan to achieve the Sustainability Development Goal target of 25 or fewer deaths by 2030 seem bleak at best.

Even though Pakistan is still on the higher end of under-5 mortality, comparing the number of deaths over the years reveals that they have continued to decline in number, from 667,780 in 1990 to 386,364 in 2022. While this is a positive indication of moving in the right direction, special

¹ <https://childmortality.org/profiles/country>

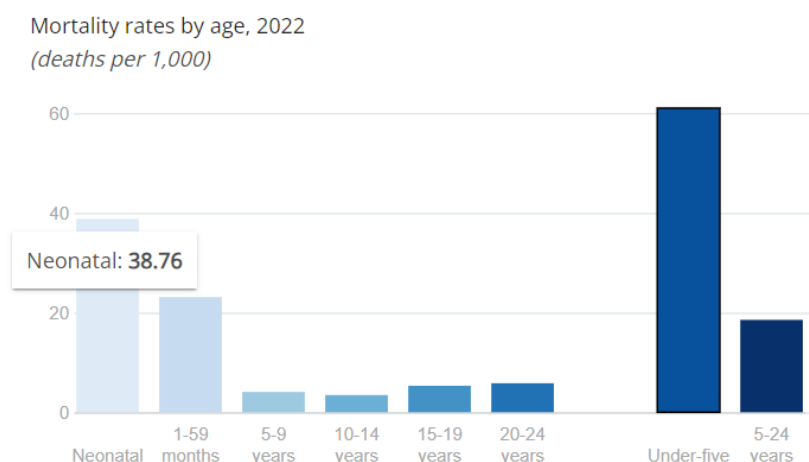
efforts would be required to bring Pakistan's U5MR at par with the rest of the world, or even South Asia.



Source: United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME)

Comparing Pakistan's share of under-five deaths with those of the region reveals that for every 10 such deaths in South Asia, 3 of them occur in Pakistan (31%). As of 2022, Pakistan contributed 386,364 under-five deaths while the other countries in South Asia combined had 857,042 deaths.

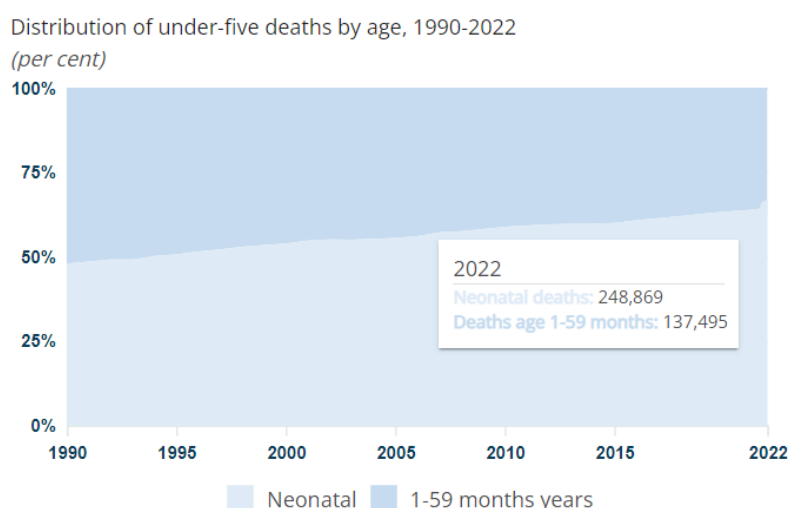
2. Within the under-five death category (386,364), neonatal deaths made up 64% (248,869) of the total deaths in 2022, with 1–5-year-old deaths making up 36% (137,495).



Source: United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME)

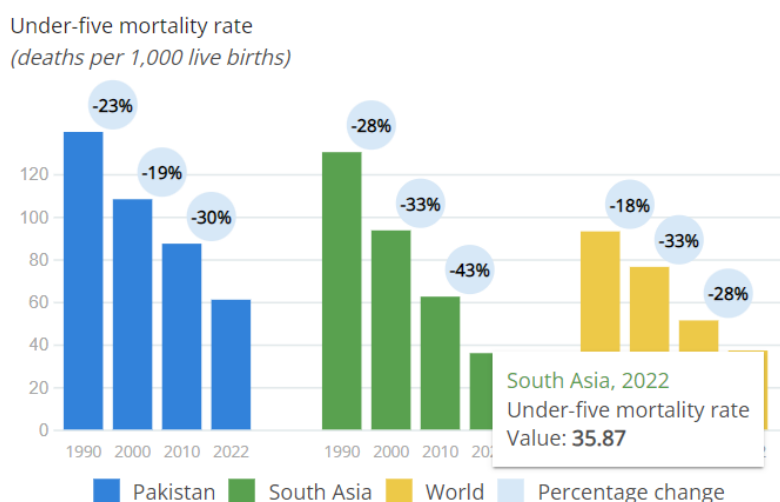
As of 2022, there were 61 under-five deaths and 19 5-24-year-old deaths, per 1000 live births, occurring in Pakistan. Out of the 61 under-five deaths, 39 were neonatal, meaning the deceased children were under one year old.

While the decline of U5MR in Pakistan over the years can be taken as a positive indication of improving healthcare and shifting priorities, delving deeper into the under-5 category reveals that neonatal deaths have been on a steady rise over the years. This implies that while deaths in older children have reduced, the risk to new-born children continues to increase. Within the under-five death category (386,364), neonatal deaths made up 64% (248,869) of the total deaths in 2022, with 1–5-year-old deaths making up 36% (137,495).



Source: United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME)

3. Under-five mortality rate saw its sharpest percentage decline for Pakistan between 2010 and 2022, falling 30% from 87 to 61 deaths per 1000 live births.

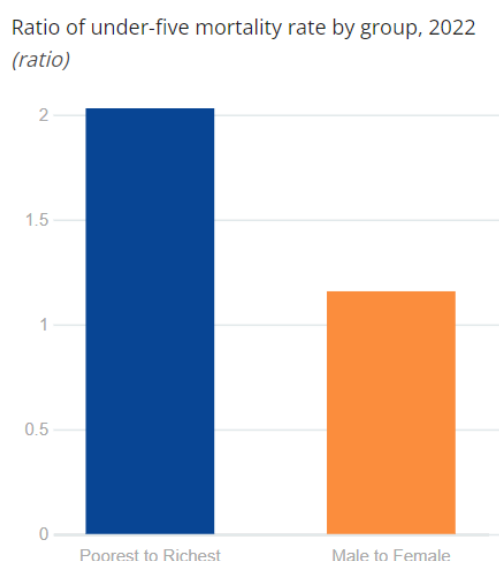


Source: United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME)

Since 1990, the under-five mortality rate in Pakistan saw its sharpest decline in the past decade (2010-2022), falling by 30%. In comparison, 2000-2010 saw a 19% decrease while there was a decrease of 23% in 1990-2000. This has led to the figure in 2022 being 61 under-five deaths per 1000 live births. However, the percentage decrease in such deaths in the South Asian region was even more pronounced, at 43%, from 62 under-five deaths in 2010 to 36 in 2022, almost twice as few as Pakistan.

4. The under-five mortality rate for the lowest wealth quintile (71 deaths per 1000 live births) is almost double that of the highest wealth quintile (39 deaths/1000 live births) in Pakistan.

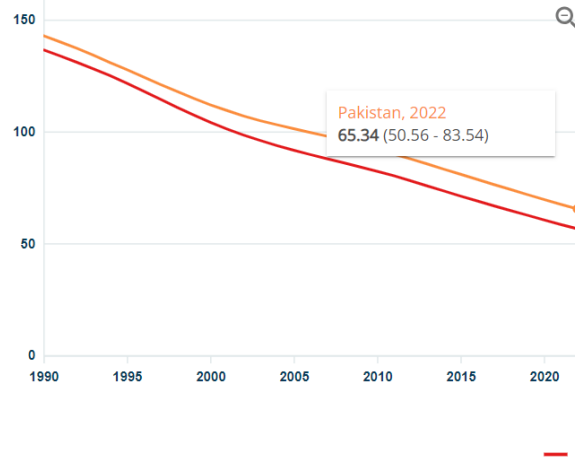
As for demographic breakdowns to look at which group is most affected by under-five mortality, it can be seen that income disparity plays a major role in deaths in young children, with there being 71 deaths per 1000 live births in the lowest wealth quintile, compared to the 39 of the highest wealth quintiles.



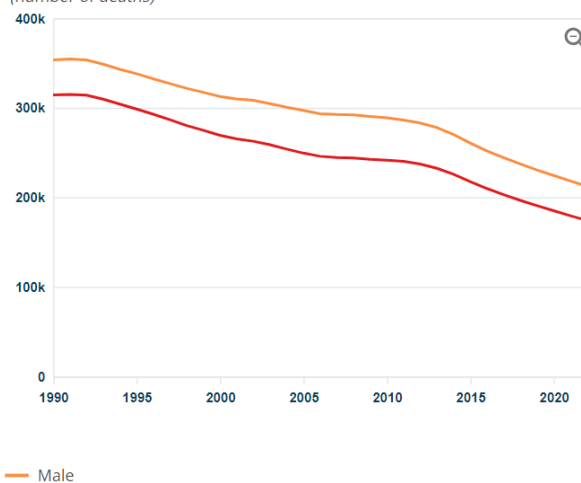
Source: United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME)

On the other hand, there does not seem to be much of a discrepancy between genders, with the ratio of male to female being only slightly higher than one. The under-five mortality rate for males in 2022 was calculated to be 65 (four points higher than the national average), while that for females was 56 (five points lower than the national average). In numbers, this amounts to 212,299 male deaths and 170,065 female deaths. While this ration between genders has remained almost parallel over the years, one positive sign is the overall downward trajectory that can be observed, which has gotten steeper post-2013.

Under-five mortality rate by sex
(deaths per 1,000 live births)



Under-five deaths by sex
(number of deaths)



Source: United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME)

GALLUP PAKISTAN PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

Gallup Pakistan formally introduced the Gallup Pakistan Public Health Program in 2020. Through this dedicated space, we hope to act as catalysts of change in the public health landscape by using innovative and collaborative solutions to tackle complex problems in the country.

Under this program, the streams of work currently include:

1. Let's Talk Public Health
2. Gallup Pakistan and CDC Sponsored Projects: including the Cause of Death (COD) Training and Enhancing Integrated Mortality Surveillance Workshop held in Islamabad from February 6 – February 10, 2023
3. Gallup Pakistan and Digital Vaccine Register Project
4. Gallup Big Data Analysis of Pakistan Statistical Yearbook – Healthcare in Pakistan (2010 – 2020)
5. Gallup Big Data Analysis of Pakistan Statistical Yearbook – Live Births (2018 – 2020) – Pakistan Demographic Survey 2020
6. Gallup Pakistan 40-year report on Health

One of our pioneering initiatives as part of the Public Health Program is the **“Let's Talk Public Health”** series which was launched in March 2022. Through this platform, we conduct insightful conversations with experts/researchers/practitioners in the field, on public health challenges that Pakistan is facing today and we hope we can find ways to reimagine the concept of health as well as make meaningful contributions to the public health discourse in both, Pakistan and globally.

Links to our previous episodes can be accessed below:

- *Episode 1: Lifestyle and Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) – Conceptual, Empirical and Practical Perspective* by Dr. Ijaz Gilani. <https://youtu.be/uJcYQIj3GH4>
- *Episode 2: Pakistan's Healthcare Market, Medical Devices and Digital Health* by Hammad Ijaz. <https://youtu.be/Wz8QWExlHGg>
- *Episode 3: Health Perception Survey - WiN International and Gallup Pakistan* by Mishalle Kayani and Laila Waqar. <https://youtu.be/lFQp6Qp6GrQ>
- *Episode 4: Value of Community Co-design for Vaccine Confidence Interventions - A Case from Karachi* by Rubina Qasim.: <https://youtu.be/7TqL3cM17A>
- *Episode 5: Science Behind Artistic Processes (Conductive Tools for Health Sector)* by Dr. Habib Afsar. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZWK0EhZyD8>
- *Episode 6: Family Planning in Pakistan: Issues, Progress and the Way Forward* by Dr. Adnan Khan. <https://youtu.be/LyQfFv0w8oA>
- *Episode 7: The Menace of Self-Citation: An Audit of Two Years from Journals of KPK* by Dr. Umema Zafar. <https://youtu.be/UZrCBreD8No>
- *Episode 8: International Health Regulations (IHRs) and Pakistan* by Dr. Saeed Ahmad. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9sZOnzfiS8&t=64s>
- *Episode 9: Migration and Health* by Dr. Roomi Aziz. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E89KBuiU52E>
- *Episode 10: Dispelling Development Myths: The Power of Community Engagement* by Dr. Ayesha Khan. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtFXmrnazzc>

- *Episode 11: Nutrition and Health in Pakistan: A Conversation with Mishalle A. Kayani and Zainab Khan from Gallup Pakistan.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4LuHd77lK-M>

In our 11th episode of our “Let’s Talk Public Health” series, we discussed findings from Gallup Pakistan’s 7th Health Cyberletter, which focused on health and nutrition in the country. The discussion included unpacking the cultural and regional influences on the perceptions of diet and health for an average Pakistani. In addition to this, we discussed changes in nutritional preferences and how these have been shaped by socio-economic influences over the years. For the last section of our talk, we explored the possible social policy actions that could encourage adopting healthier nutritional habits to improve the overall health status of Pakistan.

In addition to our talk series, we’ve worked on several *research projects with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)*.²

Project: Survey of Social and Behavioral Determinants of COVID-19 Vaccination Uptake and Evaluation of On-going National and Subnational Programming to Increase Demand for COVID-19 Vaccines. 2021

Description: The project aimed to prepare for the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines by assessing social and behavioral determinants for under vaccination in the EMRO region. The multi-country assessment focused on understanding determinants of demand for COVID-19 and other vaccines among priority populations, particularly the role of rumors and misinformation on behavior, and a secondary focus on challenges in vaccine service delivery faced by healthcare workers and program administrators. This project also evaluated ongoing regional, country-level, and subnational planning efforts to introduce COVID-19 vaccines to high priority populations of healthcare workers, adults over 65, and high-risk adults. An important aspect of this project was data triangulation- collecting and reviewing diverse sources of data to compare, contrast, and develop a fuller picture of demand for COVID-19 vaccines in each selected country.

Project: A Cross-Sectional Survey on COVID-19 Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices (KAP) and Resiliency in Pakistan. 2021-2022

Description: The goal of this study was to provide a nationally and regionally representative comprehensive understanding of knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAPs) around COVID-19 as well as the mental health impacts and other personal effects of the pandemic by providing context specific evidence to help address COVID-19 more effectively. Measuring key cognitive and behavioral factors associated with COVID-19 will help inform recommendations for effective public health management of the disease, such as behavior change strategies, communication strategies to counteract misperceptions around COVID-19, address stigma, community and home-care strategies, and the deployment of food or cash assistance, to vulnerable households.

² Funding for this conference was made possible (in part) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Project: *Track and Trace of COVID-19 Suspected Cases – Pilot Program Working with Faith-Based Organizations. 2022*

Description: Engaging faith communities to advance COVID-19 risk communication and mitigation represents a pivotal opportunity to accelerate pandemic control. The project goal was to pilot a program in which contact tracing and advocacy around non-pharmaceutical intervention (NPIs) is done by FBO's and lessons can be learned and shared with policy-makers dealing with COVID-19.

Project: *Estimating Excess Deaths and Improving Mortality Surveillance and Civil Registration Systems in Pakistan during COVID-19. 2022-2023*

Description: This project aims to estimate and improve the capacity for estimation of excess deaths and their causes in selected areas of Pakistan; understand and inform as to causes of increases in preventable deaths; and to attempt to integrate relevant partners and systems to build sustainable capacity in mortality surveillance and in National Public Health Institutes.

Cause of Death (COD) Training (Monday, February 6 to Wednesday February 8, 2023)

Over the course of 3-days, health stakeholders such as doctors from public and private hospitals, the district health office (DHO), Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Unit (CRVS) in Islamabad, participated in a training module led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC-US) with Gallup Pakistan's support. The technical training focused on assigning cause of death, the use of ICD-10/11 coding for maternal mortality (MM) and perinatal mortality (PM), and birth and death record assessment and management. Participants also took part in practical exercises using digital platforms like DORIS and AnaCOD as well as group case studies to appropriately fill out death registration forms and discuss mortality management with respect to participants' institutions.

Enhancing Integrated Mortality Surveillance Workshop (Thursday, February 9 to Friday, February 10, 2023)

On February 9 and 10, 2023, Gallup Pakistan and the Ministry of National Health Services and Coordination held a workshop in Islamabad to discuss potential ways to strengthen mortality surveillance in Pakistan. Participants included doctors from public and private hospitals in Islamabad, development organizations and other key actors involved in health surveillance and management systems in Pakistan. Participants had the chance to learn from insightful presentations on existing health infrastructure which included detailed information on data collection processes. In addition to this, participants also actively engaged in group exercises which involved the identification of problems as well as solutions to problems in current surveillance systems at different levels of implementation ranging from the community level up to the facility and institutional levels.

Lastly, during this year we also worked on a ***Digital Vaccine Register Project***, the details of which, you can find below:

The ***Zindagi Mehfooz (ZM)*** application has been designed as a digital repository of enrolment and vaccination records of women and children on a web-based dashboard, currently being leveraged as a micro-data collection tool in the health centers of Sindh, Pakistan. The scope of the research study was to evaluate the impact of the application on immunization service delivery, registry coverage, uptake of immunization services, and data use patterns.

The qualitative aspect of the evaluation included a series of focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and observations across health facilities/offices in the districts of Jacobabad, Shikarpur, and Naushahro Feroz with the goal of understanding the perceptions of all the stakeholders involved (ZM staff, caregivers, vaccinators, supervisors/coordinators, district managers, and provincial managers) regarding the use and impacts of the ZM application.

Gallup Big Data Analysis of Pakistan Statistical Yearbook – Healthcare in Pakistan (2010 – 2020) <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Health-pr.pdf>

Gallup Big Data Analysis of Pakistan Statistical Yearbook – Live Births (2018 – 2020) – Pakistan Demographic Survey 2020

In addition to all the initiatives, Gallup Pakistan is also working on producing a ***40-year report on Health in Pakistan*** which is a compilation of findings from health research conducted by the organization over the last 4 decades.

For any queries, please contact:

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A faint, light gray world map is visible in the background of the lower half of the page, showing the continents of North America, South America, Europe, and Africa.

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