

Goal 12

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION

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Country Context

Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the fifth largest population on the planet with 213.6 million people,¹ is a sovereign state situated in a geo-strategic location at the junction of middle East and central Asia. Bereft of Quaid's dream for a welfare state, social development has been off the mark with 22.4 million Out of School Children,² 56.3% Out of Pocket Expenditure in health,³ and 29.5% population living below poverty line.⁴ Exclusionist policy patterns marginalizing governance has led to country ranking at 147th out of 188 in Human Development Index⁵ and 143rd out of 144th in Global Gender Gap Index.⁶ Moreover, marginalization of key strategic sectors has led to funding diversions away from social development, barely allocating 3% of the GDP each for Education, Health and Social protection.⁷

With a GDP of \$279 billion (2017 est.),⁸ Pakistan is categorized as a lower middle-income country. Economic stability has been a constant uphill battle with public debts and liabilities escalating up to 74% of GDP.⁹ The country is ranked at 171 out of 188 countries in terms of GDP per capita (PPP) of \$5,400 (2017 est.)¹⁰ while unemployment stands at 6% without factoring in statistics from informal economy which employs almost 70% of the country's workforce.¹¹ Gini index estimates 30.7% inequality with disparities as wide as the income share held by the lowest 10% at 4% against that of the top 10% at 26% (2013 est.)¹² in Pakistan.

In hindsight, political institutions in their formative years - mainly adapted from the colonial rump - were barely able to withstand extraconstitutional maneuvers¹³ in the absence of a strong nation-building consciousness. This resulted in successive instability of civilian governments followed by political proxies and status-quo representatives, beguiling under democratic pretexts. Weak democratic structures led to the absentia of populace from democratic processes and crippled country prospects in socio-economic and political spheres with implications long into its future. This is evident of the country rankings at 110th in Democracy Index¹⁴ and 20th among Failed States rankings in 2018.¹⁵ Fret over it not though, for Quaid's optimism guides our course:

The story of Pakistan, its struggle and its achievement, is the very story of great human ideals, struggling to survive in the face of great odds and difficulties.ⁱ

Amid international isolationism, national calamities and social fragmentation, democratization of state and social institutions is the moral and political imperative. It is essential that we promote critical education and discourse to bring forth analysis that helps adequately influence policy mandates for a just, peaceful and prosperous Pakistan.

ⁱ M.A. Jinnah, Address to the people in Chittagong, March 23, 1948

Responsible Consumption and Production

The abundant supply of low-cost goods and ever-increasing emphasis on consumption of latest products have greatly stressed the natural resource base around the world. The production fanaticism resulting in overexploitation of natural resources has had devastating social and environmental consequences in Pakistan, currently ranked 5th worst on Climate Risk Index. However, lack of integrated policy infrastructure, weak regulatory mechanisms combined with zero awareness at broader societal level continues to increase production patterns without any emphasis on responsibility or accountability.

Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), recognized by the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), targets were integrated into our National Action Plan (NAP) in 2017 but require policy coherence, intersectional planning, efficient implementation and robust review.

1. **SCP approach could leverage several other goals including energy and resource efficiency, access to basic services, decent jobs and a better quality of life for all**
2. **The country requires an efficient data architecture on domestic material consumption, national recycling rate and material footprint for effective counter measures**
3. **Similarly, this requires a whole of society approach to sensitize public on careful consumption of natural resources, specially water and energy where our national average exceeds other Asian Pacific countries**

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