

Goal 17

Partnership for the Goals

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



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

Means of Implementation

Means of Implementation around Sustainable Development requires concerted multilateral effort to galvanize technical, technological and financial support. Global North must assume its responsibility towards the Global South for sustainable development.

Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) recommendations advise developing countries to mobilize domestic resources for which fiscal and revenue generation capacity needs to be enhanced through:

- 1. Monetary and fiscal policy framework should be revamped with a reformative scope to widen and deepen taxation nets.**
- 2. It should also ensure curbing tax evasive corridors and cutting down patronized exemptions.**
- 3. Progressive taxation model, proven as the most efficient socially just redistributive policy measure,¹⁶ should be implemented to decrease wealth and income gaps for inclusive and sustainable economic growth.**
- 4. Private sector regulation framework must be enacted to ensure its contribution back into the community under CSR as an obligation, and not a benevolence.**

Under the patronage of International Monetary Fund (IMF), fiscal consolidation and austerity measures have increased the death traps in citizens' way of universal access to healthcare, quality education and a decent standard of living. Efficient management of public debt should serve as a key policy consideration, with a focus on borrowing for production not consumption, to create enough fiscal space for social development financing. Reduction of budget-deficits is also a key determinant for debt management, albeit, with a careful consideration that it doesn't affect development expenditures in key strategic sectors like Health, Education and Social protection.

- 1. Pakistan ought to rethink its debt distress reduction strategy based on its national interests, not IMF's Structural Adjustment Policy reforms.**
- 2. Foreign exchange reserves must be stabilized by addressing issues of budgetary deficits and high mark up on debt servicing.**
- 3. Efficient controls on public and private borrowing should be instituted to avoid the current trend of borrowing from private banks at very high interest rates reflective of the markups paid against domestic debts in 2017/18.**

4. Foreign direct investment should be encouraged but not at the expense of labor and environment standards; normative conditions must be clearly spelt out across trade deals.
5. Economic growth is possible along with protection of labor and environmental standards, which should not be lost in the hindsight as a tradeoff for growth models.
6. The government must ensure a clear balance between provision of a stable, secure and predictable business environment for private sector whilst also ensuring protection of peoples' interests.
7. Private sector's contribution must be mobilized under articulated development framework to address the shrinking Official Development Assistance (ODA) funds issue.

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