

Goal 4

QUALITY EDUCATION

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



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

Educationⁱⁱ

The advancement of educational outcomes continues to be an uphill battle with 58% literacy rate against the MDGs target of 88% by 2015.¹⁶ Financing for education is still short of the targeted 4% of GDP by 2018¹⁷ and the country is 2nd worst in the world with 24 million children out of school.¹⁸ Raptures grow deeper as the country was ranked 125th out of 130 in Education and Skills development¹⁹ and worst in the world in Higher Education.²⁰ The country requires fundamental reforms in educational governance to even up the ambitious expectations for education outlined in goal 04 of the SDGs.

- 1. Educational budget needs to be increased with a special focus on incentivising public sector to improve the overall quality of educational standards.**
- 2. Universal access to education should be ensured followed by effective governance reforms focusing all tiers of access i.e. availability, attainability and affordability with quality as an overarching principle.**
- 3. Post 18th amendment, the regulatory bodies must focus on quality assurance and enhancement measures for transformative educational outcomes.**
- 4. Educational curricula must be revised to include constitutional education and human rights as a compulsory discipline and exclude anti-women practices, fundamentalist narratives and cultural hierarchization.**
- 5. Education ought to foster creativity and not kill it. It must facilitate the growth of conscious citizens capable of coping with globalization changes rather than just cogs to serve the capitalist machine.**
- 6. Procedural and administrative barriers in acquiring HEC equivalency for foreign qualifications need to be sorted out and improved through structural upgrades in the system.**
- 7. Performing Arts institutions need to be increased in number and improved in quality to ensure nurturing of talents in the field of singing, acting and direction.**
- 8. Special, Technical and Vocational education needs to be improved in line with international best practices.**
- 9. Adult education also needs to be expanded through structured programs for enhancement of life skills.**

ⁱⁱ The subject has been devolved to provinces after 18th amendment. The recommendations cover a generic spectrum of policy reforms to improve educational outcomes.

-
- ¹ Government of Pakistan. (2017). *Provisional Summary Results of 6th Population and Housing Census – 2017*. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved August 23, 2018, from <http://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/provisional-summary-results-6th-population-and-housing-census-2017-0>
- ² Government of Pakistan. (2015). *Pakistan Education Statistics*. National Education Management Information Systems. Retrieved September 11, 2018, from <http://library.aepam.edu.pk/Books/Pakistan%20Education%20Statistics%202015-16.pdf>
- ³ Government of Pakistan. (2017). *Pakistan Economic Survey 2017/18*. Ministry of Finance. Retrieved August 21, 2018, from http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters_17/10-Education.pdf
- ⁴ United States Government. (n.d.). *The World Fact Book*. Central Intelligence Agency. Retrieved August 19, 2018, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html>
- ⁵ UNDP. (2016). *Human Development Report 2016*. Retrieved September 07, 2018, from http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf
- ⁶ World Economic Forum. (2017). *The Global Human Capital Report 2017*. Retrieved September 07, 2018, from <https://weforum.ent.box.com/s/dari4dktg4jt2g9xo2o5pksjpatvawdb>
- ⁷ Government of Pakistan. (2017). *Budget 2017/18*. Ministry of Finance. Retrieved September 11, 2018, from <http://www.finance.gov.pk/budget/Budget%20in%20Brief%202017-18.pdf>
- ⁸ World Bank. (2018). *World Bank Data/Pakistan*. Retrieved September 17, 2018, from <https://data.worldbank.org/country/pakistan>
- ⁹ Government of Pakistan. (2018). *Pakistan's Debt and Liabilities - Summary*. State Bank of Pakistan. Retrieved September 14, 2018, from <http://www.sbp.org.pk/ecodata/Summary.pdf>
- ¹⁰ United States Government. (n.d.). *The World Fact Book*. Central Intelligence Agency. Retrieved September 11, 2018, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html>
- ¹¹ United States Government. (n.d.). *The World Fact Book/Pakistan*. Central Intelligence Agency. Retrieved August 20, 2018, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html>
- ¹² World Data Atlas. (2018). *GINI Index/Pakistan*. Knoema Corporations. Retrieved September 13, 2018, from <https://knoema.com/atlas/Pakistan/topics/Poverty/Income-Inequality/GINI-index>
- ¹³ Tudor, M. (2015). *Pakistan's Security State of Mind*. Cambridge Journals/Perspectives on Politics, 13(04), 1097-1102. Retrieved September 04, 2018, from <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/pakistans-security-state-of-mind/71A9A5FFA5B65766110425AE774E9502>
- ¹⁴ The Economist Intelligence Unit. (2017). *Democracy Index*. Retrieved August 21, 2018, from http://pages.eiu.com/rs/753-RIQ-438/images/Democracy_Index_2017.pdf?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiWkRKB1U1HWmxNVEUwTW1FdyIsInQiOiJPd

[lltVFV0blFRQzZNVERCZHhVeitZREImUGplOHh3NWs1d2wzVzdRS1JvNU1kVmUxQVRESU9LbEVSOVwvR1F4aG1PV1NIS0ZZcng4NzBcLzVNZ09JOUxiZU5TTEVPekVHayttOTRqQkQ](http://www.fundforpeace.org/fsi/data/)

¹⁵ Fund For Peace. (2018). *Fragile States Index*. Retrieved September 07, 2018, from <http://fundforpeace.org/fsi/data/>

¹⁶ Government of Pakistan. (2014). *Millennium Development Goals Report 2013*. Ministry of Planning, Development & Reform, Planning Commission. Retrieved August 28, 2018, from <http://www.pk.undp.org/content/dam/pakistan/docs/MDGs/MDG2013Report/final%20report.pdf>

¹⁷ Government of Pakistan. (2017). *Pakistan Economic Survey 2017/18*. Ministry of Finance. Retrieved September 03, 2018, from http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters_17/10-Education.pdf

¹⁸ Institute of Social and Policy Sciences. (2014). *Public Financing of Education in Pakistan*. Retrieved August 23, 2018, from http://i-saps.org/upload/report_publications/docs/1434014326.pdf

¹⁹ World Economic Forum. (2017). *The Global Human Capital Report 2017*. Retrieved September 02, 2018, from <https://weforum.ent.box.com/s/dari4dktg4jt2g9xo2o5pksjpatvawdb>

²⁰ Quacquarelli Symonds. (2016). *Higher Education System Strength Rankings 2016*. Retrieved September 02, 2018, from https://www.topuniversities.com/system-strength-rankings/2016?utm_source=tu_house_banners&utm_medium=web_banner#sorting=rank+custom=rank+order=desc+search=pakistan