

# **ZARRA's APP and PMDU Missing and Abducted Children Data FROM OCTOBER, 2021 TO JUNE, 2022**

Pakistan is a signatory of United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child. Pakistan recognizes child abduction in all its forms (stranger and parental) as well as the sale and trafficking of children. The Government of Pakistan ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1990 and is obliged to implement its provisions and submit a progress report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Geneva, every five years. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child while considering Pakistan's 5<sup>th</sup> periodic report urged for taking legislative measures to protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation. Accordingly, the Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act, 2020 has been enacted. The Section 3 of the Act provides for Establishment of Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Agency.

The kidnapping of children, across Pakistan is rapidly increasing. The issue of missing and abducted children is alarming; therefore, the Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Agency (ZARRA) is being established. The legislation has been named after Zainab, a six-year-old girl, who was kidnapped from her home in Kasur, and then raped and killed in 2018. The Act applies to all four provinces of Pakistan and Islamabad Capital Territory and defines the child as anyone under the age of 18 years.

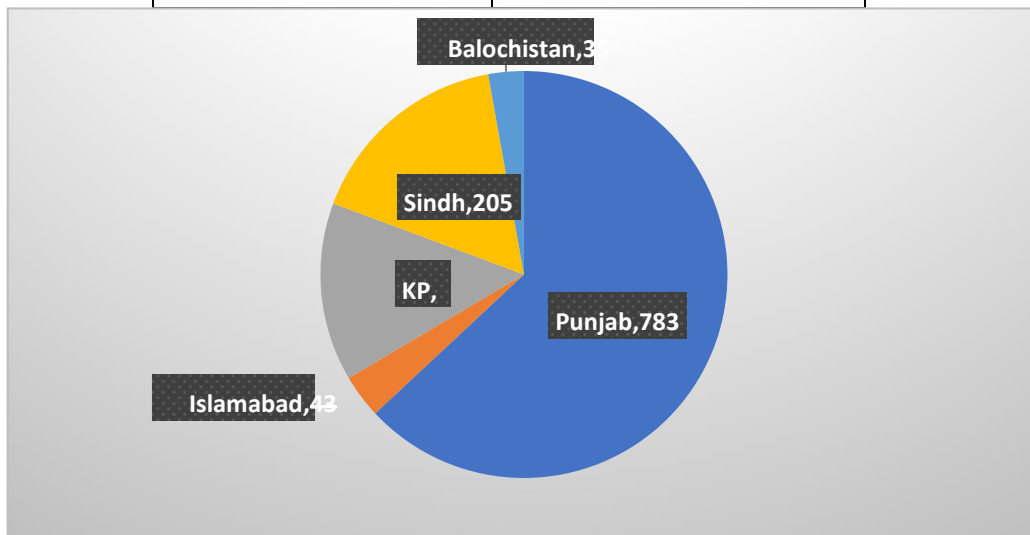
The ZARRA is to coordinate with the help lines and all relevant institutions at federal and provincial level for referral of missing and abducted children. The administration of ZARRA lays with the Director General whereas superintendence of the ZARRA vested with the ICT Child Protection Advisory Board.

In recent years, there has been a spike in child abductions and assault cases in Pakistan. To combat this menace, the Zainab Alert app was established and linked by the Ministry of Human Rights with the Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit (PMDU) to enable users to report the missing children.

A statistical analysis of the data related to missing and abducted children by the ministry of human rights during the year from October, 2021 to June, 2022 is tabulated below:

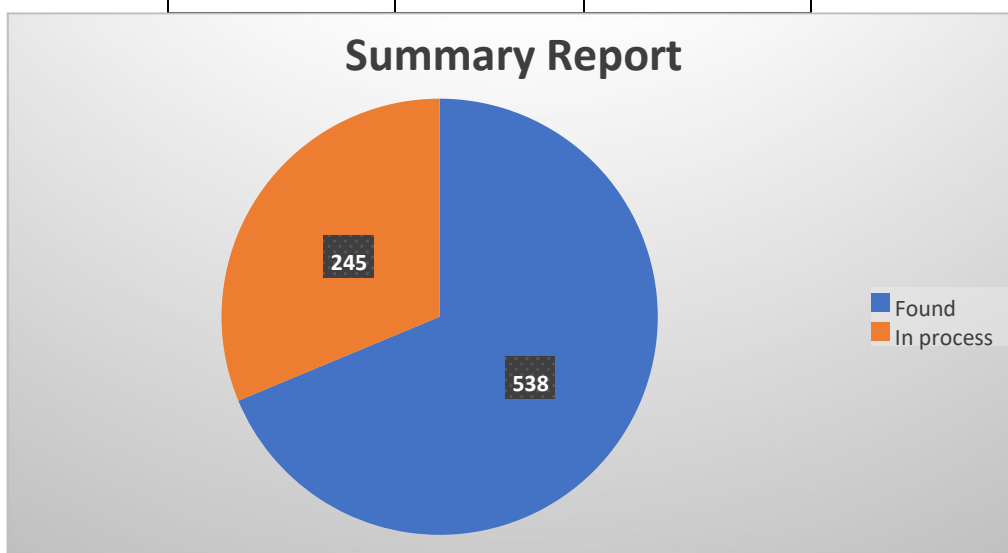
**National Level:**

PROVINCE WISE SUMMARY REPORT	
Punjab	783
Islamabad	43
KPK	176
Sindh	205
Balochistan	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>1242</b>



**Punjab:**

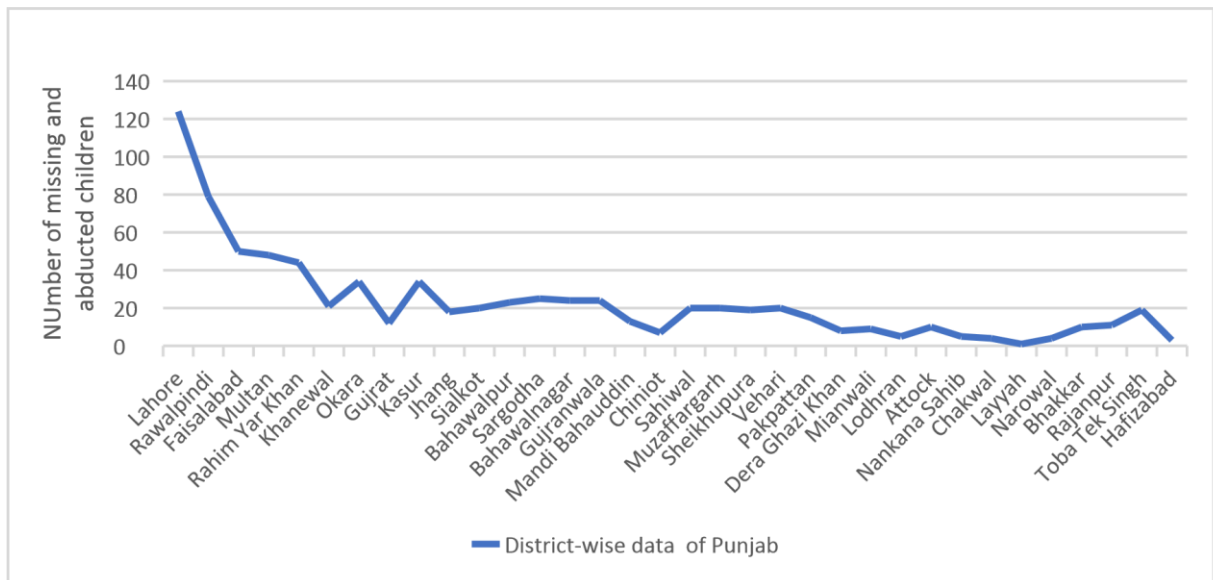
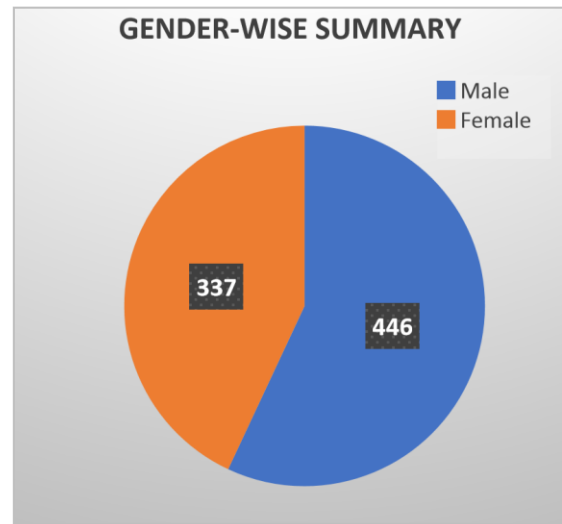
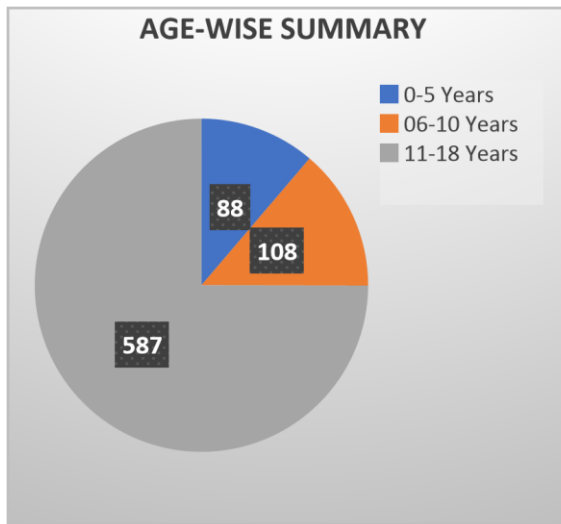
SUMMARY		
No of Cases	Found	In process
783	538	245



AGE-WISE SUMMARY	
AGE	Count
0 TO 5	88
06 TO 10	108
11 TO 18	587
<b>Total</b>	<b>783</b>

GENDER WISE	
MALE	FEMALE
446	337

Punjab:



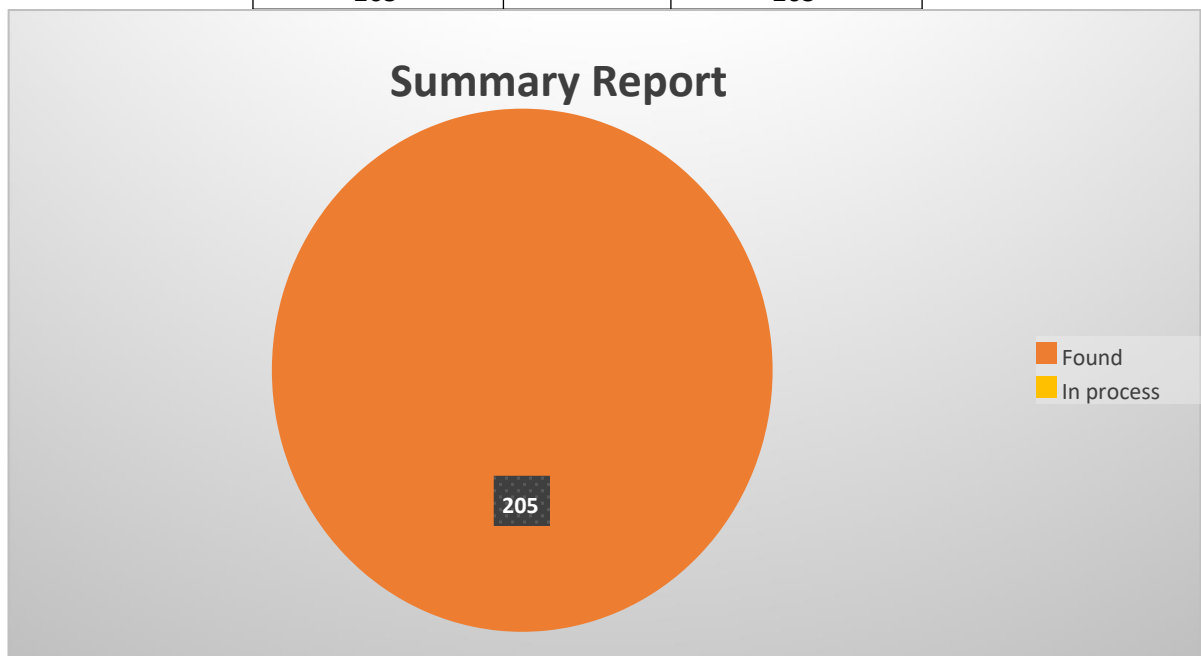
**Analysis:**

**Punjab:**

In view of the population strength, Punjab reflects the children missing and abduction at the top among the other provinces. As of the intensive distribution of the population, child abduction is on a serious level in Punjab. A total of 783 cases of missing and abducted children are reported in Punjab alone. In Punjab, Lahore city reflects a higher number (124) which has comparatively high mobility, and education resources which means more awareness to citizens regarding Zainab Alert app and helpline 1099 while reporting a missing child. Similarly, Rawalpindi (79), Faisalabad (50), and Multan (48). It is evident that Lahore is a well-populated city and flow of commuter is quite higher and complex which makes child kidnapping easy. However, this should not be the trend to be left abandoned as it would flourish and increase the number of cases.

**Sindh:**

<b>SUMMARY</b>		
<b>No of Cases</b>	<b>Found</b>	<b>In process</b>
205	--	205

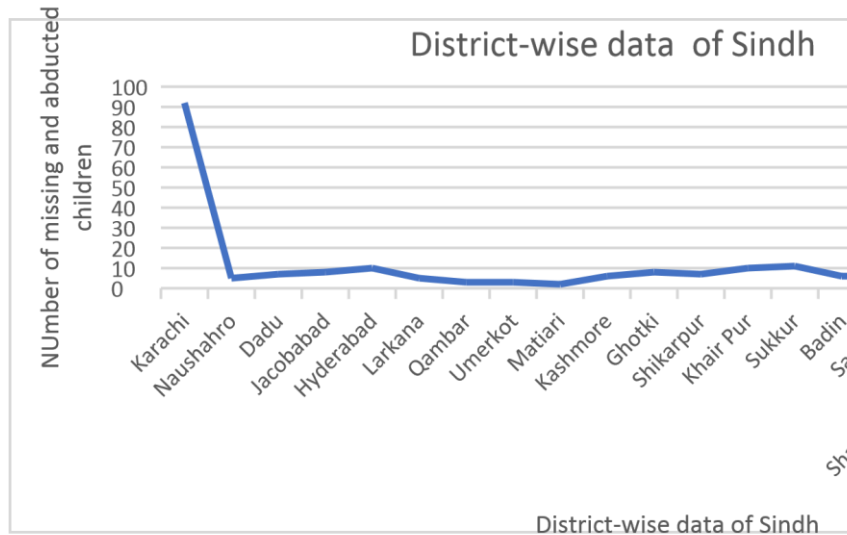
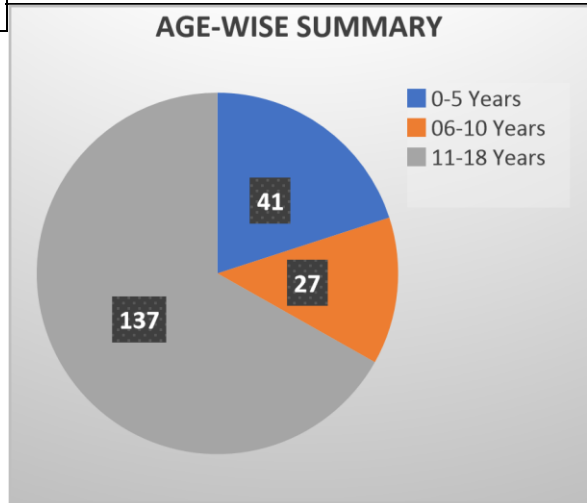


**AGE WISE SUMMARY**

AGE	Count
0 TO 5	41
06 TO 10	27
11 TO 18	137
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>

**GENDER WISE SUMMARY**

MALE	FEMALE
129	76

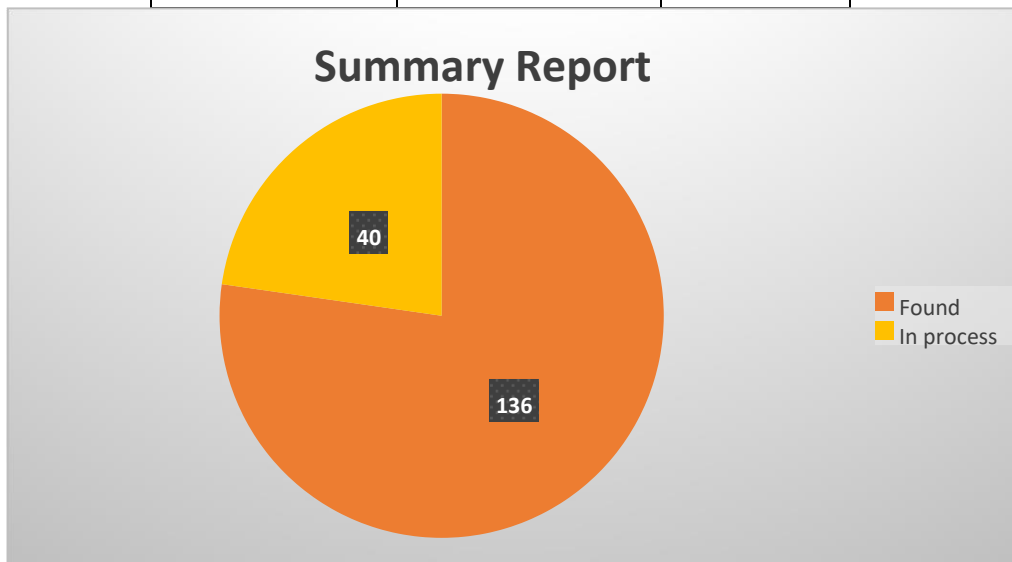


Sindh is second after Punjab, that has relatively thick population, yet the number of missing and abducted children is relatively low. Due to poor economic factors, lack of education and awareness, the number of missing and abducted children is high even though there are number of cases which are not reported on Zainab Alert App. According to age wise data, the number of missing children between the ages of 11-18 years is higher in Sindh. The city of Karachi carries the high load, followed by Sukkur (11), Hyderabad (10), and Khairpur (10). The province of Sindh too carries a high risk factor and requires tremendous heed in this regard.

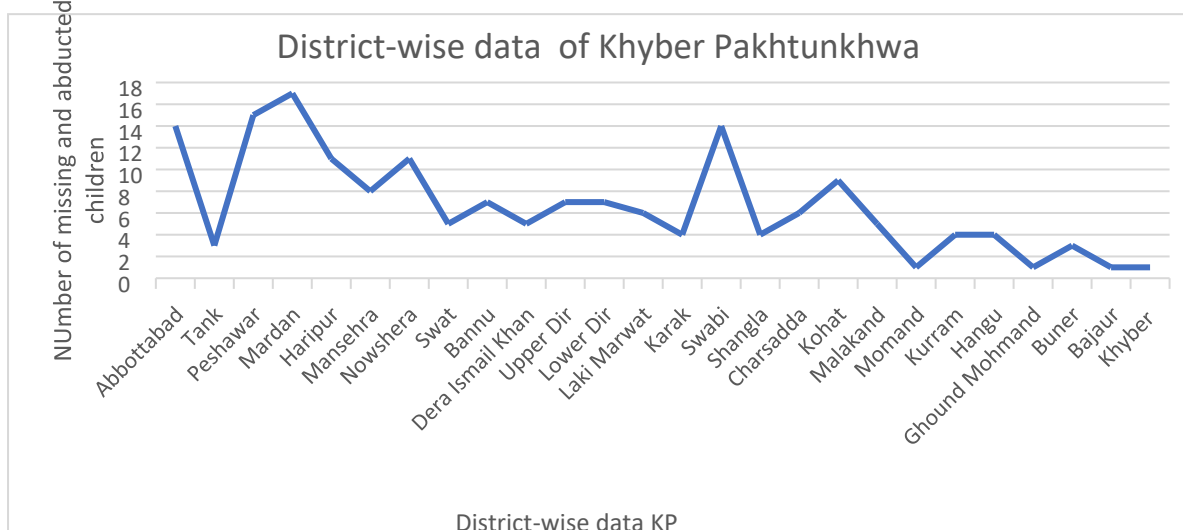
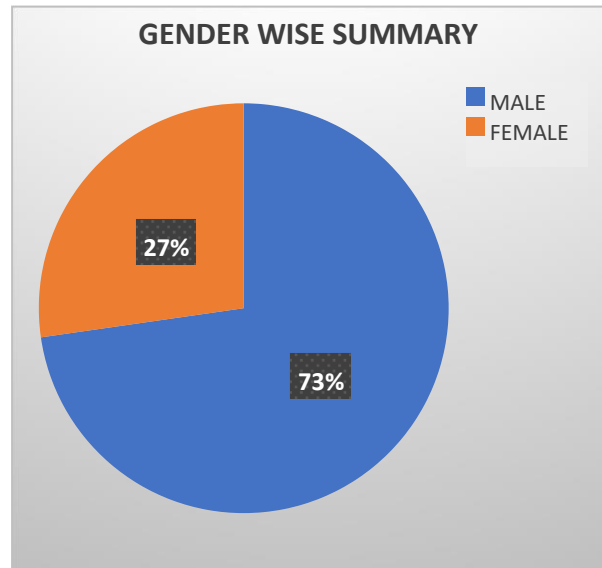
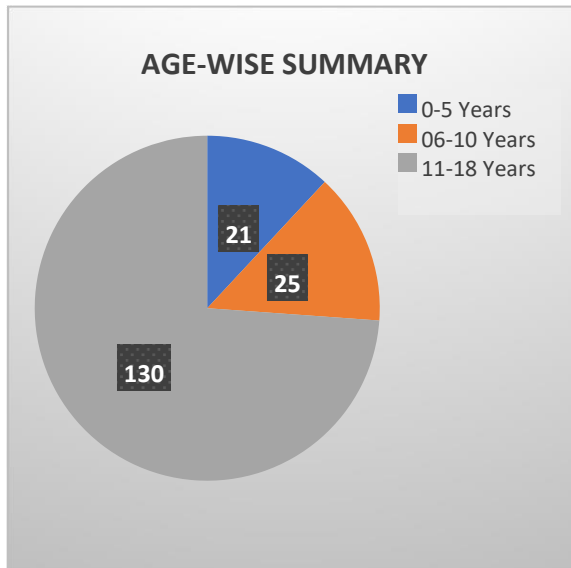
AGE	Count
0 TO 5	21
06 TO 10	25
11 TO 18	130
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:

SUMMARY REPORT		
No of Cases	Found	In process
176	136	40



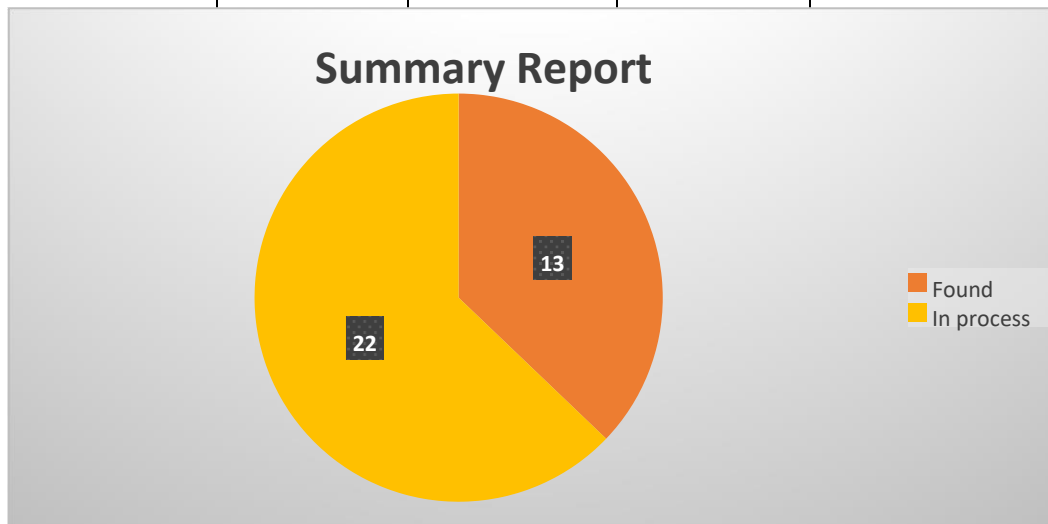
GENDER WISE SUMMARY	
MALE	FEMALE
128	48



With respect to population, the province falls 3rd after Punjab and Sindh. Overall in 176 missing and abducted children, Mardan (17), carries the highest number followed by Peshawar (15), Swabi (14), and Abbottabad (14). Looking at the stature of the population, Mardan is smaller than Peshawar but the trend here is high which means that the area is insensitive in this regard and the situation is getting worse day by day or it can be otherwise, which means that Mardan has more awareness regarding Zainab Alert App then Peshawar.

**Balochistan:**

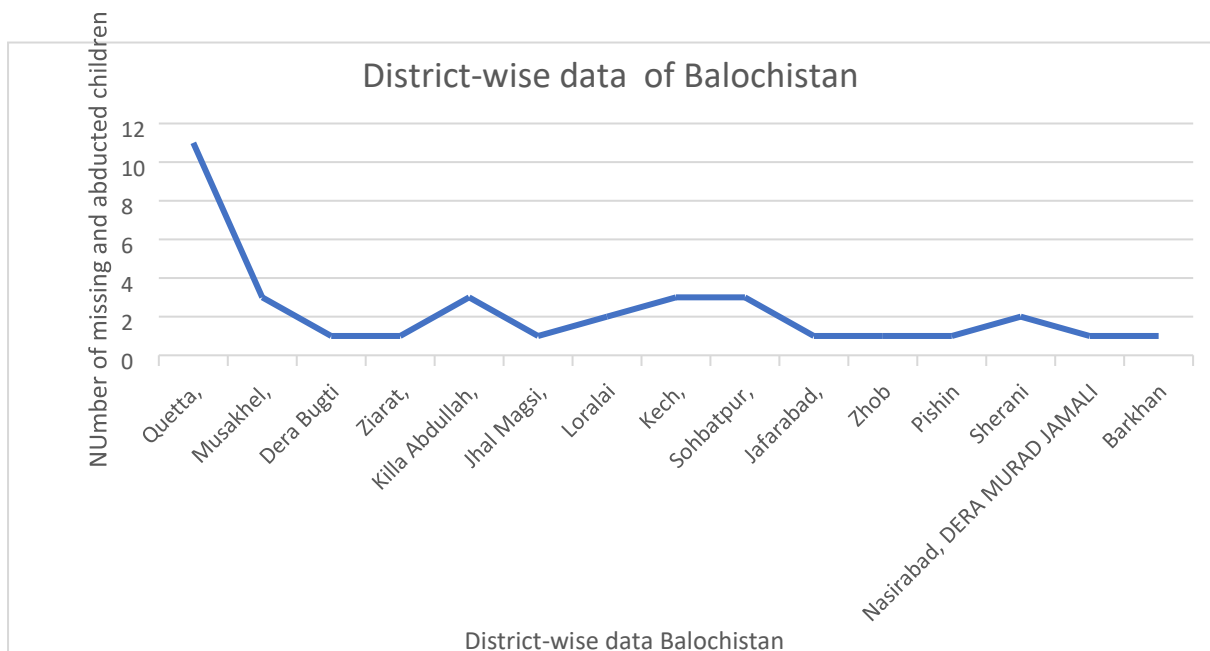
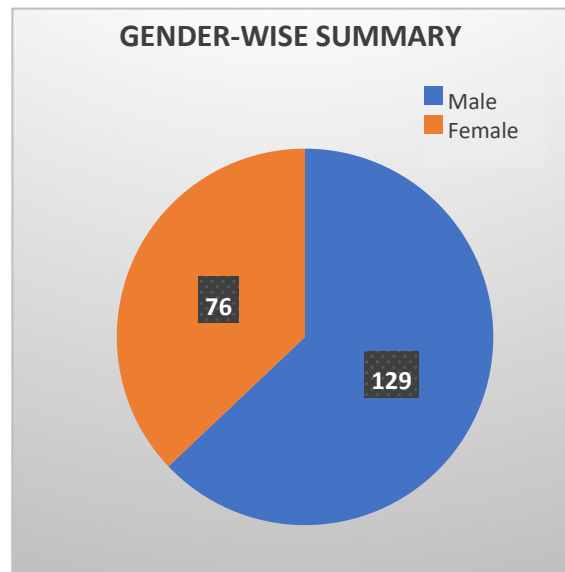
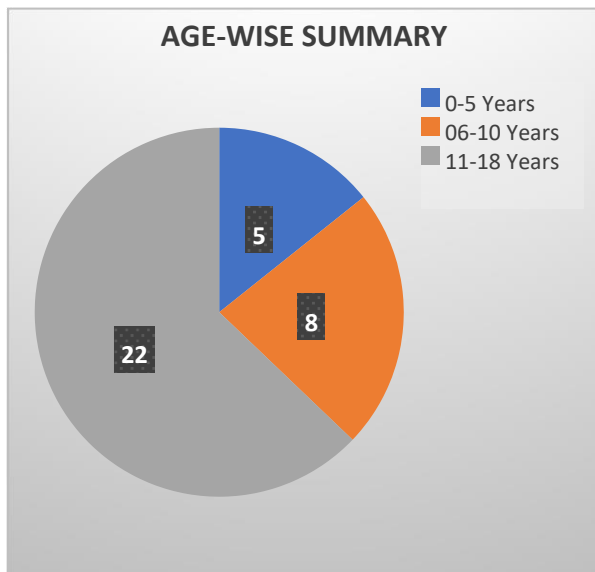
SUMMARY		
No of Cases	Found	In process



AGE WISE SUMMARY	
AGE	Count
0 TO 5	5
06 TO 10	8
11 TO 18	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>

GENDER WISE SUMMARY	
MALE	FEMALE
24	11





The data relating to the province is not much discouraging with a total number of 35 cases. Despite being a bigger province in size, the level of missing and abduction of children is not comparatively low. Quetta district has high number of incidences (11) followed by Musa Khel (3), Killa Abdullah (3), Kech (3), and Sohbatpur (3) districts. But this may also mean that the awareness level regarding the Zainab Alert App may be increased so that the cases of missing and abducted children can be reported on Zainab Alert if and when they happen.

**Recommendations:**

Children who are reported missing return home on their own after a short period of the time but the longer a child is missing the more vulnerable he/she is. The Ministry/ ZARRA strongly believes that one missing child is one too many. It's a matter of great pleasure to mention that Pakistan has made significant progress in combating this problem. Pakistan has established the Zanaib Alert, Response and Recovery Agency (ZARRA) under the Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act, 2020 to strengthen its efforts to find missing children and reunite them with their families by improving alert system data sharing, information provision, and reporting of missing children. The law requires police stations to make an initial report within two hours of receiving a report. It is hereby recommended that the Agency may now focus on the following activities to safeguard the missing and abducted children as per the mandate of ZARRA.

1. Activate Alert for Quick Response and Recovery of missing and abducted children.
2. Strengthening of coordination mechanism with stakeholders and implementations of ZARRA;
3. Establishment of missing and abducted children database for analysis, and policy recommendation;
4. Provision of Psycho-social and legal counseling services through referral partners.
5. Capacity building of all the major stakeholders.
6. Awareness and sensitization of the general masses.
7. Coordination with all helplines on provincial level and linking the 1099 mobile app with the police departments.