

WHAT WOMEN WANT IN THEIR HEALTH FACILITIES IN PAKISTAN

**FORUM FOR WOMEN DEVELOPMENT & RESEARCH
(PRIVATE) LIMITED**



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Background

Forum for Safe Motherhood (recently renamed Forum for Women Development and Research) served as the lead mobilizing organization in Pakistan for two local-to-global campaigns that mass-queried women and girls on their health and/or wellbeing needs using an open-ended question:

- What Women Want: Demands for Quality Healthcare (2019)
- Listening Across the Life-Course: Women’s Demands for their Health and Wellbeing (2023)

The original **What Women Want (2019) campaign** in Pakistan surveyed approximately **245,000 women and girls in five provinces** (Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan, Islamabad Capital Territory). The main question asked of women in this campaign was: **What is your one request for quality maternal and reproductive health?**

The **Women’s Demands for their Health and Wellbeing (2023) campaign** in Pakistan surveyed approximately **100,000 women and girls in three provinces** (Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). The main question asked of women in this campaign was: **To improve my health and wellbeing, I want...**¹

To help ensure women’s voices inform primary health care planning, service delivery, and decision-making, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation requested White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) Global to conduct a rapid, comparative analysis of what women are most demanding in their health facilities at the provincial level (i.e., comparing women’s health facility demands in a particular province in both 2019 and 2023, and noting any variations in demands across provinces).

Methodology

WRA Global conducted rapid analysis using the “[What Women Want Pakistan Dashboard](#)” – an online dashboard that uses artificial intelligence and natural language understanding to quickly and accurately categorize responses. WRA Global restricted analysis to Sindh, Punjab, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces given these three provinces collected demands in both campaign years. Using the dashboard, WRA Global assessed which words/concepts were demanded by women and girls most frequently. We excluded from this report words/concepts that received fewer than 500 demands, except in a few cases.

¹ Women in Pakistan provided two answers to the main campaign question. They answered what they wanted for their health and for their wellbeing, separately.

Findings at-a-glance

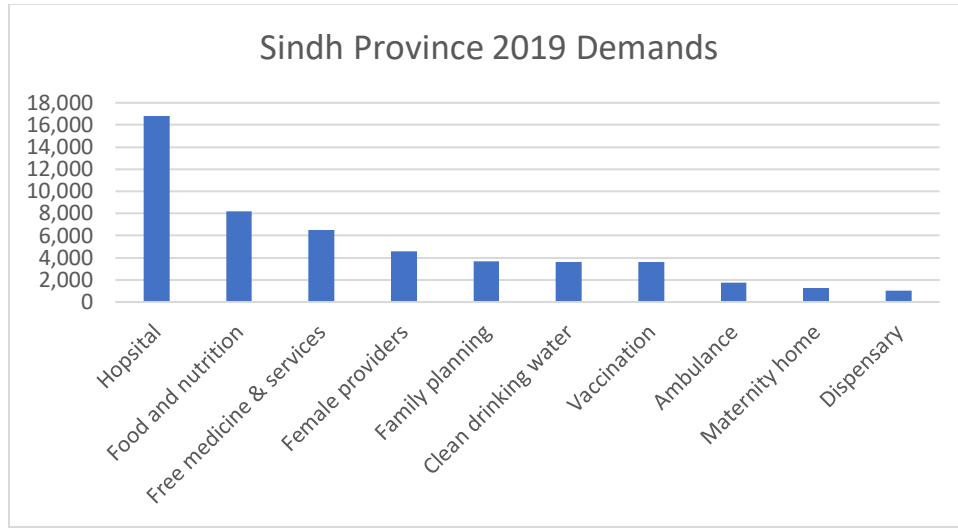
Below are the top eight demands per province by campaign year.

<p>Sindh Province 2019</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hospital 2. Food and nutrition 3. Free medicine and services 4. Female providers 5. Family planning 6. Clean drinking water 7. Vaccination 8. Ambulance 	<p>Sindh Province 2023</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Free medicine and services 2. Food and nutrition 3. Hospital 4. Clean drinking water 5. Female providers 6. Ultrasound machine 7. X-ray machine 8. Family planning
<p>Punjab Province 2019</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hospital 2. Free medicine and services 3. Female providers 4. Ambulance 5. Dispensary 6. Clean drinking water 7. Ultrasound machine 8. Food and nutrition 	<p>Punjab Province 2023</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Free medicine and services 2. Hospital 3. Food and nutrition 4. Clean drinking water 5. Dispensary 6. Female providers 7. Ultrasound machine 8. X-ray machine
<p>KP Province 2019</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Free medicine and services 2. Vaccination 3. Hospital 4. Food and nutrition 5. Family planning 6. Female providers 7. Respectful maternity care 8. Maternity services/centers 	<p>KP Province 2023</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Free medicine and services 2. Food and nutrition 3. Hospital 4. Clean drinking water 5. Female providers 6. Mental health 7. Ultrasound machine 8. X-ray machine

Findings

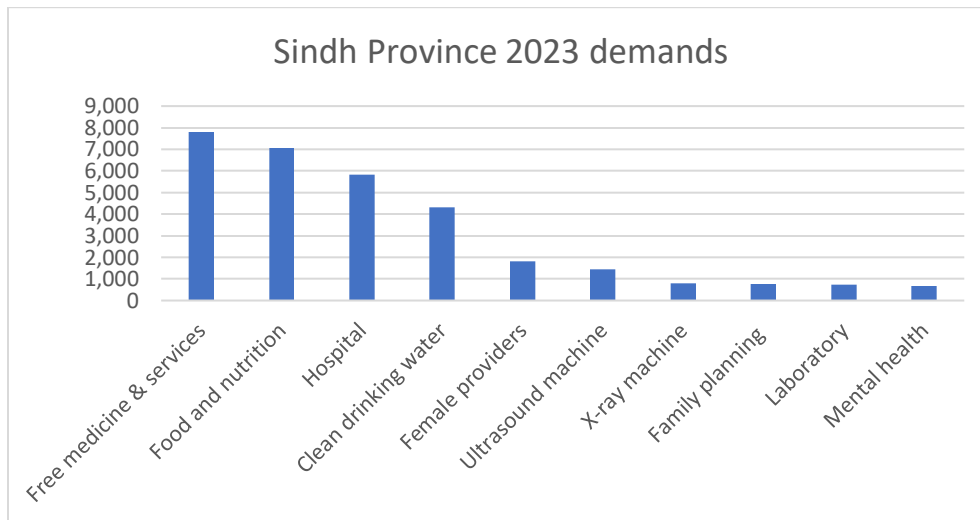
Sindh province (2019)

In 2019, 98,234 demands were collected in Sindh Province. The biggest demands include for a hospital; food and nutrition, free medicine and health services (with “free medicine” accounting for about one-third of all requests for free services); female providers (lady doctors, lady health workers, lady health visitors); and family planning. Regarding vaccinations, specific vaccinations were requested including tetanus toxoid (“tt”), “EPI” vaccines, polio, measles, and antenatal vaccination.



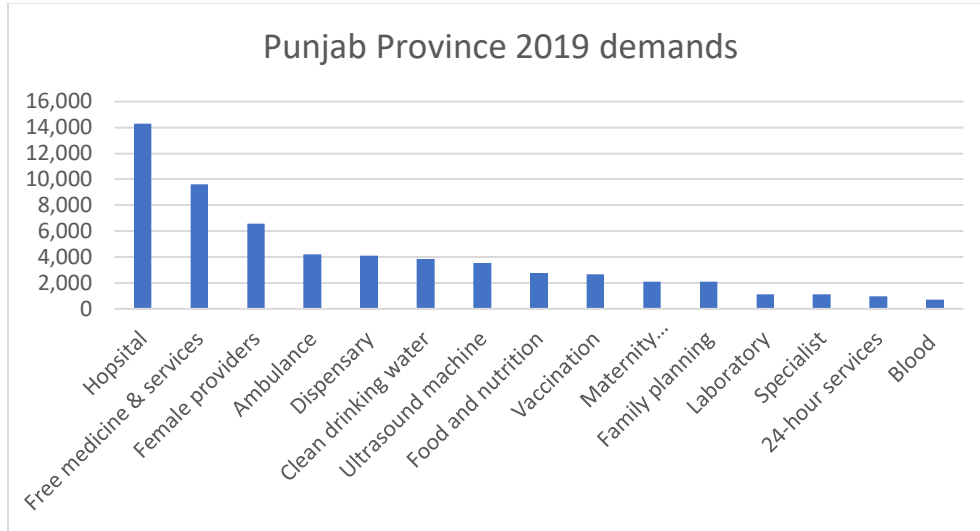
Sindh Province (2023)

In 2023, 33,093 demands were collected in Sindh Province. The biggest demands include free medicine and health services (again with “free medicine” accounting for over one-third of all requests for free services); food and nutrition, hospital, clean drinking water, and female providers (lady doctors, lady health workers, and lady health visitors).



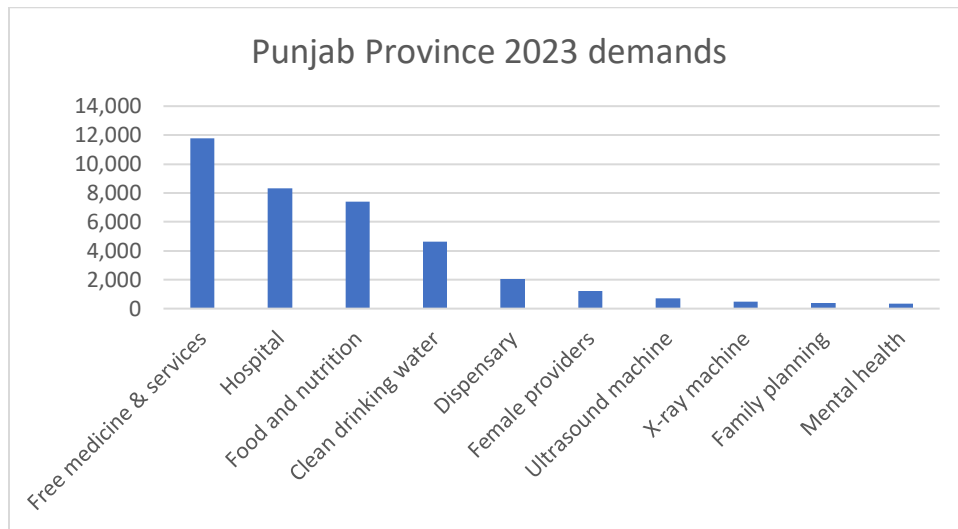
Punjab province (2019)

In 2019, 100,184 demands were collected in Punjab province. The biggest demands include hospital, free medicine and health services (again with “free medicine” accounting for one-third of requests for free services), female providers (lady doctors, lady health workers, lady health visitors), ambulance service, and dispensary. Again, regarding vaccinations, specific vaccinations were requested including “EPI” vaccines, polio, antenatal vaccination, tetanus toxoid (“tt”), and measles.



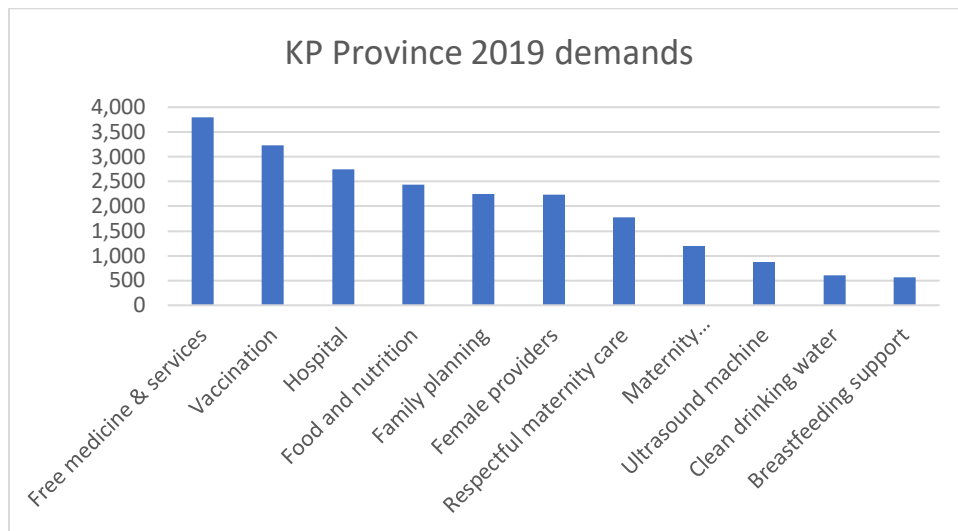
Punjab province (2023)

In 2023, 34,643 demands were collected in Punjab province. The biggest demands are clustered on four topics and include free medicine and health services (again with “free medicine” accounting for over one-third of requests for free services), hospital, food and nutrition, and clean drinking water.



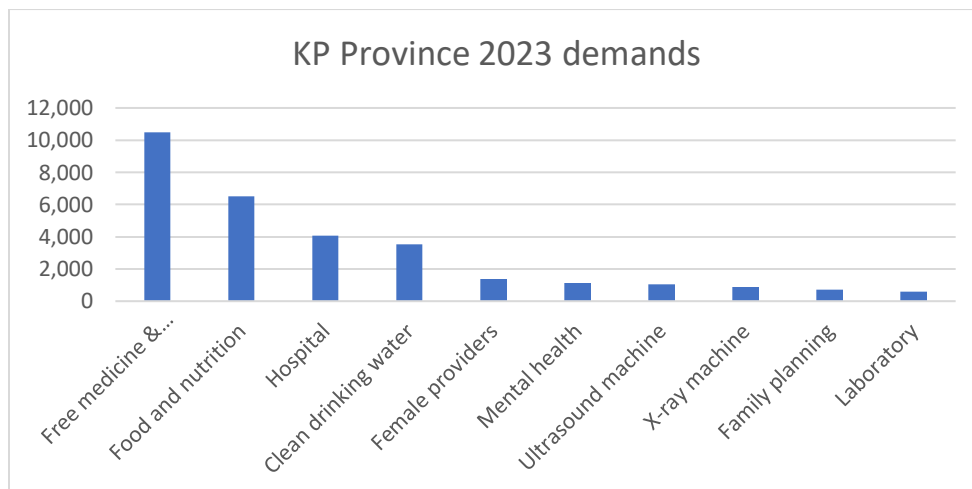
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (2019)

In 2019, 35,645 demands were collected in KP province. The biggest demands include free medicine and health services (with “free medicine” accounting for just under one-third of requests for free services); vaccination (specifically “EPI” vaccines, tetanus toxoid, antenatal vaccination, measles, and polio); hospital; food and nutrition; and family planning and female providers (lady doctors, lady health workers, lady health visitors). This is the only example of vaccination breaking into the top five demands.



Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (2023)

In 2019, 32,424 demands were collected in KP province. The biggest demands include free medicine and health services (with “free medicine” accounting for nearly 40% of requests for free services); food and nutrition; hospital; clean drinking water; and female providers (lady doctors, lady health workers, lady health visitors). Notably, mental health services came in at #6 with more than 1,000 demands.



A few summary observations

1. **Free medicine and health services** is consistently in the top three demands in all provinces across both campaign years. It is the top demand for all three provinces in 2023. While various services within a facility are being demanded for free (e.g. free treatment, free medical services, free checkup, free maternity, free ultrasound), the exact phrase “free medicine” is typically demanded by about one-third of women who are demanding free services.
2. **Hospital** is also consistently a top three demand in all provinces across both campaign years. Here, women are chiefly requesting for a hospital in general – they want a hospital in their village, a well-equipped hospital, government hospital.
3. **Food and nutrition** is a top demand in 2019 and the second or third demand in 2023 across all provinces and campaign years. Women are asking for healthy food, good nutrition (especially for pregnant women and children), and supplements.
4. **Female providers** (lady doctors, lady health workers, and lady health visitors) and **clean drinking water** are top requests across all provinces in both campaign years.
5. **KP province** stands out from Sindh and Punjab as it has some unique demands in its top 10 for both 2019 and 2023. A few to note:
 - In 2019, vaccination/vaccines was the second highest demand (with 3,000+ requests), but in 2023 there were fewer than 20 demands for vaccination/vaccines.
 - In 2023, mental health services/mental peace was the 6th highest demand.
 - KP is the only province where respectful maternity care was a top demand (in 2019).